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For Immediate Release

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**Representative Kane Joins House Colleagues to Pass
“An Act for Language Opportunity for Our Kids”**

Provides school districts across the Commonwealth with flexibility regarding English learner programs

(BOSTON) – Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury) joined her colleagues in the House of Representatives to pass legislation that will enable districts to implement alternative English language learner (ELL) programs. Understanding that Massachusetts’ ELL population is incredibly diverse, the proposed change will allow for more flexibility so that districts can tailor programs to better meet the specific needs of their ELL population.

English learners are the fastest growing student population in Massachusetts. While academic achievement has improved for other minority populations, significant achievement gaps persist for ELL students. This legislation seeks to remedy that discrepancy.

“This legislation affords school districts, which best understand the needs of their students, the ability to propose and provide ELL programs” said Representative Kane. “School districts and communities across the Commonwealth can utilize this greater flexibility to proactively ensure their students continue to receive a world-class public education and become successful, productive residents of Massachusetts”.

“This bill, at its core, is about allowing districts to exercise the flexibility in programming necessary to best serve their English learner populations – a student group that is not only increasing in numbers but is also very dynamic with a wide range of needs,” said Representative Peisch (D-Wellesley), Chair of the Joint Committee on Education.

To ensure accountability and effectiveness, the legislation establishes a 17-person commission to review the collection and dissemination of ELL data and make recommendations on improvements. It also enhances existing reporting requirements to ensure ELL students are making academic progress as a result of classroom programming.

In addition, this legislation further supports parental involvement for ELL families, requiring the establishment of English Learner Parent Advisory Councils in districts that serve more than 100 ELL students or in which English learners comprise more than five percent of the student

population (whichever is fewer). It also expands the current waiver process to allow a school, on the recommendation of a teacher or guidance counselor, to obtain the waiver for the individual student.

The bill now goes to the Senate.

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