

May 18, 2026

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Lindsay Paiva, I use she/her pronouns, and I am writing today in support of bill S2555. I am the Providence Teachers Union President-Elect, a Providence community member and resident, community organizer, and a third grade teacher of multilingual learners in Providence Public Schools.

I have been a teacher of multilingual learners for the past 13 years, and I love my job primarily because of the ways it allows me to uplift and celebrate multilingualism. I teach in an ESL setting, but I work hard to create a classroom environment that encourages translanguaging, celebrates families and students' countries of origin, and centers student voice. As a person who grew up monolingual and became multilingual as an adult, I have experienced firsthand the ways that knowing multiple languages has changed my life for the better.

In my childhood, I was already taught to be empathetic and to embrace connection with other people, but being multilingual has allowed me to do this at a much deeper level. It has made me a more competitive candidate in the job market, supported me in my work in schools with multilingual families, allowed me to travel and engage in incredible cultural experiences, and opened up my mind to different ways of learning and knowing.

One of the hardest things about my job as an ESL teacher is watching my students lose their home language skills and not have the opportunity to develop academic abilities and literacy in their native languages. I would love to see more bilingual programs throughout our district and the state to best serve our students and families and to preserve the diversity of language in our communities.

This bill matters because:

- We need multilingual workers in our state and beyond. Bilingual education is what students need to be competent global citizens with a wide range of employment opportunities. Over 90% of employers seek workers with language skills, and we can provide those by prioritizing bilingual education in K-12 settings.
- Teacher shortages are significant, especially in under-resourced districts like Providence. This bill will help to expand programming and develop the pipeline we need while removing unnecessary barriers to getting qualified folks in the classroom as soon as possible to serve as many students as we can.
- All students benefit when we have bilingual programs. These programs consistently produce stronger academic outcomes and provide opportunities for students to develop strong vocabulary and skills in both languages.

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

Sincerely,

Lindsay Paiva