

## NEWS

For Immediate Release

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### TESOL Supports Reaching English Learners Act in U.S. Congress

Alexandria, VA (28 February 2019) – [TESOL International Association](#), the trusted global authority for knowledge and expertise in English language teaching, is proud to affirm its support of the bipartisan [Reaching English Learners Act](#) (H.R. 1153, S. 545). Amending the Higher Education Act, this bill establishes a competitive grant program for institutions of higher education to partner with high-need school districts to develop teacher preparation programs to help close the achievement gap experienced by English learners. The legislation ensures teacher candidates are properly prepared to handle the unique needs of English Learners, regardless of ability. Furthermore, it encourages future teachers of English learners to incorporate family and community engagement into their curricula and ensures they undergo high-quality clinical experiences as part of their training.

“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 bipartisan legislation 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,” said Christopher Powers, Executive Director of TESOL International Association.

First introduced in the U.S. House of Representative by Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI), the bill is co-sponsored by Rep. Will Hurd (R-TX), Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY), Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Rep. Jimmy Gomez (D-CA). In the U.S. Senate, a companion bill was introduced by Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and is co-sponsored by Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX).

Addressing the bill’s significance and impact on English learners and teachers, Rep. Langevin explained “As the number of English learners continues to increase across the nation, this bill will provide crucial resources to ensure the teachers of tomorrow are equipped with the necessary skills to help them succeed academically. English learners have enormous potential, and I am excited to work with leaders like Senator Cortez Masto and Congressmen Espaillat and Hurd to ensure these students can thrive.”

TESOL looks forward to continuing its advocacy for the passage of the Reaching English Learners Act and working closely with members of Congress to support English learners and teachers.

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### ***About TESOL International Association***

TESOL International Association is the trusted global authority for knowledge and expertise in English language teaching. A professional community of more than 10,000 educators representing over 150 countries, TESOL fosters the exchange of ideas to advance the expertise of those teaching English while supporting equity, diversity, and multilingualism. For over 50 years, TESOL has strived to advance its mission with programs, publications, and services to expand its global presence and connectivity throughout the field, share its knowledge and expertise, and amplify its voice through advocacy. For more information, please visit [www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org).

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