

**Prepared Testimony to the National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs  
Subcommittee  
House Committee on Appropriations**

**Public Witness Hearing**

**Carol L. Jenkins, CEO, World Learning  
Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 10:00 AM, Room 2362-A  
Rayburn House Office Building**

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member Frankel, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, it's an honor to testify before you today in support of the State Department's Educational and Cultural Exchanges. My name is Carol Jenkins, and I am the CEO of the American non-profit organization World Learning, which has designed and offered international education and exchange programs since 1932.

As a longstanding implementing partner of the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), we share President Trump's commitment to making America safer, stronger, and more prosperous through exchanges involving some of our most effective and trustworthy diplomats—American citizens themselves. Therefore, our nationwide community of partners respectfully requests no less than \$741 million in FY2026 funding for educational and cultural exchanges, consistent with the level agreed to in the current Continuing Resolution. Allow me to provide a couple of brief examples to illustrate why exchanges deserve your support.

The International Visitor Leadership Program brings approximately 4,500 distinguished professionals to the U.S. annually. Vetted by our embassies, these participants gain exposure to American best practices in fields such as counterterrorism, law enforcement, interfaith dialogue and religious freedom, and technology. Our programs have facilitated collaboration between foreign and American law enforcement professionals, leading to the resolution of an international crime. Another program, administered by a different partner, tackled the fentanyl crisis by bringing together public and private security experts in Florida, Alabama, and Texas. These exchanges foster new networks and partnerships that enhance the security of our country and the American people.

The International Visitor Leadership Program, along with many other citizen diplomacy programs of the ECA Bureau, promotes collective action on pressing issues and advances American interests. In fact, every dollar of U.S. taxpayer funding allocated to this program generates \$11 for local communities in America. In 2023, \$7.1 million in federal funding for this program resulted in an impressive \$81.7 million in economic impact.

In 2023, international education programs, including ECA's exchanges, generated approximately \$44 billion in economic impact and supported the creation of nearly 400,000 jobs across our country, including in rural American communities.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I respectfully request that you continue to support these vital citizen diplomacy programs that make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

Thank you.