



ILSR

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Dear Chair and Committee Members:

I'm Gilak Alvarez and I am writing in support of Senate Bill No. S2555. I am a community member from Woonsocket RI.

I respectfully urge the Committee to support the Support and Access to Bilingual Education (SABE) Act. This legislation is essential to expanding equitable access to high – quality bilingual education and advancing support for multilingual learners throughout Rhode Island. It will also strengthen the educator pipeline and help ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed in inclusive, culturally responsive classrooms.

This bill matters because:

- **Bilingual programs help all students succeed.** Research shows that dual language programs lead to stronger academic outcomes—not just for multilingual learners, but for English-dominant students too. These programs close achievement gaps and promote high-level learning in two languages.
- **Multilingualism is key to Rhode Island's future workforce.** Over 90% of employers seek workers with language skills. Investing in bilingual education prepares students for real-world careers, attracts businesses, and strengthens the state's economy.
- **It addresses teacher shortages.** The majority of multilingual learners in RI are concentrated in under-resourced districts. This bill helps expand programs in those communities while also building a pipeline of qualified bilingual educators by removing barriers to certification.

Please support this bill and invest in the success of our multilingual students.

Sincerely,

Gilak Alvarez
Program Director
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