November 19, 2014

The undersigned organizations of the Coalition for International Education appreciate your support for the U.S. Department of Education’s international and foreign language education programs noted above. As you consider the omnibus funding bill for FY 2015, we strongly urge your support for the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies FY 2015 bill’s funding level for these programs. The Senate proposal would increase International Education and Foreign Language Studies to $81.164 million, a $9 million increase over the FY 2014 level of $72.164 million. This level includes $74.103 million for HEA-Title VI, a $9 million increase over FY 2014, and $7.061 million for Fulbright-Hays overseas programs, the same level as FY 2014.

As you know, these programs have sustained severe budget reductions since FY 2010. We recommend that since Fulbright-Hays has not been increased since its 52% budget reduction in FY 2011, that $1 million in new funding be used to begin restoring the Fulbright overseas programs, particularly for doctoral dissertation abroad and advanced critical language study overseas. We also recommend that after accounting for the $5 million increase in funding provided for study abroad, the remaining $3 million increase for Title VI be devoted to programs that increase opportunities for students and faculty in regional, global, foreign language and international business studies and research, including outreach to K-12 and underrepresented populations. During the recent FY 2014 competition for these programs, the number and size of grants were reduced significantly, while many well-qualified applications were not awarded due to lack of funds.
Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are the nation’s longest-serving, most comprehensive programs that develop and maintain a strong, world-class foundation for international education and foreign language studies. In our increasingly interconnected world, global competence is vital to ensuring U.S. capabilities in national security, global leadership, economic competitiveness, as well as mutual understanding and collaboration for solving global challenges. As the nation’s employers face increasing demands for Americans with in-depth knowledge of world regions and international markets, and fluency in foreign languages and their cultures, a robust federal investment in these historically bipartisan programs continues to be vital to America’s future.

We thank you again for your support and consideration of our views.

Submitted by the following organizations:

- African Studies Association
- Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
- American Association of Community Colleges
- American Council on Education
- American Council of Learned Societies
- American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
- American Councils for International Education
- American Political Science Association
- American University of Beirut
- 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 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 Council for Languages and International Studies
- National Humanities Alliance
- North American Small Business International Trade Educators Association
- Social Science Research Council

cc: Members and Staff of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations