

U.S. SENATE RESOLUTION: 2004 AND 2005 - YEARS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

Congressional Record: June 12, 2003 (Senate), Page S7844-S7845

SENATE RESOLUTION 170--DESIGNATING THE YEARS 2004 AND 2005 AS "YEARS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY"

Mr. DODD (for himself and Mr. Cochran) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. Res. 170

Whereas according to the European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture, 52.7 percent of Europeans speak both their native language and another language fluently;

Whereas the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 names foreign language study as part of a core curriculum that includes English, mathematics, science, civics, economics, arts, history, and geography;

Whereas according to the Joint Center for International Language, foreign language study increases a student's cognitive and critical thinking abilities;

Whereas according to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, foreign language study increases a student's ability to compare and contrast cultural concepts;

Whereas according to a 1992 report by the College Entrance Examination Board, students with 4 or more years in foreign language study scored higher on the verbal section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than students who did not;

Whereas the Higher Education Act of 1965 labels foreign language study as vital to secure the future economic welfare of the United States in a growing international economy;

Whereas the Higher Education Act of 1965 recommends encouraging businesses and foreign language study programs to work in a mutually productive relationship which benefits the Nation's future economic interest;

Whereas according to the Centers for International Business Education and Research program, foreign language study provides the ability to both gain a comprehensive understanding of and interact with the cultures of United States trading partners, and thus establishes a solid foundation for successful economic relationships;

Whereas Report 107-592 of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives concludes that American multinational corporations and nongovernmental organizations do not have the people with the foreign language abilities and cultural exposure that are needed;

Whereas the 2001 Hart-Rudman Report on National Security in the 21st Century names foreign language study and requisite knowledge in languages as vital for the Federal Government to meet 21st century security challenges properly and effectively;

Whereas the American intelligence community stresses that individuals with proper foreign language expertise are greatly needed to work on important national security and foreign policy issues, especially in light of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001;

Whereas a 1998 study conducted by the National Foreign Language Center concludes that inadequate resources existed for the development, publication, distribution, and teaching of critical foreign languages (such as Arabic, Vietnamese, and Thai) because of low student enrollment in the United States; and

Whereas a shortfall of experts in foreign languages has seriously hampered information gathering and analysis within the American intelligence community as demonstrated by the 2000 Cox Commission noting shortfalls in Chinese proficiency, and the National Intelligence Council citing deficiencies in Central Eurasian, East Asian, and Middle Eastern languages:

Now, therefore, be it Resolved,

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF YEARS OF LANGUAGE.

(a) Sense of the Senate.--It is the sense of the Senate that foreign language study makes important contributions to a student's cognitive development, our national economy, and our national security.

(b) Designation and Proclamation.--The Senate--

(1) designates the years 2004 and 2005 as "Years of Foreign Language Study", during which foreign language study is promoted and expanded in elementary schools, secondary schools, institutions of higher learning, businesses, and government programs; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to--

(A) encourage and support initiatives to promote and expand the study of foreign languages; and

(B) observe the "Years of Foreign Language Study" with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities.