

107TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 2505

To promote the national security of the United States through international educational and cultural exchange programs between the United States and the Islamic world, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 10 (legislative day, MAY 9, 2002)

Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DODD, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. FEINGOLD) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

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## A BILL

To promote the national security of the United States through international educational and cultural exchange programs between the United States and the Islamic world, and for other purposes.

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 “Cultural Bridges Act  
5 of 2002”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1           (1) Educating international students is an im-  
2           portant way to impart cross-cultural understanding  
3           and create goodwill for the United States throughout  
4           the world.

5           (2) Students from the Islamic world are signifi-  
6           cantly underrepresented among the approximately  
7           500,000 international students who study in the  
8           United States annually.

9           (3) The volume of professional and cultural ex-  
10          changes between the United States and the Islamic  
11          world is extremely low compared to other regions,  
12          and these exchanges have proven extremely effective  
13          worldwide in building productive people-to-people  
14          ties.

15          (4) The federally-funded Future Leaders Ex-  
16          change Program for high school students from the  
17          former Soviet Union, administered by the Depart-  
18          ment of State, has demonstrated the positive impact  
19          of reaching out to international students at the sec-  
20          ondary school level, introducing them to American  
21          culture, and strengthening their commitment to  
22          democratic values and ideals.

23          (5) A critical element in the war against ter-  
24          rorism will be increasing mutual understanding and  
25          respect between the peoples of the United States and

1 peoples around the world, particularly those of the  
2 Islamic faith.

3 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-  
6 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-  
7 mittees” means the Committee on Foreign Relations  
8 and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate  
9 and the Committee on International Relations and  
10 the Committee on Appropriations of the House of  
11 Representatives.

12 (2) FROM THE ISLAMIC WORLD.—The term  
13 “from the Islamic world”, when used with respect to  
14 a person, means that the person is a national of a  
15 country in the Islamic world or has as the person’s  
16 residence or place of birth the West Bank or Gaza.

17 (3) ISLAMIC WORLD.—The term “Islamic  
18 world” means—

19 (A) the member countries of the Organiza-  
20 tion of the Islamic Conference and does not in-  
21 clude any country having observer status in the  
22 Organization; and

23 (B) the areas consisting of the West Bank  
24 and Gaza.

1           (4) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term “sec-  
 2           ondary school” means a school that serves students  
 3           in any of the grades 9 through 12 or equivalent  
 4           grades in a foreign education system, as determined  
 5           by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary  
 6           of Education.

7           (5) SECRETARY.—Except as otherwise provided,  
 8           the term “Secretary” means the Secretary of State.

9           (6) UNITED STATES SPONSORING ORGANIZA-  
 10          TION.—The term “United States sponsoring organi-  
 11          zation” means a nongovernmental organization hav-  
 12          ing United States citizenship that is designated by  
 13          the Secretary to carry out the program authorized  
 14          under section 5(a).

15 **SEC. 4. PURPOSE.**

16          The purpose of this Act is to promote the national  
 17          security of the United States through international edu-  
 18          cational and cultural exchange programs between the  
 19          United States and the Islamic world that would—

20               (1) afford additional opportunities for eligible  
 21          participants from the Islamic world to study in the  
 22          United States;

23               (2) foster mutual respect for American and Is-  
 24          lamic values and culture through people-to-people  
 25          contacts; and

1           (3) build bridges to a more peaceful world  
2           through programs aimed at enhancing mutual un-  
3           derstanding.

4 **SEC. 5. NEW EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM FOR SEC-**  
5                   **ONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM THE IS-**  
6                   **LAMIC WORLD.**

7           (a) IN GENERAL.—To carry out the purpose of sec-  
8           tion 4, and to redress the underrepresentation in United  
9           States international exchange visitor programs of persons  
10          from the Islamic world, the Secretary, acting under the  
11          authority, direction, and control of the President, is au-  
12          thorized to establish an international exchange visitor pro-  
13          gram under which eligible secondary school students from  
14          the Islamic world would—

15               (1) attend a public secondary school in the  
16          United States;

17               (2) live with an American host family and expe-  
18          rience life in a United States host community; and

19               (3) participate in activities designed to promote  
20          a greater understanding of American and Islamic  
21          values and culture.

22          (b) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary shall utilize  
23          the authorities of the Mutual Educational and Cultural  
24          Exchange Act of 1961 to carry out the program author-

1 ized by subsection (a) by grant, contract, or otherwise with  
2 United States sponsoring organizations.

3 (c) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-  
5 graph (2) and section 7, a foreign student is eligible  
6 for participation in the program authorized by sub-  
7 section (a), if the student—

8 (A) is from the Islamic world;

9 (B) is at least 15 years of age but not  
10 more than 18 and 6 months years of age at the  
11 time of initial school enrollment;

12 (C) is enrolled in secondary school in the  
13 student's country of nationality or in the West  
14 Bank or Gaza;

15 (D) has completed not more than 11 years  
16 of primary and secondary education, exclusive  
17 of kindergarten;

18 (E) demonstrates maturity, good char-  
19 acter, and scholastic aptitude; and

20 (F) has not previously participated in an  
21 academic year or semester secondary school stu-  
22 dent exchange program in the United States.

23 (2) EXCEPTION.—An alien is not eligible for  
24 participation in the program authorized by sub-  
25 section (a) if the alien is otherwise inadmissible to

1 the United States under section 212(a) of the Immi-  
2 gration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)).

3 (d) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—The program au-  
4 thorized by subsection (a) shall satisfy the following re-  
5 quirements:

6 (1) RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION.—Each  
7 United States sponsoring organization shall recruit  
8 and select eligible secondary school students on a  
9 competitive basis under guidelines developed by the  
10 Secretary and in a manner that ensures geographic,  
11 gender, and socio-economic diversity.

12 (2) ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY.—The  
13 Secretary or the United States sponsoring organiza-  
14 tion shall establish the English language proficiency  
15 of eligible secondary school students through stand-  
16 ardized testing. For selected secondary school stu-  
17 dents found in need of additional English language  
18 training, the Secretary shall provide for not to ex-  
19 ceed three months of such training, depending on  
20 the need of the student, prior to the commencement  
21 of the student's course of academic study in the  
22 United States.

23 (3) PREFERENCE FOR FULL ACADEMIC YEAR  
24 OF STUDY.—The program shall emphasize edu-

1 cational exchanges consisting of a full academic year  
2 of study.

3 (4) COMPLIANCE WITH “J” VISA REQUIRE-  
4 MENTS.—Participants in the program shall satisfy  
5 all requirements applicable to the admission of non-  
6 immigrant aliens described in section 101(a)(15)(J)  
7 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.  
8 1101(a)(15)(J)). The program shall be considered a  
9 designated exchange visitor program for purposes of  
10 the application of section 641 of the Illegal Immig-  
11 ration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of  
12 1996.

13 (5) REGULAR REPORTING TO THE SEC-  
14 RETARY.—Each United States sponsoring organiza-  
15 tion shall report regularly to the Secretary the infor-  
16 mation that the organization has obtained during  
17 regular contacts with the sponsored student, the  
18 host family, and the host secondary school.

19 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH NEW EDUCATIONAL AND**  
20 **CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AND EX-**  
21 **PAND EXISTING PROGRAMS.**

22 Under the authority, direction, and control of the  
23 President, the Secretary is authorized to use the authori-  
24 ties of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act  
25 of 1961 to establish new programs under that Act, and



1 expand the coverage of existing programs under that Act,  
2 to increase the number of educational and cultural ex-  
3 change activities involving persons from the Islamic world,  
4 except as provided in section 7.

5 **SEC. 7. EXCEPTION FOR ISLAMIC WORLD COUNTRIES COV-**  
6 **ERED BY THE FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT.**

7 An individual who is a national of any of the following  
8 countries shall not be eligible for participation in any new  
9 program authorized under section 5 or 6 or for participa-  
10 tion in an existing program expanded under the authority  
11 of section 6: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan,  
12 Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

13 **SEC. 8. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

14 (a) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 3 months after  
15 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall sub-  
16 mit to the appropriate congressional committees a report  
17 setting forth the plans to implement this Act. The report  
18 shall include—

19 (1) with respect to the program authorized by  
20 section 5(a)—

21 (A) a plan indicating priority countries and  
22 areas in the Islamic world for participation in  
23 the program;

24 (B) an estimate of the number of partici-  
25 pating students from each country or area;

1 (C) an identification of United States  
2 sponsoring organizations; and

3 (D) a schedule for implementation of the  
4 program; and

5 (2) with respect to fiscal year 2003, an alloca-  
6 tion of funds by country or area in the Islamic world  
7 for the program authorized by section 5(a), and by  
8 program and country or area in the Islamic world  
9 for the exercise of authority under section 6.

10 (b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than January 31  
11 of each year, the President shall submit to the appropriate  
12 congressional committees a report on the progress and ef-  
13 fectiveness of activities carried out under this Act.

14 **SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

15 (a) NEW PROGRAM FUNDING.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to funds other-  
17 wise available for such purpose, there is authorized  
18 to be appropriated for the Department of State  
19 \$20,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2003  
20 through 2007 to carry out the program authorized  
21 by section 5(a).

22 (2) AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATIONS.—  
23 Amounts appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1)  
24 are authorized to remain available until expended.

1 (b) FUNDING OF EXPANSION OF EXISTING PRO-  
2 GRAMS.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to funds other-  
4 wise available for such purpose, there is authorized  
5 to be appropriated for the Department of State  
6 \$75,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2003  
7 through 2007 to carry out any new international  
8 educational or cultural exchange programs under  
9 section 6 or the expansion under section 6 of any ex-  
10 isting such programs.

11 (2) AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATIONS.—  
12 Amounts appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1)  
13 are authorized to remain available until expended.

14 (c) LIMITATIONS.—

15 (1) SINGLE COUNTRY LIMITATION.—Of the  
16 amount authorized to be appropriated by subsection  
17 (a), and of the amount authorized to be appro-  
18 priated by subsection (b), not more than 10 percent  
19 of each such amount is authorized to be available for  
20 any single country.

21 (2) SINGLE PROGRAM LIMITATION.—Of the  
22 amount authorized to be appropriated by subsection  
23 (b), not more than 25 percent is authorized to be

- 1 available to carry out, or expand, any single inter-
- 2 national educational or cultural exchange program.

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