

COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Promoting U.S. Global Competence

August 10, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education,
Labor & Pensions
United States Senate

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education,
Labor & Pensions
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray,

We are pleased to submit the attached Coalition for International Education proposals for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA), Title VI–International Education. Our proposals are put forth in recognition of both the rapidly growing national needs for Americans with international knowledge and foreign language abilities across employment sectors, as well as the funding limitations of a constrained federal budget environment.

Each reauthorization of the Higher Education Act finds the United States facing new global challenges. Today our nation’s successful global engagement, security and economic competitiveness depend on our capacity to understand and adapt to the more complex world of the 21st century. The ability of our nation and its citizens to engage with diverse cultures at home and around the globe has never been more critical in our history.

Unlike the time of Sputnik when the National Defense Education Act of 1958 first created Title VI to serve Cold War needs, today’s challenges require a far wider and deeper range of knowledge about the world, its cultures and many more of its languages, from high level expertise to a globally competent citizenry and workforce. The nation’s economic competitiveness, along with security challenges in global health, environment, law enforcement, food production, technology, and more, today rely on language, cultural and regional expertise. At the same time, these skills and knowledge continue to be of vital interest to our defense, intelligence and diplomatic communities with expanding threats in multiple world regions. Other complementary international education activities in the Departments of Defense, State and Commerce, which have more targeted priorities, depend on the Title VI educational infrastructure and resources to further their strategic goals.

Our Title VI recommendations are based on the findings of a 2014 policy research conference, [*Internationalization of U.S. Education in the 21st Century*](#), which examined the growing U.S. human resource needs for global competence at home and abroad, and the preparedness of our educational institutions to graduate students with the global competencies and international experiences required for the global workforce. The proven federal catalytic role in international and foreign language education through Title VI continues to be an essential strategy for developing—in partnership with our educational institutions—the American capabilities and leadership needed for addressing our

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global challenges. Without Title VI, most of the less commonly taught languages and world regions of strategic interest would not be taught in our schools and colleges on a regular basis. We urge that this role be continued, strengthened, and improved through our detailed recommendations attached.

We believe HEA-Title VI is the federal government’s foundational vehicle to address this 21st century human resource issue that too often is on the margins of our nation’s education policy discussions. During this HEA reauthorization, we urge a focus on the international and foreign language educational challenges facing the nation, and continuation and improvement of Title VI programs with the bipartisan support they have enjoyed over the decades.

We are eager to work with the committee to ensure the future success of Title VI, and would be pleased to provide any additional information requested.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Submitted by the following organizations:

African Studies Association
American Association of Community Colleges
American Council of Learned Societies
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Councils for International Education
American Historical Association
American Political Science Association
American Society for Engineering Education
Asia Society
Association for Asian Studies
Association for International Business Education and Research
Association of International Education Administrators
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of American Overseas Research Centers
Council of Directors of National Resource Centers
The Forum on Education Abroad
Joint National Committee for Languages
Latin American Studies Association
Middle East Studies Association
Modern Language Association
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Coalition for History
National Council for Languages and International Studies
National Humanities Alliance
North American Small Business International Trade Educators Association
Social Science Research Council

Attachments: Proposals for HEA-Title VI Reauthorization, and Title VI Programs At-A-Glance
cc: Members and Staff of the Senate HELP Committee