

Dear House Finance Committee,

My name is Judith Dixon, I am writing in support of the Support and Access to Bilingual Education Act, House Bill 7389.

I am a Speech and Language Pathologist of 27 years. I work with many multi-language learners (MLLs). Three years ago, I started taking Spanish classes because I felt that I could no longer be a SLP in this state without a working knowledge of Spanish. I now have an intermediate level of Spanish, which has greatly enhanced my work with my students. I tell this story not to brag but to highlight how important it is for educators in the state to gain skills to work with MLLs. I was able to self fund my classes. However, other educators may not have these resources. That is why it is important to pass this bill to help educators to gain skills/competence to work with MLLs.

Please prioritize MLLs and support this bill. Research shows that learning more than one language helps enhance students' cognitive and social skills. Dual language programs can benefit not just MLLs but also monolingual students. Providing more pathways to help educators gain skills/ certifications and secure jobs, not only helps our multi-language learners but also our economy.

Sincerely,

Judith Dixon, M.S. CCC-SLP

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Judith Dixon (she/her)