

Date of Hearing: June 19, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

SJR 12 (Wiener) – As Amended April 9, 2018

SENATE VOTE: 37-0

SUBJECT: Fulbright U.S. Student Program

SUMMARY: This resolution encourages the federal government to maintain or restore full funding to integral international exchange programs, such as the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Specifically, **this bill:**

1) Makes the following finds and resolutions:

- a) United States international exchange programs, such as the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, are vital to creating and fostering relationships with countries around the world and to the promotion of international peace and diplomacy.
- b) The current Administration has submitted a budget proposal that, if adopted, would result in a devastating 71 percent cut to the Fulbright U.S. Student Program for fiscal year 2019.
- c) The Fulbright U.S. Student Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. It is known as the gold standard in international educational exchange for students, scholars, teachers, professionals, scientists, and artists.
- d) Many private and public California higher education institutions have excelled in preparing competitive applicants for these scholarship awards.

EXISTING LAW:

Federal Law

Authorizes the Director of the United States Information Agency is authorized, when considered that it would strengthen international cooperative relations, to provide, by grant, contract, or otherwise, for educational exchanges by financing studies, research, instruction, and other educational activities. (22 U.S. Code Section 2452)

FISCAL EFFECT: This Senate Joint Resolution is keyed as non-fiscal.

COMMENTS: *Fulbright Program background.* The Fulbright Program is administered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State under policy guidelines established by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB) and in cooperation with a number of private organizations.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs develops policies to ensure fulfillment of the purposes of the Fulbright Program and administers the Program with the assistance of binational

commissions and foundations in 50 countries, U.S. embassies in more than 100 other countries and a number of cooperating agencies in the United States.

The J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, composed of 12 educational and public leaders appointed by the President of the United States, formulates policies for the administration of the Program, establishes criteria for the selection of candidates and approves candidates nominated for awards.

The Fulbright Program was established in 1946 under legislation introduced by then-Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas. The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The Fulbright Program awards approximately 8,000 grants annually. Roughly 1,600 U.S. students, 4,000 foreign students, 1,200 U.S. scholars, and 900 visiting scholars receive awards, in addition to several hundred teachers and professionals. Approximately 370,000 Fulbright scholarship recipients have participated in the Program since its inception in 1946.

Currently, the Fulbright Program operates in over 160 countries worldwide.

Purpose of the Resolution. According to the author, "...the Fulbright program is an international exchange opportunity for students, scientists, teachers, artists and more designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and those of other countries. While the proposed budget cuts would absolutely devastate the program, restoration of full funding would provide Fulbright with the funds to continue its work in connecting the people of the United States with the rest of the world."

"SJR 12 calls upon the federal government to fully fund the Fulbright program with the \$252 million that was previously committed to the Fulbright program. This program is essential to the United States' innovation in government, science, the arts, business, philanthropy, education, and athletics. Keeping this program funded is an important step in the continual goal of improving the United States' relationship with the rest of the world."

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

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