

The Texas Foreign Language Association

Phyllis B. Thompson, Ph.D., Director, Public Outreach and Advocacy, TFLA
Houston Baptist University, 7502 Fondren, Houston, TX 77074 Cell: 281 702 2293
PH 281 649 3000 X2277 FAX 281 649 3012 Email: pthompson@hbu.edu

The mission of the TFLA is to advance the study of languages other than English and their literatures and cultures through dissemination and publication of information and data; recognition of excellence in study and teaching; encouragement of program development; promotion of state organizations; and cooperation with regional, national, and international organizations also dedicated to the advancement of the study of languages other than English.

Petition to the Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison and the Honorable John Cornyn,

NSLI and FLAP. On January 5th, in a speech at the Department of State, President Bush launched National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), a plan to further strengthen national security and prosperity in the 21st century through education, especially in developing foreign language skills. **We urge that the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP), now included as part of NSLI, be funded and that the critical needs language component be a competitive priority, but not an absolute priority.**

We suggest that FLAP funding should not be limited solely to a small list (Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, Farsi) of critical languages. This would exclude other critical languages such as Vietnamese and African languages as well as numerous other innovative language programs. Also, there is a limited number of qualified teachers in the critical languages.

FLAP has provided help to fund innovative high-quality foreign language programs in districts that might not otherwise be able to provide them. Texas districts which have recently received funding through the FLAP program are Dallas ISD (Japanese & Russian), Spring Branch (Houston) ISD (Spanish), Houston ISD (Chinese, Japanese), Midland ISD (elementary school languages), and Katy ISD (Japanese, Spanish).

The NSLI will have three primary goals:

1. Expand the number of Americans mastering critical need languages.
2. Increase the number of advanced-level speakers of foreign languages, with an emphasis on critical needs languages.
3. Increase the number of foreign language teachers and the resources for them.

Signed:

Name:

Address:

City, State, and Zip

E-mail