

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1239

To authorize the Secretary of Defense to make grants to support the study of world languages in elementary schools and secondary schools.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina (for himself, Mr. LANCE, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. COLE, and Ms. TITUS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Defense to make grants to support the study of world languages in elementary schools and secondary schools.

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 “World Language Ad-
5 vancement and Readiness Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The national security of the United States
2 continues to depend on language readiness, in par-
3 ticular among the seventeen agencies of the Intel-
4 ligence Community.

5 (2) The levels of language proficiency required
6 for national security necessitate long sequences of
7 language training for personnel in the Intelligence
8 Community and the Department of Defense.

9 (3) The future national security and economic
10 well-being of the United States will depend substan-
11 tially on the ability of its citizens to communicate
12 and compete by knowing the languages and cultures
13 of other countries.

14 (4) The Federal Government has an interest in
15 ensuring that the employees of its departments and
16 agencies with national security responsibilities are
17 prepared to meet the challenges of this changing
18 international environment.

19 (5) The Federal Government also has an inter-
20 est in taking actions to alleviate the problem of
21 American students being inadequately prepared to
22 meet the challenges posed by increasing global inter-
23 action among nations.

24 (6) American elementary schools, secondary
25 schools, colleges, and universities must place a new

1 emphasis on improving the teaching of foreign lan-
2 guages, area studies, counterproliferation studies,
3 and other international fields to help meet those
4 challenges.

5 **SEC. 3. WORLD LANGUAGE ADVANCEMENT AND READINESS**
6 **GRANTS.**

7 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of De-
8 fense, in consultation with the Director of National Intel-
9 ligence and the Secretary of Education, shall carry out
10 a program under which the Secretary of Defense makes
11 grants, on a competitive basis, to State educational agen-
12 cies and local educational agencies to pay the Federal
13 share of the cost of innovative model programs providing
14 for the establishment, improvement, or expansion of world
15 language study for elementary school and secondary school
16 students.

17 (b) DURATION.—Each grant under this Act shall be
18 awarded for a period of 3 years.

19 (c) REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE AND LOCAL EDU-
20 CATIONAL AGENCIES.—

21 (1) GRANTS TO STATE EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
22 CIES.—In awarding a grant under subsection (a) to
23 a State educational agency, the Secretary of Defense
24 shall support programs that promote systemic ap-

1 proaches to improving world language learning in
2 the State.

3 (2) GRANTS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
4 CIES.—In awarding a grant under subsection (a) to
5 a local educational agency, the Secretary of Defense
6 shall support programs that—

7 (A) show the promise of being continued
8 beyond the grant period;

9 (B) demonstrate approaches that can be
10 disseminated to and duplicated in other local
11 educational agencies; and

12 (C) may include a professional develop-
13 ment component.

14 (d) FEDERAL SHARE.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
16 graph (2), the Federal share for each fiscal year
17 shall be 50 percent.

18 (2) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of Defense
19 may determine the Federal share for any local edu-
20 cational agency that the Secretary determines does
21 not have adequate resources to pay the non-Federal
22 share.

23 (e) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—

24 (1) Not less than 75 percent of the funds made
25 available to carry out this Act for a fiscal year shall

1 be used for the expansion of world language learning
2 in elementary schools.

3 (2) Not less than 75 percent of the funds made
4 available to carry out this Act for a fiscal year shall
5 be used to support instruction in world languages
6 determined by the Secretary of Defense to be critical
7 to the national security interests of the United
8 States.

9 (3) The Secretary of Defense may reserve not
10 more than 5 percent of funds made available to
11 carry out this Act for a fiscal year to evaluate the
12 efficacy of programs that receive grants under sub-
13 section (a)

14 (f) APPLICATIONS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—To be considered for a grant
16 under subsection (a), a State educational agency or
17 local educational agency shall submit an application
18 to the Secretary of Defense at such time, in such
19 manner, and containing such information and assur-
20 ances as the Secretary may require.

21 (2) SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.—The Secretary
22 of Defense shall give special consideration to appli-
23 cations describing programs that—

1 (A) include intensive summer world lan-
2 guage programs for professional development of
3 world language teachers;

4 (B) link nonnative English speakers in the
5 community with the schools in order to promote
6 two-way language learning;

7 (C) promote the sequential study of a
8 world language for students, beginning in ele-
9 mentary schools;

10 (D) make effective use of technology, such
11 as computer-assisted instruction, language lab-
12 oratories, or distance learning, to promote
13 world language study;

14 (E) promote innovative activities, such as
15 dual language immersion, partial world lan-
16 guage immersion, or content-based instruction;
17 and

18 (F) are carried out through a consortium
19 comprised of the agency receiving the grant, an
20 elementary school or secondary school, and an
21 institution of higher education (as that term is
22 defined in section 102 of the Higher Education
23 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)).

24 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

25 In this Act:

1 (1) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary
2 school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary
3 school”, and “State educational agency” have the
4 meanings given the terms in section 8101 of the Ele-
5 mentary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
6 U.S.C. 7801).

7 (2) WORLD LANGUAGE.—The term “world lan-
8 guage” means—

9 (A) any natural language other than
10 English, including—

11 (i) languages determined by the Sec-
12 retary of Defense to be critical to the na-
13 tional security interests of the United
14 States;

15 (ii) classical languages;

16 (iii) American sign language; and

17 (iv) Native American languages; and

18 (B) any language described in subpara-
19 graph (A) that is taught in combination with
20 English as part of a dual language or immer-
21 sion learning program.

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