

Senator Carol Liu, Chairperson
Senate Education Committee
State Capitol, 5097
Sacramento CA 95814

RE: SB 1174 (Lara) English Language Education, Introduced Feb 20, 2014
Position: Support

Dear Senator Liu,

I am writing in full support of SB 1174 (Lara) English Language Education, Introduced 20, 2014.

SB 1174 (Lara) does the following: 1) repeals Proposition 227, 2) states this repeal becomes effective only when submitted to and approved by the voters and 3) requires the Secretary of State to submit Section 1 for approval by the voters at a statewide election.

The intent of the bill is to: 1) restore flexibility to schools and school districts regarding educational programs for students – specifically English Learners, 2) move California forward in promoting multilingualism and biliteracy; 3) provide language skills to our students necessary for meaningful participation in the 21st Century; and 4) restore parent choice to parents of English Learners.

Proposition 227 has created a bureaucracy and immense paperwork for schools. School districts are hampered in offering language programs they determine appropriate for their students due to the restrictions created around the parent waiver requirement, the 30 day placement of ELs in mainstream English classrooms, the 20 student per grade level threshold for programs leading to biliteracy and the parent waiver requirements. Parents of English Learners **have been denied** choice to select the educational program for their children unlike other parents who can choose, without any restrictions or required paperwork or approval of the school administrators, educational programs for their children whether it be home schooling or charter school instruction. Additionally, parents of English speaking children placed in dual language programs are not required to file parent waivers in contrast to parents of ELs who must obtain approval first and then are required to submit waivers every year thereafter. Unequal treatment of parents, many of whom have the least power to advocate on behalf of their children, are foreclosed in deciding the educational program best for their child.

Instructional programs promoting the study of languages and cultures play a key role in closing the achievement gap for traditionally underserved students and provide better academic and social outcomes for all students. Benefits of second language learning are many including: higher levels of achievement on standardized tests, increased academic achievement in other subjects, enhanced flexibility in thinking and problem solving, improved reasoning and multi-tasking skills. Knowing multiple languages opens additional career paths to employment and social opportunities and extends possibilities for employment to less traditional and more global careers (such as diplomats and foreign policy experts).

It is essential that our children be given all the tools necessary, including learning other languages, in addition to English, in the least restrictive environment as possible. It is for all of these reasons that I **support SB 1174 (Lara) and request your yes vote on SB 1174 (Lara).**

Sincerely,

Name

Address