



AMERICAN INSTITUTE
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July 29, 2009

Senator Richard Lugar
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
450 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lugar:

On behalf of the American Institute For Foreign Study (AIFS), I am writing in strong support of inclusion of S. 473, the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, in any foreign relations authorization measure considered by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The Simon Act is a critical measure to expand international understanding and education and help the US accomplish its foreign policy goals.

The Simon bill seeks to expand the number of U.S. undergraduates who study abroad, with the goal of one million American undergraduates studying overseas in ten years. This overseas experience will help prepare students for the 21st century by providing them with critical language skills, cross-cultural experience, and international knowledge. The Simon Act was included in H.R. 2410, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which passed the House on June 10, 2009.

AIFS believe that a critical component of the legislation is to award grants directly to students to make possible their overseas study. Significant capacity to facilitate international study already exists in the US, but many students who might otherwise chose to study abroad face financial limitations. AIFS strongly supports providing financial assistance directly to the students to ease this constraint, as included in the Act's Section 6 (d)(2) Grants to Individuals and Institutions.

AIFS also strongly supports inclusion of language that promotes the utilization of existing resources. The bill awards grants to nongovernmental institutions that provide and promote opportunities for United States students, in consortium with institutions of higher education, as described in Section (6)(a)(2)(B). AIFS and other non-governmental organizations are an important component in this nation's capacity to provide a study abroad learning experience.

AIFS organizes programs in 100 countries for some 40,000 students each year including 5,000 American undergraduates from 1,000 colleges and universities on study abroad programs. The Institute's annual tuition fees total close to \$150 million. AIFS's American undergraduates attend either AIFS "catalogue" programs on the campuses of some 20 distinguished foreign universities or on partnership programs arranged for some 100 US mainly State universities and community colleges.

I urge you to include the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act in the upcoming foreign relations authorization bill.

Sincerely,


William L. Gertz
President & CEO
American Institute For Foreign Study
9 West Broad Street
Stamford, CT 06902



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July 29, 2009

Senator John Kerry
Chairman
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
439 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kerry:

On behalf of the American Institute For Foreign Study (AIFS), I am writing in strong support of inclusion of S. 473, the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, in any foreign relations authorization measure considered by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The Simon Act is a critical measure to expand international understanding and education and help the US accomplish its foreign policy goals.

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Sincerely,

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July 29, 2009

Senator Chris Dodd
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Dodd:

On behalf of the American Institute For Foreign Study (AIFS), I am writing in strong support of inclusion of S. 473, the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, in any foreign relations authorization measure considered by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The Simon Act is a critical measure to expand international understanding and education and help the US accomplish its foreign policy goals.

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I urge you to include the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act in the upcoming foreign relations authorization bill.

Sincerely,

William L. Gertz
President & CEO
American Institute For Foreign Study
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From the Office of the President
William L. Gertz



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July 29, 2009

Senator Richard Durbin
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin,

The American Institute For Foreign Study (AIFS) strongly supports your efforts to include S. 473, the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, in any foreign relations authorization measure considered by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Enclosed are letters I have sent on behalf of AIFS to Chairman John Kerry and Ranking Member Richard Lugar urging them to include this important legislation in any upcoming authorization efforts. AIFS has also contacted Senator Dodd, as the organization is based in Stamford, Connecticut.

AIFS is one of the largest providers of study abroad programs to US students. It organizes programs in 100 countries for some 40,000 students each year including 5,000 American undergraduates from 1,000 colleges and universities on study abroad programs.

AIFS recognizes the critical importance to future US competitiveness and national security to provide students with a global education. We strongly applaud your efforts to enact S. 473 and will continue to provide support whenever possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read "W. L. Gertz", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

William L. Gertz
President & CEO
American Institute For Foreign Study
9 West Broad Street
Stamford, CT 06902