

FY2023 Funding for International Education and Exchange Programs

Ask: We urge support for robust funding of international education programs as part of FY2023 appropriations. **We request Congress provide \$1.1 billion for the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and \$161 million for the Education Department’s Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs.**

U.S. international education is at an important inflection point. The COVID-19 pandemic, which began to impact U.S. higher education institutions starting in March 2020, sharply reduced new international student enrollment (by 46 percent) and largely grounded U.S. study abroad programming (99 percent drop in summer 2020) during the 2020-2021 academic year. New international student enrollment at U.S. colleges and universities had been in a steady decline even before the pandemic: decreasing more than 11 percent from Fall 2016 through Fall 2019. Robust funding increases from Congress are needed to fully restore international education at U.S. colleges and universities following the pandemic, specifically:

- **U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA): \$1.1 billion.**

For FY 2023, we urge Congress to provide \$1.1 billion in funding for the U.S. State Department’s educational and cultural exchange programs, such as the Fulbright and Gilman scholarship programs. ECA programs are essential for helping U.S. colleges and universities recruit the best and brightest students from around the world and produce U.S. college graduates with the global skills necessary for future workforce success.

Additional programs supported by increased funding include:

- **EducationUSA:** A network of over 430 international student advising centers in more than 175 countries and territories that promotes the value of U.S. higher education to students around the world. Robust funding of **at least \$50 million** (increase of \$37 million) for the network would go a long way to not only restoring but also further growing and diversifying international student enrollment post pandemic.
- **Increase and Diversify Education Abroad for U.S. Students (IDEAS) Grant Program:** Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was considerable interest in increasing institutional capacity for study abroad programming. Many programs at U.S. colleges and universities rely on fees and with fewer students currently studying abroad due to the pandemic, operating budgets have diminished considerably. As U.S. higher education recovers from the pandemic, it will be challenging to restart programs quickly without additional funding opportunities provided by grant programs like IDEAS. For FY2022, ECA doubled the number of institutional grants awarded (from 20 to 40); additional funding will support more sustained growth and impact.
- **Virtual exchange program offerings, such as the Stevens Initiative:** Increasing funding for virtual exchange would allow higher education institutions to continue to offer intercultural exchange programs for their students and maintain international

partnerships and agreements while there may still be travel restrictions or a general hesitancy to travel by students, faculty, and staff.

- **U.S. Education Department’s Title VI and Fulbright Hays programs: \$161 million.** For FY 2023, we urge Congress to provide \$161 million in funding for the Department of Education’s Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs. Success in navigating increasingly complex global challenges requires many more Americans understand and engage with diverse cultures at home and abroad. These programs experienced a \$53 million cut in funding in FY 2011 followed by a decade of flat funding, all due to budgetary restrictions. The requested dollar amount seeks to bring the funding back to pre-2011 levels, adjusted for inflation. Specifically, we request:
 - **For Title VI programs: \$141 million**
Higher Education Act Title VI programs support foreign language, area, and international studies programs at U.S. colleges and universities, ensuring U.S. college students graduate with global expertise, especially in less commonly taught foreign languages and critical world areas. For FY22, the House proposed \$79.4 million, while the Senate proposed \$74.4 million.
 - **For Fulbright Hays programs: \$20 million**
Authorized under Section 102(b)(6) of the Fulbright-Hays Act, these programs strengthen foreign language and area studies expertise for current and prospective educators (K-12 and higher education). For FY22, the House proposed \$13.8 million, while the Senate proposed \$10.8 million.