

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3390

To ensure that significantly more students graduate college with the international knowledge and experience essential for success in today's global economy through the establishment of the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program in the Department of Education.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. WICKER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To ensure that significantly more students graduate college with the international knowledge and experience essential for success in today's global economy through the establishment of the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program in the Department of Education.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Senator Paul Simon
5 Study Abroad Program Act of 2016”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) To prepare students for success in the mod-
2 ern global economy, opportunities for study abroad
3 should be included as part of a well-rounded edu-
4 cation.

5 (2) Study abroad programs provide students
6 with unparalleled access to international knowledge,
7 an unmatched opportunity to learn foreign lan-
8 guages, and a unique environment for developing
9 cultural understanding, all of which are knowledge
10 and skills needed in today's global economy.

11 (3) Less than 2 percent of all enrolled postsec-
12 ondary students in the United States study abroad
13 for credit in any given year, and minority students,
14 first generation college students, and community col-
15 lege students are significantly underrepresented in
16 study abroad participation.

17 (4) Congress authorized the establishment of
18 the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study
19 Abroad Fellowship Program pursuant to section 104
20 of the Miscellaneous Appropriations and Offsets Act,
21 2004 (division H of Public Law 108–199). Pursuant
22 to its mandate, the Lincoln Commission submitted
23 to Congress and the President a report of its rec-
24 ommendations for greatly expanding the opportunity
25 for students at institutions of higher education in

1 the United States to study abroad, with special em-
2 phasis on studying in developing nations.

3 (5) According to the Lincoln Commission,
4 “[e]xperience shows that leadership from adminis-
5 trators and faculty will drive the number of study
6 abroad participants higher and improve the quality
7 of programs. Such leadership is the only way that
8 study abroad will become an integral part of the un-
9 dergraduate experience.”. A competitive grant pro-
10 gram is necessary to encourage and support such
11 leadership.

12 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

13 The purposes of this Act are—

14 (1) to ensure that significantly more students
15 have access to quality study abroad opportunities;

16 (2) to ensure that the diversity of students
17 studying abroad reflects the diversity of students
18 and institutions of higher education in the United
19 States;

20 (3) to encourage greater diversity in study
21 abroad destinations by increasing the portion of
22 study abroad that takes place in nontraditional
23 study abroad destinations, especially in developing
24 countries; and

1 (4) to encourage a greater commitment by in-
 2 stitutions of higher education to expand study
 3 abroad opportunities.

4 **SEC. 4. SENATOR PAUL SIMON STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM.**

5 Section 741 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
 6 U.S.C. 1138) is amended—

7 (1) in subsection (a)—

8 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (12) and
 9 (13) as paragraphs (13) and (14), respectively;
 10 and

11 (B) by inserting after paragraph (11) the
 12 following:

13 “(12) awarding grants under the Senator Paul
 14 Simon Study Abroad Program described in sub-
 15 section (g);” and

16 (2) by adding at the end the following:

17 “(g) SENATOR PAUL SIMON STUDY ABROAD PRO-
 18 GRAM.—

19 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

20 “(A) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDU-
 21 CATION.—The term ‘institution of higher edu-
 22 cation’ has the meaning given the term in sec-
 23 tion 101(a).

24 “(B) NATIONAL OF THE UNITED
 25 STATES.—The term ‘national of the United

States’ means a national of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence (as those terms are defined in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101)).

“(C) NONTRADITIONAL STUDY ABROAD DESTINATION.—The term ‘nontraditional study abroad destination’ means a location that is determined by the Secretary to be a less common destination for students who study abroad.

“(D) STUDENT.—The term ‘student’ means a national of the United States who is enrolled at an institution of higher education located within the United States.

“(E) STUDY ABROAD.—The term ‘study abroad’ means an educational program of study, work, research, internship, or combination thereof that is conducted outside the United States and that carries academic credit.

“(2) SENATOR PAUL SIMON STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Department a program to be called the ‘Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program’.

1 “(B) OBJECTIVES.—The objectives of the
2 program established under subparagraph (A)
3 are, that not later than 10 years after the date
4 of enactment of the Senator Paul Simon Study
5 Abroad Program Act of 2016—

6 “(i) not less than 1,000,000 under-
7 graduate students will study abroad annu-
8 ally;

9 “(ii) the demographics of study
10 abroad participation will reflect the demo-
11 graphics of the United States under-
12 graduate population; and

13 “(iii) an increasing portion of study
14 abroad will take place in nontraditional
15 study abroad destinations, with a substan-
16 tial portion of such increases in developing
17 countries.

18 “(C) COMPETITIVE GRANTS TO INSTITU-
19 TIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—In order to ac-
20 complish the objectives set forth in subpara-
21 graph (B), the Secretary shall award grants on
22 a competitive basis to institutions of higher
23 education, individually or in a consortium,
24 based on applications by the institutions that—

1 “(i) set forth detailed plans for using
2 grant funds to further such objectives;

3 “(ii) include an institutional commit-
4 ment to expanding access to study abroad;

5 “(iii) include plans for evaluating
6 progress made in increasing access to
7 study abroad;

8 “(iv) describe how increases in study
9 abroad participation achieved through the
10 grant will be sustained in subsequent
11 years; and

12 “(v) demonstrate that the programs
13 have established health and safety guide-
14 lines and procedures.

15 “(D) NONGOVERNMENTAL INSTITU-
16 TIONS.—Consortia of institutions of higher edu-
17 cation applying for grants described in subpara-
18 graph (C) may include nongovernmental institu-
19 tions that provide and promote study abroad
20 opportunities for students.

21 “(E) COMMISSION ON THE ABRAHAM LIN-
22 COLN STUDY ABROAD FELLOWSHIP PRO-
23 GRAM.—In administering the program, the Sec-
24 retary shall take fully into account the rec-
25 ommendations of the Commission on the Abra-

1 ham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Pro-
2 gram, established pursuant to section 104 of
3 the Miscellaneous Appropriations and Offsets
4 Act, 2004 (division H of Public Law 108–199).

5 “(F) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out
6 this paragraph, the Secretary shall consult with
7 representatives of diverse institutions of higher
8 education, educational policy organizations, and
9 others with appropriate expertise.

10 “(3) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than Decem-
11 ber 31 of each year following the date of enactment
12 of the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program
13 Act of 2016, the Secretary shall submit to the Com-
14 mittee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
15 of the Senate and the Committee on Education and
16 the Workforce of the House of Representatives a re-
17 port on the implementation of this subsection during
18 the prior fiscal year.

19 “(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
20 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
21 this subsection such sums as may be necessary for
22 fiscal year 2017 and each subsequent fiscal year.”.

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