

## Talking Points for House or Senate Visits

### The ASK:

**Senate:** Please support passage of S.1338 introduced by Sens. Tom Carper (D-DE) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN). This same bill was passed by the Senate in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**House:** Please support passage of HR 2361 introduced by Reps. Barney Frank (D-MA) and Lamar Smith (R-TX).

### What are Intensive English Programs and what is the American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP) and/or the University and College Intensive English Language Programs (UCIEP)?

- Intensive English programs (IEP's) teach English language, American culture, and professional development skills to non-native English speakers from around the world. There are nearly 1,000 IEP's in the U.S. in which students must study a minimum of 18 hours per week to meet their student visa requirements.
- During the fourth quarter of the year ending on December 31, 2008, SEVIS reports that approximately 75,000-80,000 active students are enrolled in language training in the U.S. Historically, the average length of stay of English language students is around 12 weeks, less than one college semester.
- The American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP) is the largest association of intensive English programs with nearly 300 members. Our members include university and college programs as well as independent language schools; OR
- The University and College Intensive English Language Programs (UCIEP) is an independent consortium of university and college-administered intensive English programs in the United States. Founded in 1967, UCIEP's purpose is the advancement of professional standards and quality instruction in intensive English programs at universities and colleges in the United States. There are 67 members of UCIEP.
- The average intensive English students contribute significantly to the economy. They spend between \$3,500 and \$4,000 a month on tuition, room and board, insurance, transportation, etc. In total, foreign students contribute about \$14.5 billion per year to the American economy. However, enrollments in IEPs have substantially decreased since 9/11 by over 50%, from a high of 85,000 just prior to 9/11 to a low of 45,000 in 2006<sup>[1]</sup>.
- **Include specific information about your IEP program and impact in state/district.**

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<sup>[1]</sup> Source: IIE Open Doors, 2006

### Importance of IEP Accreditation

- Currently, the Department of Homeland Security, after initial program certification to issue visa documents, relies upon the voluntary compliance of IEPs with immigration regulations. Initial examination of IEPs is cursory and continuing oversight is minimal.
- AAIEP and UCIEP believe that it is critical to require all IEPs be accredited in order to issue student visa documents. Both associations require all members be accredited.
- The best IEP's are accredited either by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA), by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training (ACCET), by their state, or through the accreditation of their university or college.
- IEP accreditation through national or specialized agencies and indirectly through regional accreditation would **add to the national security**. It would help ensure:
  - ⇒ that programs were educationally legitimate, and
  - ⇒ that programs adhered to immigration regulations, such as carefully monitoring student attendance and ensuring student compliance with the terms of their visas.
- IEP accreditation would strengthen **American competitiveness** with respect to other English speaking countries. It would do so by:
  - ⇒ requiring that programs meet standards of educational quality, thus providing a positive learning experience for participants;
  - ⇒ providing on-going oversight of and requiring program accountability for continuing to meet standards; and
  - ⇒ bringing the U.S. into line with the United Kingdom, which requires accreditation for language programs, and with Canada, which is also considering such a requirement.
- An IEP accreditation requirement is supported by:
  - ⇒ The Consortium of University and College Intensive English Programs
  - ⇒ The Alliance for International Education and Cultural Exchanges
  - ⇒ Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)