

Testimony in support of SCR 115 URGING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO EXPAND WORLD LANGUAGE LEARNING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS BASED ON FUTURE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF THE STATE AND NATION:

Chair Kidani and Committee Members,

I'm Debbie Anderson, a teacher of linguistically diverse students on the Big Island at Waiakea Intermediate School. As a member of the NEA EL Cadre, I'm a staunch supporter of language learners and the beneficial skills of multiple language development. We urge you to pass SCR 115 in support of adding world language options in our ever increase diverse world.

The purpose of education is to develop human resources to their fullest potential. Greater linguistic diversity is an asset to human communication, which is one reason why it is retained by many colleges as a university entrance requirement.

The Hawaii State DOE's World Language workshops are combined often with Fine Arts, as the State has allotted only ONE Resource person in charge of all fine arts PLUS world languages. World languages was being considered as possibly 'mandatory for every school K-12 within a few years' to being completely off the table. Particularly at the elementary school age during which linguistic capabilities are at their highest, this egregious lack of opportunity needs to be rectified.

Resources on Early Language Learning are available readily from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), Asia Society, and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL):

- [Cognitive Benefits of Language Learning](#) (ACTFL)
- [Characteristics of Effective Elementary School Foreign \[World\] Language Programs](#) (ACTFL)
- [Research in Support of Elementary Foreign \[World\] Language Learning](#) (ACTFL)
- [Your Brain on Languages](#) (Asia Society)
- [The Benefits of Early Language Learning](#) (CAL)

I can attest following a sabbatical to earn a CAL linguistics degree, that I have benefited personally from learning the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Other states have recognized the benefit directly of providing experiences in a world language other than English (<http://www.k12.wa.us/worldlanguages/WorldLanguageExperiences.aspx>).

We are asking you as our Legislative representatives to lead our appointed Board of Education into a better future. Please support SCR 115! Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Debbie Anderson, M.Ed., M.L.I.S., NBCT