The Honorable Thad Cochran Chairman, Appropriations Committee U.S. Senate

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Committee
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen Chairman, Appropriations Committee U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Committee
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Member Lowey:

We are former United States Ambassadors to countries across the globe. While we may differ in political ideology, we write today united with one voice to ask that the Senate and House Appropriations Committees support full funding in fiscal year 2018 for the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The unprecedented 55 percent cut called for in the Administration's full budget would jeopardize our nation's public diplomacy efforts.

We have seen first-hand the critical role that international exchange programs play in our nation's soft power diplomacy. Exchange programs enhance U.S. national security and prosperity by building productive partnerships, mutual understanding, and personal connections that help us address critical global issues including strengthening the world economy and combating terrorism. In the countries where we have served, we have seen exchange programs help draw emerging political leaders closer to the United States, provide international scholars with critical information and contacts they need in America, and strengthen the appreciation of our country by exposing hundreds of thousands of people to our culture. These are the soft-power results that complemented our direct diplomacy efforts in countries that are critical to our national security.

Additionally, exchange programs create a welcoming environment for over a million international students to study in the United States. These students add over \$32 billion to our economy while supporting over 400,000 jobs here.

It is critical that we position Americans to be competitive and succeed in today's globalized marketplace. This includes equipping them with foreign language skills and cultural awareness – $21^{\rm st}$ century skills many employers look for today when hiring. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' budget provides highly successful exchange opportunities for young Americans who may otherwise not be able to travel or engage in these lifechanging experiences.

Gutting exchange programs is not a win for the taxpayer or small government. To the contrary, the cost of these programs is considerably less than one percent of the federal

budget, and the return-on-investment is immense. Moreover, virtually all of the exchange program budget is spent in the U.S. or on Americans. Because of that investment, 1 in 3 world leaders today have been on a U.S. exchange program.

To be most effective, U.S. funding for exchange programs should be balanced and strategic by reaching a range of people from many different countries. Our country is very well served by supporting: academic exchanges; initiatives to engage emerging leaders; language and area studies programs that prepare U.S. citizens for the workforce; capacity development for women; youth engagement; exchanges of cultural and artistic expression; interactions with international athletes; and virtual exchanges that connect people who are unable to travel.

We are grateful that the power and reach of these programs is widely recognized and that Congress has consistently demonstrated a strong, bipartisan commitment to exchange programs. This spring, Congress passed the FY 2017 Omnibus bill, which secured a seven percent budget increase for educational and cultural exchange programs through the end of the year.

Notwithstanding this, the Administration continues to push for dramatic cuts and a reorganization of exchange programs that would significantly narrow the reach and range of these programs. This would be a grave mistake.

As Defense Secretary James Mattis has suggested, the way to reduce the possibility of war is to increase people-to-people diplomacy – which is at the heart of cultural and educational exchanges.

We are greatly appreciative of Congress' robust support of educational and cultural exchange programs in the FY 2017 Omnibus bill. With deep respect, we urge you to continue protecting these critical programs by fully funding educational and cultural exchange programs in FY 2018.

cc: The Honorable Lindsey Graham

cc: The Honorable Harold Rogers

cc: Secretary of State Rex Tillerson

Signed,

Amb. (ret.) Frank Almaguer Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras, 1999-2002

Amb. (ret.) Mark L. Asquino *Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, 2012-2015*

Amb. (ret.) Elizabeth Frawley Bagley *Ambassador to the Portuguese Republic, 1994-1997*

Amb. (ret.) Robert Barry *Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria, 1981-1983 and to the Republic of Indonesia, 1992-1995*

Amb. (ret.) William M. Bellamy Ambassador to the Republic of Kenya, 2003-2006

Amb. (ret.) Eric D. Benjaminson *Ambassador to the Gabonese Republic and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, 2010-2013*

Amb. (ret.) Stuart Bernstein *Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark, 2001-2005*

Amb. (ret.) John R. Beyrle *Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria, 2005-2008 and to the Russian Federation, 2008-2012*

Amb. (ret.) Jack R. Binns Ambassador to the Republic of Honduras, 1980-1981

Amb. (ret.) Robert Orris Blake, Jr. Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives, 2006-2009 and to the Republic of Indonesia, 2014-16

Amb. (ret.) Donald Blinken Ambassador to Hungary, 1994-1998

Amb. (ret.) Donald T. Bliss *Ambassador to the International Civil Aviation Organization,* 2006-2009

Amb. (ret.) Julia Chang Bloch *Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal,* 1989-1993

Amb. (ret.) Barbara K. Bodine Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen, 1997-2001

Amb. (ret.) Parker W. Borg *Ambassador to the Republic of Mali, 1981-1984 and to the Republic of Iceland, 1993-1996*

Amb. (ret.) Robert A. Bradtke *Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia, 2006-2009*

Amb. (ret.) Aurelia E. Brazeal *Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia, 1990-1993, to the Republic of Kenya, 1993-1996, and to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2002-2005*

Amb. (ret.) Steven A. Browing *Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi, 2003-2004 and to the Republic of Uganda, 2006-2009*

Amb. (ret.) Gordon S. Brown Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, 1991-1994

Amb. (ret.) Sue K. Brown Ambassador to Montenegro, 2011-2015

Amb. (ret.) George Bruno Ambassador to Belize, 1994-1997

Amb. (ret.) Edward Paul Brynn *Ambassador to Burkina Faso, 1990-1993 and to the Republic of Ghana, 1995-1998*

Amb. (ret.) A. Peter Burleigh Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives, 1995-1997

Amb. (ret.) Robert Callahan Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua, 2008-2011

Amb. (ret.) Brian E. Carlson *Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia, 2001-2005*

Amb. (ret.) Phillip Carter III Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea, 2007-2008 and to the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, 2010-2013

Amb. (ret.) Asif J. Chaudhry Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, 2008-2011

Amb. (ret.) Peter R. Chaveas *Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi, 1994-1997 and to the Republic of Sierra Leone, 2001-2004*

Amb. (ret.) Paul Cleveland *Ambassador to New Zealand, 1986-1989 and to Malaysia, 1989-1992*

Amb. (ret.) James F. Collins Ambassador to the Russian Federation, 1997-2001

Amb. (ret.) William H. Courtney *Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1992-1995* and to Georgia, 1995-1997

Amb. (ret.) Marion V. Creekmore, Jr. Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives, 1989-1992

Amb. (ret.) Walter L. Cutler *Ambassador to the Republic of Zaire (Congo) 1975-1979, to the Republic of Tunisia 1982-1984, and to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1984-1987 and 1988-1989*

Amb. (ret.) Anne E. Derse Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2006-2009 and to the Republic of Lithuania, 2009-2012

Amb. (ret.) Robert Dillon Ambassador to the Lebanese Republic, 1981-1983

Amb. (ret.) John Dinger Ambassador to Mongolia, 2000-2003

Amb. (ret.) Dr. Evans S. Dobelle US Chief of Protocol, 1977-1979

Amb. (ret.) Shaun Donnelly *Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives, 1997-2000*

Amb. (ret.) David Dunford Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, 1992-1995

Amb. (ret.) William Eaton *Ambassador to the Republic of Panama, 2005-2008*

Amb. (ret.) Wesley W. Egan *Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1993-1998 and to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, 1983-1985*

Amb. (ret.) Luigi R. Einaudi *Ambassador to the Organization of American States, 1989-1993*

Amb. (ret.) Harriet L. Elam-Thomas Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal, 2000-2002

Amb. (ret.) Nancy H. Ely-Raphel Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia, 1998-2001

Amb. (ret.) John B. Emerson Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, 2013-2017

Amb. (ret.) Gregory W. Engle Ambassador to the Togolese Republic, 2003-2005

Amb. (ret.) Raymond C. Ewing *Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus, 1981-1984 and to the Republic of Ghana, 1989-1992*

Amb. (ret.) Kenneth Fairfax Ambassador to the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2011-2013

Amb. (ret.) Robert P. Finn *Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan, 1998-2001 and to Afghanistan, 2002-2003*

Amb. (ret.) Robert Fitts *Ambassador to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the Republic of Vanuatu, 2003-2006*

Senator Wyche Fowler U.S. Senator from Georgia, 1987-1992 and Ambassador (ret.) to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1996-2001

Amb. (ret.) Chas W. Freeman, Jr. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1989-1992

Amb. (ret.) Laurie S. Fulton Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark, 2009-2013

Amb. (ret.) Edward M. Gabriel Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, 1997-2001

Amb. (ret.) Robert S. Gelbard *Ambassador to the Plurinational State of Bolivia, 1988-1991* and to the Republic of Indonesia, 1999-2001

Amb. (ret.) Yousif B. Ghafari Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia, 2008-2009

Amb. (ret.) Mark D. Gilbert *Ambassador to New Zealand and the Independent State of Samoa, 2014-2017*

Amb. (ret.) Robert Gosende Special Envoy for the Federal Republic of Somalia with the personal rank of Ambassador, 1991-1992

Amb. (ret.) Gary Grappo Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, 2006-2009

Amb. (ret.) Gordon Gray Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia, 2009-2012

Amb. (ret.) Donald P. Gregg Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, 1989-1993

Amb. (ret.) Robert E. Gribbin *Ambassador to the Central African Republic, 1992-1995 and to the Republic of Rwanda, 1996-1999*

Amb. (ret.) John R. Hamilton *Ambassador to the Republic of Peru, 1999-2002 and to the Republic of Guatemala, 2003-2005*

Amb. (ret.) Fay Hartog-Levin Ambassador to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 2009-2011

Amb. (ret.) Patricia McMahon Hawkins Ambassador to the Togolese Republic, 2008-2011

Amb. (ret.) Samuel D. Heins Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway, 2016-2017

Amb. (ret.) Stuart W. Holliday *Ambassador for Special Political Affairs at the United Nations, 2003-2005*

Amb. (ret.) Genta Holmes *Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia, 1990-1992 and to the Commonwealth of Australia, 1997-2000*

Amb. (ret.) Franklin Huddle Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan, 2001-2003

Amb. (ret.) Vicki Huddleston *Ambassador to the Republic of Madagascar, 1995-1997 and to the Republic of Mali, 2002-2005*

Amb. (ret.) Marie T. Huhtala Ambassador to Malaysia, 2001-2004

Amb. (ret.) Ravic R. Huso Ambassador to Lao People's Democratic Republic, 2007-2010

Amb. (ret.) William H. Itoh Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand, 1995-1999

Amb. (ret.) Janice Jacobs *Ambassador to the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, 2006-2007*

Amb. (ret.) David Jacobson Ambassador to Canada, 2009-2013

Amb. (ret.) Dr. Dennis Jett *Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique, 1993-1996 and to the Republic of Peru, 1996-1999*

Amb. (ret.) Linda Jewell Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador, 2005-2008

Amb. (ret.) Deborah K. Jones *Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, 2008-2011 and to Libya, 2013-2015*

Amb. (ret.) James R. Jones *Ambassador to the United Mexican States, 1993-1997*

Amb. (ret.) Richard H. Jones *Ambassador to the Lebanese Republic, 1996-1998, to the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1998-2001, to the State of Kuwait, 2001-2004, and to the State of Israel, 2005-2008*

Amb. (ret.) Theodore Kattouf *Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, 1998-2001 and to the Syrian Arab Republic, 2001-2003*

Amb. (ret.) Richard D. Kauzlarich *Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan, 1994-1997 and to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1997-1999*

Amb. (ret.) John F. Keane Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay, 2003-2005

Amb. (ret.) James Keith Ambassador to Malaysia, 2007-2010

Amb. (ret.) Laura E. Kennedy Ambassador to Turkmenistan, 2001-2003

Amb. (ret.) John M. Koenig Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus, 2012-2015

Amb. (ret.) Thomas C. Krajeski *Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen, 2004-2007 and to the Kingdom of Bahrain, 2011-2014*

Amb. (ret.) Daniel C. Kurtzer *Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1997-2001 and to the State of Israel, 2001-2005*

Amb. (ret.) David Lambertson *Ambassador to the Kingdom of Thailand, 1991-1995*

Amb. (ret.) Edward G. Lanpher Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe, 1991-1995

Amb. (ret.) Richard LeBaron Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, 2004-2007

Amb. (ret.) David C. Litt Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, 1995-1998

Amb. (ret.) Carmen Lomellin Permanent Representative and Ambassador to the Organization of American States, 2009-2014

Amb. (ret.) John F. Maisto *Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua, 1993-1996 and to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 1997-2000*

Amb. (ret.) R. Niels Marquardt *Ambassador to the Republic of Cameroon, 2004-2007, to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, 2004-2006, and to the Malagasy Republic and the Union of the Comoros, 2007-2010*

Amb. (ret.) Jackson McDonald *Ambassador to the Republic of Gambia, 2001-2004 and to the Republic of Guinea, 2004-2007*

Amb. (ret.) Douglas L. McElhaney Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2004-2007

Amb. (ret.) Stephen McFarland *Ambassador to the Republic of Guatemala, 2008-2011*

Amb. (ret.) Elizabeth McKune Ambassador to the State of Qatar, 1998-2001

Amb. (ret.) Michael Michalak *Ambassador to APEC, 2005-2007 and to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2007-2011*

Amb. (ret.) William B. Milam *Ambassador to the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 1990-1993 and to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1998-2001*

Amb. (ret.) Richard Miles Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan, 1992-1993, to the Republic of Bulgaria, 1999-2002, and to Georgia, 2002-2005

Amb. (ret.) David C. Miller, Jr. *Ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania, 1980-1983 and to the Republic of Zimbabwe, 1983-1985*

Amb. (ret.) Thomas J. Miller *Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1999-2001 and to the Hellenic Republic, 2001-2004*

Amb. (ret.) Mark C. Minton Ambassador to Mongolia, 2006-2009

Amb. (ret.) William Monroe Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, 2004-2007

Amb. (ret.) Patrick S. Moon Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2010-2013

Amb. (ret.) Richard Morningstar Ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2012-2014

Senator Carol Moseley Braun *U.S. Senator from Illinois, 1993-1999 and Ambassador (ret.)* to New Zealand and the Independent State of Samoa, 1999-2001

Amb. (ret.) Cameron Munter *Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia, 2007-2009 and to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 2010-2012*

Amb. (ret.) Richard W. Murphy *Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, 1971-1974, to the Syrian Arab Republic, 1974-1978, to the Republic of the Philippines, 1978-1981, and to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 1981-1983*

Amb. (ret.) Joseph M. Mussomeli *Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, 2005-2008 and to the Republic of Slovenia, 2010-2015*

Amb. (ret.) Larry C. Napper *Ambassador to Latvia, 1995-1998 and to the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2001-2004*

Amb. (ret.) Thomas Niles Ambassador to Canada, 1985-1989, to the European Union, 1989-1991, and to the Hellenic Republic, 1993-1997

Amb. (ret.) Thomas N. Null III Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone, 2004-2007

Amb. (ret.) David Passage Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana, 1990-1993

Amb. (ret.) Robert Pelletreau *Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, 1979–1980, to the Republic of Tunisia, 1987–1991, and to the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1991–1993*

Amb. (ret.) Vernon D. Penner *Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde, 1986-1990*

Amb. (ret.) June Carter Perry *Ambassador to the Kingdom of Lesotho, 2004-2007 and to the Republic of Sierra Leone, 2007-2010*

Amb. (ret.) Nicolas Platt Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia, 1982-1984, to the Republic of the Philippines, 1987-1991, and to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1991-1992

Amb. (ret.) Michael C. Polt *Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro, 2004-2007 and to the Republic of Estonia, 2009-2012*

Amb. (ret.) Charles L. "Jack" Pritchard *Ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, 2003-2006*

Amb. (ret.) Jon Purnell Ambassador to the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2004-2007

Amb. (ret.) Anthony C.E. Quainton Ambassador to the Central African Republic, 1975-1978, to the Republic of Nicaragua, 1982-1984, to the State of Kuwait, 1984-1987, and to the Republic of Peru, 1989-1992

Amb. (ret.) Robin L. Raphel Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia, 1997-2000

Amb. (ret.) Charles A. Ray *Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, 2002-2005 and to the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2009-2012*

Amb. (ret.) Francis J. Ricciardone *Ambassador to the Republic of the Philippines, 2002-2005, to the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2005-2008, and to the Republic of Turkey, 2011-2014*

Amb. (ret.) Thomas B. Robertson *Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia, 2004-2007*

Amb. (ret.) Leslie Rowe Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique, 2012-2014 and to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the Republic of Vanuatu, 2009-2012

Amb. (ret.) William A. Rugh *Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen, 1984-1987 and to the United Arab Emirates, 1992-1995*

Amb. (ret.) Janet A. Sanderson *Ambassador to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria,* 2000-2003 and to the Republic of Haiti, 2006-2009

Amb. (ret.) Richard J. Schmierer Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, 2009-2012

Amb. (ret.) Stephen A. Seche *Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen, 2007-2010*

Amb. (ret.) Theodore Sedgwick Ambassador to the Slovak Republic, 2010-2015

Amb. (ret.) Robert E. Service Ambassador to the Republic of Paraguay, 1994-1997

Amb. (ret.) David B. Shear Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2011-2014

Amb. (ret.) Sally Shelton-Colby Ambassador to the Eastern Caribbean, 1978-1981

Amb. (ret.) Ints M. Silins Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia, 1992-1995

Amb. (ret.) Alan Solomont Ambassador to the Kingdom of Spain and the Principality of Andorra, 2009-2013

Amb. (ret.) Donald K. Steinberg *Ambassador to the Republic of Angola, 1995-1998*

Amb. (ret.) Kathleen Stephens Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, 2008-2011

Amb. (ret.) Gordon L. Streeb Ambassador to the Republic of Zambia, 1990-1993

Amb. (ret.) J. Curtis Struble Ambassador to the Republic of Peru, 2004-2007

Amb. (ret.) Joseph G. Sullivan *Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2001-2004 and to the Republic of Angola, 1998-2001*

- Amb. (ret.) William B. Taylor Ambassador to Ukraine, 2006-2009
- Amb. (ret.) Patrick N. Theros Ambassador to the State of Qatar, 1995-1998
- Amb. (ret.) Vinai Kumar Thummalapally Ambassador to Belize, 2009-2013
- Amb. (ret.) George Arthur Trail III Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi, 1988-1991
- **Amb. (ret.) Charles H. Twining** *Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, 1994-1995 and to the Republic of Cameroon and the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, 1996-1998*
- **Amb. (ret.) Nicholas A. Veliotes** *Ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1978-1981 and to the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1984-1986*
- **Amb. (ret.) Alexander Vershbow** *Ambassador to the Russian Federation, 2001-2005 and to the Republic of Korea, 2005-2008*
- Amb. (ret.) Marcelle M. Wahba Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, 2001-2004
- **Amb. (ret.) Edward S. Walker, Jr.** *Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, 1989-1992, to the Arab Republic of Egypt, 1994-1997, and to the State of Israel, 1997-1999*
- **Amb. (ret.) Marc Wall** Ambassador to the Republic of Chad, 2004-2007
- Amb. (ret.) James D. Walsh Ambassador to the Argentine Republic, 2000-2003
- **Amb. (ret.) Earl Anthony Wayne** *Ambassador to the Argentine Republic, 2006-2009 and to the United Mexican States, 2011-2015*
- **Amb. (ret.) Pamela A. White** Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia, 2010-2012 and to the Republic of Haiti, 2012-2015
- **Amb. (ret.) E. Ashley Wills** Ambassador to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives, 2000-2003
- Amb. (ret.) Andrew Winter Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia, 1993-1995
- Amb. (ret.) Larry Wohlers Ambassador to the Central African Republic, 2010-2013
- Amb. (ret.) John S. Wolf Ambassador to Malaysia, 1992-1995 and to APEC, 1997-1998
- **Amb. (ret.) Johnny Young** *Ambassador to the Republic of Sierra Leone, 1989-1992, to the Togolese Republic, 1994-1997, to the Kingdom of Bahrain, 1997-2001, and to the Republic of Slovenia, 2001-2004*
- Amb. (ret.) Stephen M. Young Ambassador to the Kyrayz Republic, 2003-2005