

BILL SUMMARY AND ENDORSEMENTS

HR 4065, Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ) “The Foreign Language Education Partnership Program Act”

HR 4065 Summary

- The bill amends the Foreign Language Assistance Program in NCLB-Title V to create a new K-12/higher education foreign language education partnership program.
- The legislation was developed in wide consultation with the K-12 and higher education foreign language communities, and represents a consensus on what new federal program is needed to improve foreign language education in grades K-12.
- The new legislation would provide incentives for creating and maintaining model programs of articulated, sequenced foreign language instruction from K-12, with the goal of graduating high school students with an advanced level of proficiency.
- Model programs must also include activities to expand understanding and knowledge of the historic, geographic, cultural, economic and other contextual factors of countries where the foreign language is spoken.
- Eligible partners include local and/or state education agencies and institutions of higher education, and may include businesses and nonprofit organizations.
- Any foreign language is eligible, but the Secretary of Education may establish priorities on languages critical to national needs.
- Grants may be provided initially for four years, and if success is demonstrated, may be followed by two additional 5-year grants with demonstrated success.
- The first two years of an initial four-year grant may be used for planning and development for languages critical to national needs for which there are shortages of teachers, curriculum materials, and language assessments.
- Target proficiency levels must be identified and assessed at critical benchmarks.
- Program design and teaching strategies must be informed by best practices recognized by the foreign language field and available research.
- Funds may be used for a variety of activities, including, among others, the development of curriculum materials, in-service and pre-service teacher development, teacher recruitment, development or improvement of language assessments for K-12, study abroad and immersion opportunities for grades 9-12, and community involvement including heritage populations.
- Research and evaluation must be built into the model program, and data collected made available to the Secretary of Education and the public.
- Information on successful programs and practices would be widely disseminated by the Secretary of Education.
- \$50 million is authorized in the first fiscal year, and such sums for each succeeding fiscal year.

HR 4065 Endorsements

African Studies Association
Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS
Association for Asian Studies
Association for International Business Education and Research
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of American Universities
Association of International Education Administrators
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council on American Overseas Research Centers
Council of Directors of National Language Resource Centers
Council of National Resource Center Directors
The Forum on Education Abroad
Joint National Committee for Languages
Middle East Studies Association
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
National Education Association
National Humanities Alliance
United Negro College Fund Special Programs Corporation/UNCF
American Translators Association
American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese
Michigan World Language Association
Southwest Conference on Language Teaching
New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers
National Council of Organizations of Less Commonly Taught Languages
American Council of Teachers of Russian
Foreign Language Educators of New Jersey
Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Florida Foreign Language Association
Foreign Language Association of Georgia
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Center for Applied Linguistics
Southern Conference on Language Teaching
National Committee for Latin and Greek
Connecticut Council of Language Teachers
Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers
Massachusetts Foreign Language Association
International Association for Language Learning Technology
Coordinators of Foreign Languages in Connecticut

American Sign Language Teachers Association
Chinese Language Teachers Association
Foreign Language Association of Missouri
National Network for Early Language Learning
Tennessee Foreign Language Teaching Association
South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers' Association
California Language Teachers' Association
National Foreign Language Center
American Classical League
African Languages Teachers Association
Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Kentucky World Language Association
Texas Foreign Language Association
Ohio Foreign Language Association
Foreign Language Association of North Carolina
Texas Foreign Language Association
South Dakota World Languages Association
National Council of State Supervisors For Languages
American Association of Teachers of German
National Association of Self-Instructional Language Programs
National Council of Japanese Language Teachers
Arkansas Foreign Language Teachers' Association
Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association
Kansas World Language Association
American Association of Teachers of Arabic
American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies
National Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations
The Arizona Language Association
Partnership Across Languages
Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Pacific Northwest Council for Languages

As of May 2010

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

K-12 INTERNATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE U.S.

- According to the National Research Council report, *International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America's Future*, “a pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and foreign languages in this country threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability to compete in the global marketplace.” Underscoring the need to expand support for international and foreign language education throughout the education system, the report concludes that “**early language learning in elementary and secondary school is key to establishing a pipeline of students who can eventually reach a high enough level of proficiency in foreign language and culture to meet national needs.**”
 - A 2006 Committee for Economic Development report concluded that current efforts in this country to develop language skills and knowledge of world regions at an early age are clearly inadequate to prepare high school graduates with the skills necessary for productivity and citizenship in an integrated global economy. Keeping America's economy competitive requires that we maintain our position as a leader in the global marketplace, obtain a foothold in important emerging markets, and compete successfully with countries that boast multilingual, multicultural and high skilled workforces.
 - According to the 2000 census, less than 18 percent of Americans can speak a second language, whereas over 50 percent of Europeans speak one or more foreign languages.
 - According to the U.S. Department of Education, only 44% of high school students are studying any foreign language and less than 1% percent study a critical-need language.
 - A recent survey by the Center for Applied Linguistics found that only 25 percent of American elementary schools even offer foreign languages. Moreover, fewer elementary and middle schools are teaching a foreign language compared to a decade ago, while the number of high schools has not increased. One-third of the public elementary and secondary schools with language programs said that **foreign language instruction has been affected by NCLB**. Schools cited mostly negative influences that affect the quantity and quality of language instruction: intense focus on tested subjects (mathematics and reading) to the detriment of other subjects, and shortage of highly qualified language teachers. See http://www.cal.org/resources/pubs/fl_teaching.html
 - Research indicates that language education beginning in primary school is the best way to introduce a child to a foreign language and its nuances. Research also suggests that foreign language study helps develop a child's cognitive skills and improves the child's learning of other subject matter.
 - The length of time students spend studying languages at the K-12 level stagnates, so that many students reach only introductory levels of proficiency.
 - Research demonstrates that success lies not only in the number of years of learning but also in having carefully sequenced, articulated, programs of language learning across a child's school experience, requiring bridging the gaps between levels in foreign language education.
 - A 2006 National Geography global literacy survey found that 63% percent of students in the U.S. between ages 18 and 24 could not find Iraq on a world map, 88 percent could not find Afghanistan, and 51 percent could not find Japan. See <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/roper2006/pdf/FINALReport2006GeogLitsurvey.pdf>
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Coalition for International Education
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