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119TH CONGRESS
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H. RES. 219

Recognizing the contributions of the Charles B. Rangel Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Graduate Fellowship Program to advance America's national security, development, and diplomacy efforts.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 11, 2025

Mr. MEEKS (for himself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Ms. MENG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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RESOLUTION

Recognizing the contributions of the Charles B. Rangel Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Graduate Fellowship Program to advance America's national security, development, and diplomacy efforts.

Whereas the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and other foreign affairs agencies require a workforce with diverse talents, skills, and experiences to effectively protect United States citizens abroad, expand commercial opportunities

for United States businesses, and administer United States foreign policy;

Whereas Congress has required in statute and the Department of State and USAID have committed to recruit, hire, and retain a workforce on the basis of merit principles that reflects the diverse backgrounds of the American people they represent abroad;

Whereas, in 1990, Congress amended the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (Public Law 84–885) to authorize the Secretary of State to make grants to post-secondary educational institutions or students to increase knowledge of and interest in employment with the Foreign Service, with a special focus on minority students, broadening recruitment and retention efforts in order to ensure equal opportunity and draw on the strength of all United States citizens;

Whereas, pursuant to these authorities, the Department of State launched the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship, the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program, and the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship in 1992, 2002, and 2023, respectively;

Whereas these programs increase the inclusion of Pell-eligible and first-generation college graduates in the Foreign Service, with a majority of current fellows having been Pell grant recipients;

Whereas the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program and the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program—the Department of State's flagship initiatives to recruit top-tier talent—are merit-based, need-based, and highly competitive, with an annual acceptance rate under 5 percent;

Whereas all fellows pass the same rigorous selection, hiring, and security clearance process as all other members of the Foreign Service;

Whereas research shows that developing a workforce representing all of America significantly contributes to better national security outcomes by providing a wider range of perspectives, experiences, and cultural understanding, enabling more effective threat identification, innovative solutions, and stronger diplomatic engagement across the globe;

Whereas international affairs fellowships that promote the employment of candidates who belong to historically excluded groups and with a financial need, including the Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program, the William D. Clarke, Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and the Donald M. Payne International Development Fellowship Program, represent smart investments vital for building a strong, merit-based, capable, and diverse national security workforce;

Whereas Congress, on a bipartisan basis, has authorized each of these fellowship programs recognizing their importance in expanding merit- and need-based recruitment from a wide geographic and economically diverse talent pool, including from all 50 States and more than 500 institutions of higher education;

Whereas Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, other minority-serving institutions and other institutions of higher education, including community colleges and trade schools, serve populations historically excluded from the Department of State or

USAID and prepare the next generation of international affairs professionals with the core skills necessary to meet the United States global diplomatic and development imperatives; and

Whereas the Secretary of State and Administrator of USAID are required by law to consult with Congress before taking steps to modify these programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the importance of efforts to recruit, hire, and retain employees from the broadest talent pool for United States foreign affairs agencies in order for the United States to be globally competitive and ensure that our diplomatic and development agencies remain the best in the world;

(2) reaffirms that the Charles B. Rangel Graduate Fellowship Program, Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship Program, William D. Clarke Sr. Diplomatic Security Fellowship, and Donald M. Payne International Development Graduate Fellowship Program are statutorily mandated programs enacted into law by Congress on a bipartisan basis to address recognized issues of exclusion for women and racial and ethnic minority groups as well as economically disadvantaged and rural populations plaguing the Department of State and

United States Agency for International Development for decades;

(3) underscores the importance of international affairs fellowships and similar career entry programs to United States national security and foreign policy; and

(4) recognizes the substantial United States taxpayer investment in ensuring the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development can recruit top talent from across the country, provide them with critical training, and strengthen America's development and diplomatic capabilities—efforts that are undermined by attempts to dismantle these programs, wasting taxpayer resources and weakening national security.

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