

FY 2012 DEPARTMENT OF STATE EXCHANGE PROGRAM FUNDING

LEGISLATIVE GOALS

- **Maintain funding for State Department educational and cultural exchanges at \$635 million for the remainder of FY 2011**
- **Fund State Department educational and cultural exchanges at \$637.1 million in FY 2012 (the President's request)**

RATIONALE

Representing only 0.0001 per cent of the federal budget, State Department exchange programs make extraordinary contributions to U.S. national security and economic competitiveness. Maintaining exchange funding will allow the U.S. to continue to build relationships with high priority audiences in key countries throughout the world, to leverage significant in-kind contributions from American citizens, institutions, and communities, and to support activities that bring major economic benefits to communities across the U.S.

BACKGROUND

International exchanges have enjoyed strong bipartisan support from Congress, and from both the Bush and Obama administrations. The U.S. exchange community appreciates the broad recognition that educational, citizen, and youth exchanges are not luxuries, but rather critical and cost-effective smart power tools that support U.S. national security and economic growth.

IMPACT

The United States faces economic uncertainty and ongoing threats to national security around the globe. Meeting these challenges requires smart power strategies that foster mutual respect and strong international partnerships. State Department exchange programs engage U.S. citizens and institutions in shaping our country's image and sharing our values, ideals, and ingenuity.

- **Exchanges change minds:** State Department evaluations repeatedly show that foreign exchange participants complete their programs with a better impression of the United States and its people. U.S. ambassadors consistently rank exchange programs among the most useful catalysts for long-term political change and mutual understanding. A Congressional Research Service review of 29 reports on public diplomacy revealed that the most common recommendation of these reports was to increase exchange funding.
- **Exchanges bring resources to U.S. communities:** Virtually the entire State Department exchanges budget is spent on American participants or in the United States, and foreign students and exchange visitors spend substantial personal funds here. In addition, the exchange appropriation leverages important contributions, including tuition waivers from U.S. universities for academic grantees and extensive volunteer activity by Americans.
- **Exchange foster collaboration on critical issues such as national security, global economics and trade, energy, climate change, terrorism, and nuclear nonproliferation.**

The Alliance urges continued support to bolster exchange programs, which have proven their value for more than 50 years. Funding will enable the United States to continue to: 1) invest in more opportunities for Americans to go abroad; 2) strengthen exchange programming in all world regions; 3) increase access to a broader and more diverse range of exchange participants; and 4) build relationships at more levels of foreign societies, strengthening citizen networks between the United States and the world.



Student and Scholar Exchange

- The world-renowned **Fulbright Program** has provided scholarships for nearly 300,000 U.S. and international participants, chosen for outstanding academic achievement and leadership potential. Fulbright Alumni include Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winners, governors and senators, prime ministers, and heads of state.
- Alumni of the **Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship** and the **Global Undergraduate Exchange Program** occupy top positions in government, industry, and civil society across Eurasia, creating a network of leaders with positive views of the United States.
- With a \$12.9 million appropriation, **EducationUSA Student Advising Centers** contribute to an annual **trade surplus of nearly \$20 billion** generated by foreign students in the United States. Foreign students enrich and enliven communities and classrooms throughout the country, and take a first-class education home to assume positions of leadership.
- The **Gilman International Scholarship Program**, funded at \$10.42 million in FY 2010, expands study abroad opportunities for American undergraduate students receiving Pell grants. Last year, students filed more than 4,100 applications for 1,700 awards. The Department has used programs such as **Fulbright, Gilman, and the Critical Language Summer Institutes** to increase U.S. **capacity in Arabic, Farsi, Russian, and the languages of South, Central, East, and Southeast Asia.**

Teacher Exchange

- Teacher exchanges prepare educators to shape young people into positive agents of change. A typical participant in the **Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program**, the **Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program**, the **International Leadership in Education Program**, or the **Language, Technology, Math, and Science Program** can be expected to influence at least 1,000 students and 50 colleagues during his or her career, creating a powerful multiplier effect.

Professional and Citizen Exchange

- The **International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)** has brought nearly 200,000 key business, political, and civil society leaders from around the world to meet with counterparts and citizens across the U.S. IVLP alumni include Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and more than 320 other current and former chiefs of state.
- **Sister Cities International** links more than 600 U.S. communities with 2,300 international cities in 136 countries around the globe. The Sister Cities citizen network represents more than 100 million people in the United States and millions more around the world.

Youth Exchange

- High school exchanges have a consistent record of success in fostering attitudinal change, building lifelong relationships, and encouraging leadership aspirations. **The YES program** (predominantly Islamic countries), **FLEX** (Russia, Ukraine, and other Eurasian nations), **A-SMYLE** (Balkans), **Congress-Bundestag** (Germany), and **the new U.S.-Poland exchange** bring high school students to live with American families and attend American schools for an academic year, building deep impressions and life-long friendships. Students are chosen through a rigorous competitive selection process.

