

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1198

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

APRIL 11, 2019

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. LEAHY) 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 2019”.

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, community college
15 students, and students with disabilities are signifi-
16 cantly underrepresented in study abroad participa-
17 tion.

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

1 for students at institutions of higher education in
2 the United States to study abroad, with special em-
3 phasis on studying in developing nations.

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

13 (6) Student safety while studying abroad is and
14 must continue to be a priority for institutions of
15 higher education and study abroad programs.

16 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

17 The purposes of this Act are—

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

20 (2) to ensure that the diversity of students
21 studying abroad reflects the diversity of students
22 and institutions of higher education in the United
23 States;

24 (3) to encourage greater diversity in study
25 abroad destinations by increasing the portion of

1 study abroad that takes place in nontraditional
 2 study abroad destinations, especially in developing
 3 countries; and

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

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

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

10 (1) in subsection (a)—

11 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (12) and
 12 (13) as paragraphs (13) and (14), respectively;
 13 and

14 (B) by inserting after paragraph (11) the
 15 following:

16 “(12) awarding grants under the Senator Paul
 17 Simon Study Abroad Program described in sub-
 18 section (g);”; and

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

20 “(g) SENATOR PAUL SIMON STUDY ABROAD PRO-
 21 GRAM.—

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

23 “(A) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDU-
 24 CATION.—The term ‘institution of higher edu-

cation’ has the meaning given the term in section 101(a).

“(B) NATIONAL OF THE UNITED 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.—

1 “(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is estab-
2 lished in the Department a program to be
3 called the ‘Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad
4 Program’.

5 “(B) OBJECTIVES.—The objectives of the
6 program established under subparagraph (A)
7 are, that not later than 10 years after the date
8 of enactment of the Senator Paul Simon Study
9 Abroad Program Act of 2019—

10 “(i) not less than 1,000,000 under-
11 graduate students will study abroad annu-
12 ally;

13 “(ii) the demographics of study
14 abroad participation will reflect the demo-
15 graphics of the United States under-
16 graduate population by increasing the par-
17 ticipation of underrepresented groups; and

18 “(iii) an increasing portion of study
19 abroad will take place in nontraditional
20 study abroad destinations, with a substan-
21 tial portion of such increases in developing
22 countries.

23 “(C) COMPETITIVE GRANTS TO INSTITU-
24 TIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—In order to ac-
25 complish the objectives set forth in subpara-

graph (B), the Secretary shall award grants on a competitive basis to institutions of higher education, individually or in a consortium, based on applications by the institutions that—

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

“(ii) include an institutional commitment to expanding access to study abroad;

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

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

“(v) demonstrate that the programs have established health and safety guidelines and procedures, informed by Department of State travel advisories and other appropriate Federal agencies and resources, including the Overseas Security Advisory Council, the USA Study Abroad Office of the Department of State, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

1 “(D) NONGOVERNMENTAL INSTITU-
2 TIONS.—Consortia of institutions of higher edu-
3 cation applying for grants described in subpara-
4 graph (C) may include nongovernmental institu-
5 tions that provide and promote study abroad
6 opportunities for students.

7 “(E) COMMISSION ON THE ABRAHAM LIN-
8 COLN STUDY ABROAD FELLOWSHIP PRO-
9 GRAM.—In administering the program, the Sec-
10 retary shall take fully into account the rec-
11 ommendations of the Commission on the Abra-
12 ham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Pro-
13 gram, established pursuant to section 104 of
14 the Miscellaneous Appropriations and Offsets
15 Act, 2004 (division H of Public Law 108–199).

16 “(F) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out
17 this paragraph, the Secretary shall consult with
18 representatives of diverse institutions of higher
19 education, educational policy organizations, and
20 others with appropriate expertise.

21 “(3) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than Decem-
22 ber 31 of each year following the date of enactment
23 of the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program
24 Act of 2019, the Secretary shall submit to the Com-
25 mittee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

1 of the Senate and the Committee on Education and
2 Labor of the House of Representatives a report on
3 the implementation of this subsection during the
4 prior fiscal year.

5 “(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
6 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
7 this subsection such sums as may be necessary for
8 fiscal year 2020 and each subsequent fiscal year.”.

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