

1 February 2018

The Honorable Jim Langevin
United States House of Representatives
2077 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Langevin,

On behalf of TESOL International Association (TESOL), a professional association representing more than 12,000 English language educators, I am writing to express our strong support for the recently introduced Reaching English Learners Act. This important piece of legislation will help provide much-needed support to institutions of higher education across the United States who have the important task of preparing the next generation of English language educators.

With a growing population of more than 5 million English learners in U.S. schools, and a critical shortage of qualified English language teachers, this bill will go a long way in helping to improve the readiness of future teachers, as well as the educational experiences of some of our most vulnerable students. The high school graduation rate for English learners continues to lag too far behind that of native English speakers, and we must work to close this gap. The demand for qualified English language educators is not only higher than ever before, but also extends beyond the classroom and into local communities, which depend on young English learners to become knowledgeable and productive members of society. Action by Congress is sorely needed, and we applaud your efforts in introducing this bill.

Throughout our history, TESOL has been committed to supporting policies that address the need for increased teacher preparation funding, strong partnerships between institutions of higher education and local education agencies, and enhanced training for future English language teachers to meet the complex social and emotional needs of their students. As a result of the numerous obstacles that too often challenge the success of English learners, it is more critical than ever that this legislation is passed.

Thank you for introducing such valuable legislation that will help improve the preparation of English language teachers and the outcomes for English learners across the United States. TESOL looks forward to working closely with you and all members of Congress who support English language teachers and learners across the United States.

Sincerely,



Christopher Powers
Executive Director