

November 10, 2022

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker  
United States Senate  
555 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Durbin and Senator Wicker,

On behalf of the American Council on Education and the undersigned higher education associations, thank you for reintroducing the “Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act.” We have long supported this legislation and the strengthening of programs that would provide U.S. students, who may not have the means to study abroad, with meaningful international experiences. In the 2018-2019 academic year (before the COVID-19 global pandemic), over 347,000 U.S. students participated in study abroad programs, which can provide a global education for those students. Unfortunately, many U.S. students are constrained by cost and may not be aware of study abroad programs within their reach. We are heartened that this bill encourages institutions to expand study abroad opportunities for these students.

The “Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act” renames the Increase and Diversity Education Abroad for U.S. Students (IDEAS) competitive grant program within the Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). This newly named program would build on the success of the IDEAS program, as well as increase its impact. We also know that you are committed to advocating for funding for this program, as well as other ECA programs, including Fulbright.

We strongly support this important legislation and look forward to working with you as this bill moves forward.

Respectfully,



Ted Mitchell  
President

On behalf of:

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
American Council on Education  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities  
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges

Council for Christian Colleges & Universities  
Council for Opportunity in Education  
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities  
NASPA- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators  
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities  
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association