



Joint National Committee for Languages
National Council for Languages and International Studies

MONTHLY UPDATE

July 3, 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

With the summer heat and storms settling in to the nation's capital, at JNCL-NCLIS we're at hard work advocating for languages. We continue to work on the Hill in opposition to the broad and deep cuts for languages proposed by President Trump. You can read our [detailed analysis of the budget](#). Thus far, what we reported in May is still holding - the likelihood of any of these cuts coming to pass is very low. Nevertheless, we will continue to make our case on the Hill, and will ask you to respond to policy alerts, from JNCL-NCLIS and our coalition partners. It's still vitally important to make our voices heard.

Setting aside the FY18 budget, the Congress and Administration have taken some positive steps in the past month with regard to languages and the language industry. First, the Wage and Hour Division of the United States Department of Labor has withdrawn the 2015 Administrator's Interpretation, which stated the non-binding opinion that anyone receiving compensation for performing work should be classified as an employee, and thus received a W-2 form. As you may know, the language industry workforce has long consisted of a mix of regular employees and independent contractors. The Administrator's Interpretation gave state departments of labor a significant boost in their efforts to force the language industry to make the entirety of its workforce regular employees, while concomitantly extracting significant fines and fees from language companies. This was deeply troubling, as it damaged language companies without any benefits to the language workforce. JNCL-NCLIS has worked on this specific issue at the national level, alongside the National Federation of Independent Businesses and the Association of Language Companies, for several years.

On the educational side of the Language Enterprise, [H.R. 1239, the World Languages Advancement and Readiness Act \(WLARA\)](#), now has 17 cosponsors. WLARA, introduced on February 28, in conjunction with the release of the report of the Commission on Language Learning ([America's Languages](#)) by Representative David Price (NC-D-04), is now under consideration by the House Armed Services Committee. There will be a policy alert in coming weeks asking you to write your Representative and seek support for HR 1239.

The Commission on Language Learning of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences has created a Working Group to take the five recommendations of the Commission and develop actionable plans, with goals, baselines, and benchmarks. Thus far, we've seen the World Languages Advancement and Readiness Act, the [Lead with Languages](#) campaign, and more than a dozen special events and conference sessions on the Commission's work. That's not enough - achieving the vision of the Commission will take sustained hard work. The working group includes leaders from all sectors of the Language Enterprise, and I have the deep honor to be included among them. We will have more news on this front throughout the summer.

The research we do at JNCL-NCLIS supports our advocacy by providing data and qualitative information to make our case that languages matter to national security, economic growth, and the fulfillment of the potential of all Americans. To that end, we've been particularly fortunate to have received a grant from the Human Resources Development Working Group of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) to investigate the demand for Global Competencies in the business sector across the Pacific Rim. The [project website](#) has a wealth of information on how employers view language skills and

cultural expertise; in addition, the data for the US were published in Foreign Language Annals in the 2017 Winter number, and a video abstract is available on the [journal's website](#). The short story is that language skills are in demand across many sectors of the US economy.

Finally, next month sees two major meetings of JNCL-NCLIS members - the annual meetings of the *American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese* and the *American Association of Teachers of French*. If you're attending, do come and chat, or sit in on sessions on the [AAAS Commission](#) and [New Models for Study Abroad](#) at AATSP and on the [AAAS Commission](#) at AATF.

In closing,

Bill Rivers
Executive Director

MESSAGE FROM THE POLICY ANALYST

Dear Colleagues,

Here at JNCL-NCLIS, summertime brings a change of pace in our usual workload. We are able to use the time to focus on organizational priorities and health, prepare for Language Advocacy Day, and, most importantly, lay the groundwork for the legislative strategy we will pursue when Congress reconvenes after August recess. This is the normal course of things in the calendar, but "normal" is a relative term in Washington nowadays, and this calendar year has been anything but normal. From protecting our programs from the potentially devastating cuts proposed by the Administration to advancing the World Language Advancement and Readiness Act, the Esther Martinez reauthorization, and other legislation through both chambers, the Language Enterprise has a full summer ahead.

At every turn, **we need support from language advocates like you to get our message across to Congress**. If you've not yet taken action to support funding for federal language programs in FY2018, please take a moment to do so below and spread the word to your colleagues by sharing the alerts through your personal and professional networks of fellow language advocates. Follow us on social media and encourage your colleagues to do the same so that you're always up to date on the happenings in Washington around language.

Enjoy your summer!

Maria Pulcini

ACTION CENTER

[Take Action for Title VI/Fulbright-Hays](#)

Housed in the Department of Education, Title IV and Fulbright-Hays are our nation's most comprehensive federal programs for foreign language and area studies, forming the bedrock of our research and teaching capacity in critical languages. President Trump's FY2018 budget proposes to eliminate both programs. Take action with the National Humanities Alliance's live [Title VI/Fulbright-Hays action alert](#).

[Take Action for Title IV-Part A of ESSA](#)

Newly created by the Every Student Succeeds Act, Title IV-Part A is a flexible block grant program for school districts designed to provide support for much needed health and safety programs, well-rounded education programs, and the effective use of educational technology. World language programs stand to benefit from ESSA as an integral part of a well-rounded curriculum. President Trump's FY2018 budget proposes to eliminate the program. Take action with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language's live [Title IV-Part A action alert](#).

[Take Action for the National Endowment for the Humanities](#)

NEH provides support for research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities, including world languages, through grants to educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and individual scholars nationwide. President Trump's FY2018 budget proposes to eliminate the Endowment. Take action with the National Humanities Alliance's live [NEH action alert](#).

[World Language Advancement and Readiness Act](#)

The bill was introduced in the House on February 28, 2017 and would establish a competitive grant program to support world language education in K-12 schools. The program would be administered by the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the Secretary of Education and the Director of National Intelligence, and would provide three-year grants to LEAs to establish, expand, or improve world language programs. The bill has been referred to the House Armed Services Committee and the House Education and Workforce Committee. [Track the bill](#).

[Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act](#)

The bill was introduced in the Senate on February 1, 2017 and in the House on February 16, 2017 and would reauthorize through FY2022 both Esther Martinez grant programs administered by the Administration for Native Americans at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) - the Native American Languages Preservation and Maintenance (P&M) grant program and the Esther Martinez Initiative (EMI) grant program. It also decreases the required minimum number of enrollees in Native American language nests funded by the grant program from 10 to 5 enrollees, and in the Native American language survival schools from 15 to 10 enrollees. Finally, the bill increases the maximum possible duration of all Esther Martinez grants from three years to five. The bill was reported favorably out of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee and awaits a floor vote in the Senate. In the House, the bill was referred to the House Education and Workforce Committee. [Track the bills](#).

[Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act](#)

The bill was introduced in the Senate on March 9, 2017 and would establish a competitive grant program in the Department of Education, for institutions of higher education to encourage the sustainable expansion of study abroad opportunities for undergraduate students in the United States. It is named after the late Illinois Senator, Paul Simon, who encouraged Congress to come together to prepare the next generation of Americans with the global knowledge and skills needed for success in an increasingly interconnected world. The bill has been referred to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. [Track the bill](#).

LANGUAGE LEARNING CHALLENGE

Would you wager on your language learning abilities?

David Bong, CEO of our member organization Avant Assessment, and Mike Biglan, the CEO of Analytic Spot have placed a bet. After 30 minutes of self-study in Spanish per day for three months, who would show the most growth? The loser would donate \$1,000 to JNCL-NCLIS! Follow David and Mike as they chronicle their Spanish-learning journeys via [blog](#) and [tweet](#)!

You're invited to join the challenge!

Avant Assessment is offering pre- and post-challenge STAMP or WorldSpeak assessments to those willing to undertake a similar challenge! The assessments are available in a range of languages:

STAMP (Four skill online assessment)

Arabic
English
French
German
Hebrew
Hindi
Italian
Japanese
Mandarin
(Simplified and Traditional)
Russian
Spanish

WorldSpeak

Filipino (Tagalog)
Somali Maay Maay
Somali Maxaa
Vietnamese
Yup'ik

READER'S CHOICE

The top language news in May 2017, according to subscribers of our weekly NewsBrief.

[Language learning and national security](#) (Op-Ed by Ambassador Karl Eikenberry)

06/23/2017

When I was a student in Nanjing University in China in the early 1980s, a professor there told me that if I spoke no Chinese at all, I would always be a metaphorical window shopper in his city, admiring the goods on display from a distance on the street. But after investing the time and effort to become proficient at Mandarin and knowledgeable of Chinese custom, I would be invited by the shop owner to come inside and enter the room where his real treasures were kept. [Read more.](#)

[Foreign language 'emergency' hinders U.S. economy and foreign policy, report warns](#)

06/15/2017

The inability of too many Americans to learn or speak anything but English constitutes a foreign language "emergency" that could end up harming the economy and impairing U.S. foreign policy, according to a survey. Only 20.7 percent of American adults can speak a foreign language - compared with 66 percent of all European adults who know more than one language, says "America's Languages," a report released in March by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The findings were discussed this week at a briefing hosted by the Council on Foreign Relations. [Read more.](#)

[The surprising pattern behind color names around the world](#)

05/16/2017

In 1969, two Berkeley researchers, Paul Kay and Brent Berlin, published a book on a pretty groundbreaking idea: that every culture in history, when they developed their languages, invented words for colors in the exact same order. They claimed to know this based off of a simple color identification test, where 20 respondents identified 330 colored chips by name. If a language had six words, they were always black, white, red, green, yellow, and blue. If it had four terms, they were always black, white, red, and then either green or yellow. If it had only three, they were always black, white, and red, and so on. The theory was revolutionary - and it shaped our understanding of how color terminologies emerge. [Read more.](#)



[Teaching foreign language in the age of Trump](#)

06/08/2017

The end-of-the year meeting began innocuously enough, colleagues bantering with routine pleasantries as the spring semester faded into the summer recess on that final day of the term. We settled in for our discussion, and I couldn't help but admire the meticulously written Chinese symbols displayed on the chalkboard in front of me. I imagined the student working in that quiet, small classroom space carefully composing each character as they crafted each mark, absorbedly moving from one down to the next. [Read more.](#)

[World language study in U.S. K-12 schools](#)

06/01/2017

As U.S. schools are enrolling increasing numbers of students who speak a language at home other than English, and major world languages like Arabic and Chinese are being introduced into K-12 curricula in many parts of the country, educators and policy makers at the local and national level require comprehensive and reliable information on the numbers of Americans who will be entering higher education and the workforce in the coming years with the language skills necessary to ensure that America maintains a competitive position in the global economy and for meeting its national security requirements. [Read more.](#)

SAVE THE DATE: 2018 LANGUAGE ADVOCACY DAY

Language Advocacy Day

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February 15-16, 2018

Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill

Registration will open in September.

UPCOMING MEMBER EVENTS

ASLTA 2017 Conference	June 28-July 1, 2017 Salt Lake Marriott Downtown at City Creek Salt Lake City, UT https://aslta.org/aslta-9th-biennial-conference/
AATK 2017 Conference	June 29-July 1, 2017 University of Southern California Los Angeles, CA http://dornsife.usc.edu/eascenter/aatk/
LSA Linguistic Institute	July 5-August 1, 2017 University of Kentucky Lexington, KY https://lsa2017.uky.edu/
NNELL Summer Institute	July 7-9, 2017 The Grand Summit Hotel Summit, NJ http://nnell.org/summer-institute-2017/
PSMLA 2017 Conference	October 5-7, 2017 Holiday Inn Harrisburg- Hershey Grantville, PA http://psmla.org/event/psmla-fall-conference-2017
ATA 58th Annual Conference	October 25-28, 2017 Washington Hilton Washington, D.C. http://www.atanet.org/conf/2017/
NABE Third Annual Dual Language Symposium	February 28-March 3, 2018 Albuquerque Convention Center Albuquerque, NM http://www.nabe-conference.com/index.html

If your organization/ company is a member of JNCL-NCLIS and you'd like to share events in our Monthly Updates, please contact [Maria Pulcini](#).

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