

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2307

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 29, 2019

Mr. BOOKER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services

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 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The national security of the United States
9 continues to depend on language readiness, in par-

1 ticular among the 17 agencies of the intelligence
2 community.

3 (2) The levels of language proficiency required
4 for national security necessitate long sequences of
5 language training for personnel in the intelligence
6 community and the Department of Defense.

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

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

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

22 (6) American elementary schools, secondary
23 schools, colleges, and universities must place a new
24 emphasis on improving the teaching of world lan-
25 guages, area studies, counterproliferation studies,

1 and other international fields to help meet those
2 challenges.

3 (7) The United States needs more people to
4 speak languages other than English in order to pro-
5 vide social and legal services for a changing popu-
6 lation.

7 (8) The study of a second language has been
8 linked to improved learning outcomes in other sub-
9 jects, enhanced cognitive ability, and the develop-
10 ment of empathy and effective interpretive skills.
11 The use of a second language has been linked to a
12 delay in certain manifestations of aging.

13 (9) The United States lags behind most nations
14 of the world, including European nations and China,
15 in the percentage of its citizens who have some
16 knowledge of a second language.

17 (10) Native American languages are distinct in
18 political status and history and should therefore re-
19 ceive targeted support to ensure their retention in
20 alignment with the Native American Languages Act
21 (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.).

22 **SEC. 3. WORLD LANGUAGE ADVANCEMENT AND READINESS**
23 **GRANTS.**

24 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORITY.—The Secretary of De-
25 fense, in consultation with the Director of National Intel-

1 ligence and the Secretary of Education, shall carry out
2 a program under which the Secretary of Defense makes
3 grants, on a competitive basis, to State educational agen-
4 cies and local educational agencies to pay the Federal
5 share of the cost of innovative model programs providing
6 for the establishment, improvement, or expansion of world
7 language study for elementary school and secondary school
8 students.

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

11 (c) REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE AND LOCAL EDU-
12 CATIONAL AGENCIES.—

13 (1) GRANTS TO STATE EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
14 CIES.—In awarding a grant under subsection (a) to
15 a State educational agency, the Secretary of Defense
16 shall support programs that promote systemic ap-
17 proaches to improving world language learning in
18 the State.

19 (2) GRANTS TO LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGEN-
20 CIES.—In awarding a grant under subsection (a) to
21 a local educational agency, the Secretary of Defense
22 shall support programs that—

23 (A) show the promise of being continued
24 beyond the grant period;

1 (B) demonstrate approaches that can be
2 disseminated to and duplicated in other local
3 educational agencies; and

4 (C) may include a professional develop-
5 ment component.

6 (d) FEDERAL SHARE.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
8 graph (2), the Federal share under this Act for each
9 fiscal year shall be 50 percent.

10 (2) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of Defense
11 may determine the Federal share under this Act for
12 any local educational agency that the Secretary de-
13 termines does not have adequate resources to pay
14 the non-Federal share.

15 (e) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—

16 (1) EXPANSION OF WORLD LANGUAGES IN ELE-
17 MENTARY SCHOOLS.—Not less than 75 percent of
18 the funds made available to carry out this Act for
19 a fiscal year shall be used for the expansion of world
20 language learning in elementary schools.

21 (2) CRITICAL LANGUAGES.—Not less than 75
22 percent of the funds made available to carry out this
23 Act for a fiscal year shall be used to support instruc-
24 tion in world languages determined by the Secretary

1 of Defense to be critical to the national security in-
2 terests of the United States.

3 (3) RESERVATION.—The Secretary of Defense
4 may reserve not more than 5 percent of funds made
5 available to carry out this Act for a fiscal year to
6 evaluate the efficacy of programs that receive grants
7 under subsection (a).

8 (f) APPLICATIONS.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—To be considered for a grant
10 under subsection (a), a State educational agency or
11 local educational agency shall submit an application
12 to the Secretary of Defense at such time, in such
13 manner, and containing such information and assur-
14 ances as the Secretary may require.

15 (2) SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.—The Secretary
16 of Defense shall give special consideration to appli-
17 cations describing programs that—

18 (A) include intensive summer world lan-
19 guage programs for professional development of
20 world language teachers;

21 (B) link nonnative English speakers in the
22 community with the schools in order to promote
23 two-way language learning;

1 (C) promote the sequential study of a
 2 world language for students, beginning in ele-
 3 mentary schools;

4 (D) make effective use of technology, such
 5 as computer-assisted instruction, language lab-
 6 oratories, or distance learning, to promote
 7 world language study;

8 (E) promote innovative activities, such as
 9 dual language immersion, partial world lan-
 10 guage immersion, or content-based instruction;
 11 and

12 (F) are carried out through a consortium
 13 comprised of the agency receiving the grant, an
 14 elementary school or secondary school, and an
 15 institution of higher education (as that term is
 16 defined in section 102 of the Higher Education
 17 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)).

18 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

19 In this Act:

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

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

3 (A) any natural language other than
4 English, including—

5 (i) languages determined by the Sec-
6 retary of Defense to be critical to the na-
7 tional security interests of the United
8 States;

9 (ii) classical languages;

10 (iii) American sign language; and

11 (iv) Native American languages; and

12 (B) any language described in subpara-
13 graph (A) that is taught in combination with
14 English as part of a dual language or immer-
15 sion learning program.

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