

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 123

Recognizing the contributions of the Charles B. Rangel Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Graduate Fellowship Program in advancing the national security and the development and diplomacy efforts of the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 11 (legislative day, MARCH 10), 2025

Mr. BOOKER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the contributions of the Charles B. Rangel Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Graduate Fellowship Program in advancing the national security and the development and diplomacy efforts of the United States.

Whereas the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and other foreign affairs agencies require a workforce with diverse talents, skills, and experiences to effectively protect United States citizens abroad, expand commercial opportunities

for United States businesses, and administer United States foreign policy;

Whereas Congress has required in statute and the Department of State and the USAID have committed to recruit, hire, and retain employees on the basis of merit that reflect the diverse backgrounds of the American people that they represent abroad;

Whereas, in 1990, Congress amended the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a et seq.) to authorize the Secretary of State to make grants to postsecondary educational institutions or students to increase knowledge of and interest in employment with the Foreign Service, with a special focus on minority students, broadening recruitment and retention efforts in order to ensure equal opportunity and draw on the strength of all United States citizens;

Whereas, pursuant to these authorities, the Department of State launched the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship, the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program, and the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship in 1992, 2002, and 2023, respectively;

Whereas these programs increase the inclusion of Pell-eligible and first-generation college graduates in the Foreign Service, with a majority of current fellows having been Pell grant recipients;

Whereas the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program and the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program—the Department of State’s flagship initiatives to recruit top-tier talent—are merit-based, need-based, and highly competitive, with an annual acceptance rate of less than 5 percent;

Whereas all fellows pass the same rigorous selection, hiring, and security clearance process as all other members of the Foreign Service;

Whereas research shows that developing a workforce representing all of the United States significantly contributes to better national security outcomes by providing a wider range of perspectives, experiences, and cultural understanding, enabling more effective threat identification, innovative solutions, and stronger diplomatic engagement across the globe;

Whereas international affairs fellowships that promote the employment of candidates who belong to historically excluded groups and who have financial needs, including the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program, represent smart investments vital for building a strong, merit-based, capable, and diverse national security workforce;

Whereas Congress, on a bipartisan basis, has authorized each of these fellowship programs, recognizing the importance of these fellowship programs in expanding merit- and need-based recruitment from a wide geographically and economically diverse talent pool, including from all 50 States and more than 500 institutions of higher education;

Whereas Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, other minority-serving institutions and other institutions of higher education, including community colleges and trade schools, serve populations

historically excluded from the Department of State and the USAID and prepare the next generation of international affairs professionals with the core skills necessary to meet the United States global diplomatic and development imperatives; and

Whereas the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development are required by law to consult with Congress before taking steps to modify these programs: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the importance of efforts to re-
3 cruit, hire, and retain for United States foreign af-
4 fairs agencies employees from the broadest talent
5 pool, in order for the United States to be globally
6 competitive and ensure that the diplomatic and de-
7 velopment agencies of the United States remain the
8 best in the world;

9 (2) reaffirms that the Charles B. Rangel Grad-
10 uate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering
11 Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the
12 William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellow-
13 ship, and the Donald M. Payne International Devel-
14 opment Graduate Fellowship Program are statu-
15 torily mandated programs enacted into law on a bi-
16 partisan basis to address recognized issues that have
17 plagued the Department of State and the United
18 States Agency for International Development for

1 decades of exclusion of women, racial and ethnic mi-
2 nority groups, and economically disadvantaged and
3 rural populations;

4 (3) underscores the importance to United
5 States national security and foreign policy of inter-
6 national affairs fellowships and similar career entry
7 programs; and

8 (4) recognizes the substantial investment by
9 United States taxpayers in ensuring the Department
10 of State and the United States Agency for Inter-
11 national Development can recruit top talent from
12 across the country, provide them with critical train-
13 ing, and strengthen the development and diplomatic
14 capabilities of the United States—efforts that are
15 undermined by attempts to dismantle these pro-
16 grams, wasting taxpayer resources and weakening
17 national security.

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