

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 1, 2024

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Barbara Lee  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,  
and Related Programs  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: U.S. Department of State Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs for Fiscal Year 2025

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart and Ranking Member Lee:

Thank you for your continued support of U.S. Department of State educational and cultural exchange programs, which are a proven and cost-effective way for the United States to remain internationally competitive, develop American leaders, engage current and future international leaders, and promote American values. These programs support global engagement that is critical to our country's prosperity and security. We respectfully request that you enable the continued success of these vital programs and appropriate no less than the FY23 enacted level for U.S. Department of State educational and cultural exchange programs in Fiscal Year 2025.

Through professional, academic, cultural, and athletic exchanges, these programs reach emerging leaders, entrepreneurs, youth, students, educators, and athletes in the United States and more than 160 countries around the world, dramatically increasing America's global reach. According to the State Department, more than 720 current or former heads of government, 75 representatives to the United Nations, 39 current and former heads of international organizations, 87 Nobel Prize winners, and 42 current or former Members of Congress have been on a State Department exchange program. Support from Congress allows the State Department to strategically align its programs with key U.S. foreign policy interests and to facilitate and oversee exchange experiences for more than 55,000 American and international exchange participants, including:

- Bringing emerging and future leaders – many of them from countries key to U.S. foreign policy interests – to the U.S. on programs like the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program, and the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program;
- Continuing to engage students and scholars through the renowned Fulbright Program;
- Engaging and training young professionals through programs such as the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX);
- Expanding opportunities for young Americans to study and research abroad;
- Broadening engagement with youth, women, and girls, as well as program alumni; and
- Expanding the virtual exchanges portfolio, allowing for a strong public diplomacy impact on a growing audience worldwide.

**Exchanges are imperative for U.S. national security**

State Department exchange programs allow the U.S. to engage with a diverse audience and emerging leaders from around the world, many of them from countries key to our national security interests. Exchanges are a key instrument in the U.S. foreign policy toolbox and essential to strengthening U.S. global leadership, while building respect and a web of partnerships based on shared interests and mutual ties around the world.

American students studying abroad through State Department exchange programs are ambassadors of the next generation of American leaders, highlighting our most promising young people and promoting American values around the world. State Department evaluations repeatedly show that international exchange participants who visit the United States complete their programs with a better impression of our country, the American people, and our values. U.S. ambassadors around the world consistently rank exchange programs among the most useful catalysts for long-term political change and mutual understanding.

**Exchanges benefit Americans and help keep America competitive**

State Department exchanges provide opportunities for Americans – as exchange participants and as hosts – to build international experience and connections and gain cross-cultural skills necessary for success in the global marketplace, including expertise in languages critical to business and national security and the establishment of key relationships around the world. State Department exchanges facilitate the development of a substantial cohort of Americans who have the skills, knowledge, and contacts to navigate effectively across cultures and economies.

**Exchanges are a cost-effective investment that brings resources to U.S. communities**

State Department exchange programs are a cost-effective investment that not only enhances America’s long-term competitiveness but also provides significant and immediate economic impact in communities across the country. More than 90% of the State Department exchanges appropriation is spent either on Americans, American businesses and organizations, or in the United States. Exchange participants support American businesses and local communities through their travel, hotel nights, and other expenses during their stay , and their presence at our colleges and universities supports academic institutions throughout the country.

International students studying at our colleges and universities during the 2022-2023 academic year contributed \$40.1 billion to the U.S. economy (up more than \$6.3 billion compared to the prior academic year) and supported more than 365,000 jobs across the country, according to NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

We respectfully request that you make a smart and effective investment in our country’s foreign policy, as well as local communities across the United States, by funding U.S. Department of State educational and cultural exchange programs at no less than the FY23 enacted level in Fiscal Year 2025.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



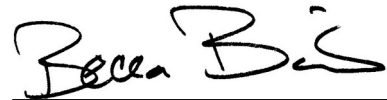
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



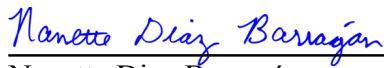
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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



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Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



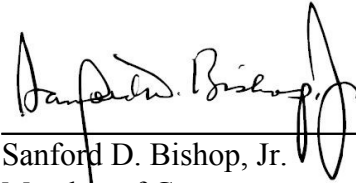
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Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



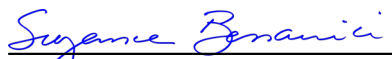
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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress

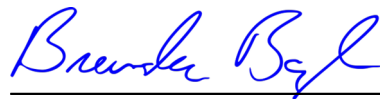


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Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



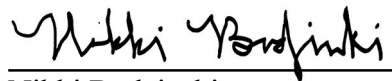
Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress




Cori Bush  
Member of Congress



André Carson  
Member of Congress



Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



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Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



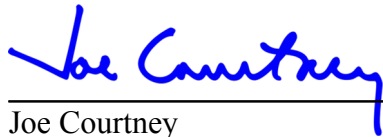
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Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



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Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



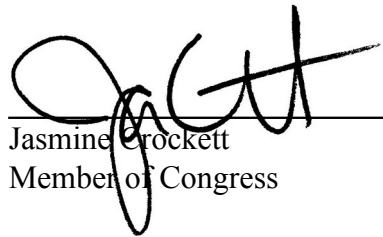
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Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



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Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



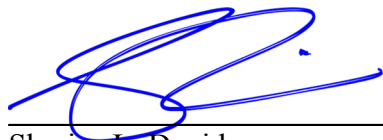
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Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



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Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



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Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress



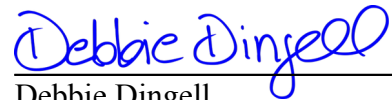
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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



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Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



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Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



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Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



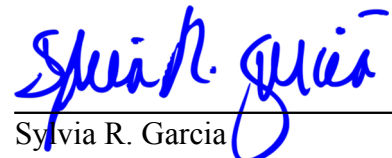
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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



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Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



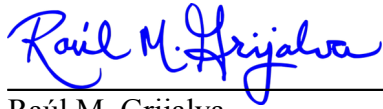
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Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



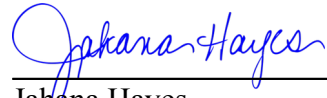
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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



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Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



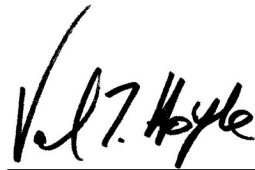
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Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



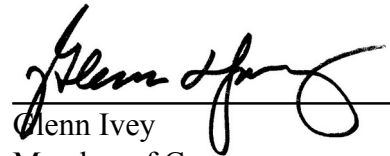
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Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



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Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



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Glenn Ivey  
Member of Congress



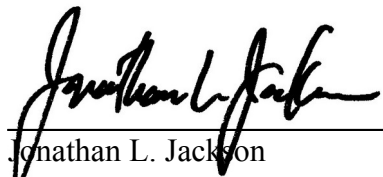
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Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



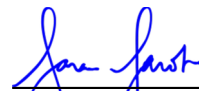
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Jeff Jackson  
Member of Congress



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Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



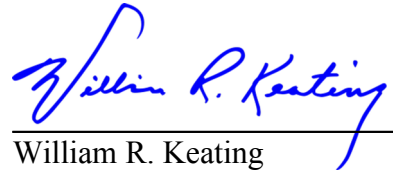
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Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



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Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress



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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



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Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



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Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



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Daniel T. Kildee  
Member of Congress



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Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



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Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



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Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



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Summer Lee  
Member of Congress





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Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



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Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



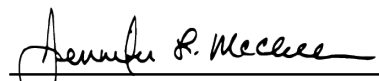
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Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



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Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



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Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress



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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



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Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



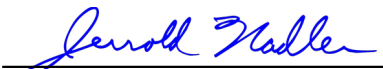
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Jared Moskowitz  
Member of Congress




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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress




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Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress




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Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress




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Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress



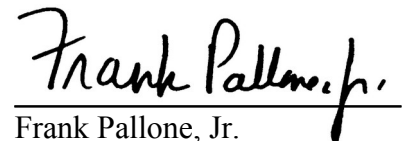
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress




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Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress




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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



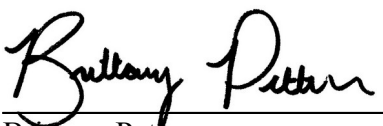
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Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress




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Mary Sattler Peltola  
Member of Congress



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Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



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Dean Phillips  
Member of Congress



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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



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Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress



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Katie Porter  
Member of Congress



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Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress



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Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



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C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress



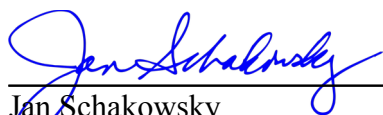
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho  
Sablan  
Member of Congress



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John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress



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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



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Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress



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David Scott  
Member of Congress



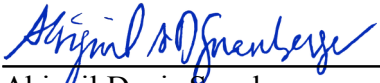
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Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



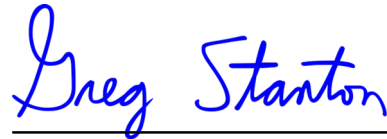
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Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



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Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress



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Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress



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Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



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Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



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Mark Takano  
Member of Congress



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Glenn "GT" Thompson  
Member of Congress



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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



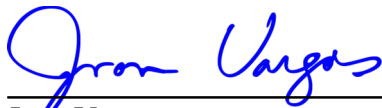
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JM Tokuda  
Member of Congress



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Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



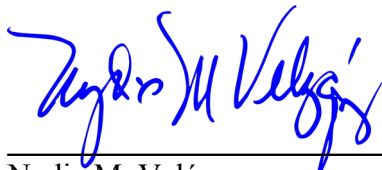
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Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



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Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



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Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



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Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



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Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress