



Center for Youth & Community Leadership in Education (CYCLE)

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May 15, 2025

To: Chairman Marvin L. Abney and the Rhode Island House Finance Committee

Subject: Testimony in Support of H5744 & H5982

Dear Chairman Abney and the Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Keith Catone, and I am writing on behalf of the Center for Youth & Community Leadership in Education (CYCLE) in **strong support** of H5744 and H5982. Together, these pieces of legislation would address important needs in communities across Rhode Island.

CYCLE works with community partners, youth, and educators across the state. Whether working in Providence and Central Falls, or Newport and Middletown, we have experienced the importance of supporting multilingual learners and promoting multilingualism in the broader population. We are more effective partners due to our multilingual staff at CYCLE and language diversity is something we should be investing in and celebrating in Rhode Island.

H5744 would strengthen our state's teacher corps to support post-secondary students and practicing teachers to gain certification in areas of ESL, dual language, bilingual, and world language instruction. Districts often have trouble finding certified educators in these areas of need and supporting more educators to focus on these areas would be greatly beneficial to our urban and urban ring communities.

H5982 will incentivize districts to develop research-based dual language programs that have been proven to lead to stronger academic outcomes for all students, multilingual learners and English-dominant student alike.

We urge the House Finance Committee **support and pass both H5744 and H5982.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith Catone". The signature is stylized with a large, bold "K" and "C".

Keith Catone, Ed.D.

Executive Director

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