

June 27, 2023

The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil
Chair, Senate Human Services Committee
1020 N Street, Room 521
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 393 (Rivas)—Support

Dear Chair Alvarado-Gil:

UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza) supports AB 393 (Rivas), as amended June 21, 2023. AB 393 would expand asset-based dual language learner (DLL) identification to general child care (CCTR) and migrant child care (CMIG) programs. This bill builds on landmark legislation which, for the first time in the nation, improved and standardized the identification of DLLs to better resource and support them. This is a critical next step as it will build a foundation for the cradle-to-career data system that builds on DLLs' linguistic skills and needs.

UnidosUS is the nation's largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization and has built a stronger country by creating opportunities for Latinos for more than 50 years. Through its unique combination of expert research, advocacy, programs, and an Affiliate Network of nearly 300 community-based organizations across the United States and Puerto Rico, UnidosUS simultaneously challenges the social, economic, and political barriers at the national and local levels. The UnidosUS California-based Affiliates include 67 community-based organizations that invest more than \$1.8 billion and employ more than 15,000 staff to provide direct services to approximately 1.8 million Californians annually. UnidosUS is headquartered in Washington, DC, and has an office in Los Angeles and staff in Sacramento. Through partnerships, community investments, and state research and advocacy on housing, health, and education, UnidosUS advances opportunities for the more than 15 million Latinos who call California home.

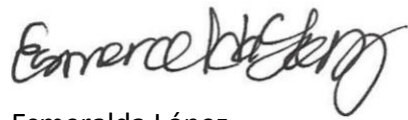
Specifically, AB 393 requires the Department of Social Services to establish a standardized process for identifying DLLs enrolled in CCTR or CMIG programs. It also requires contractors to report essential information about them; this information will help child care providers support DLLs in developing their home language and English. In addition, it will help inform state resource allocation decisions that could be leveraged to support the long-term success of DLLs by developing the early linguistic assets that benefit them and the state as a whole.

AB 393 builds upon AB 1363 by expanding asset-based dual language learner identification to CCTR and CMIG programs. DLL students make up a significant portion of California students; nearly 60% of the young child population (0–5) in California are classified as DLL, of which 1.1 million (or 66%) are Spanish speakers.¹ Additionally, almost 20% of students in California are English learners (ELs). Bilingualism has been shown to aid in closing achievement gaps, improving cognitive skills, and increasing one's competitiveness in the workforce. This legislation will help improve outcomes for

all students at all levels by preparing them with the necessary skills at an early age to succeed in their academic and professional lives.

UnidosUS is pleased to support AB 393, as it proposes to expand the asset-based support systems for dual language learners. If you have any questions regarding our support, please contact Viviana Martin, Policy Strategist at vmartin@unidosus.org.

Sincerely,



Esmeralda López
California State Director
UnidosUS

cc: Assemblywoman Luz Rivas

¹ Ivana Tú Nhi Giang and Maki Park, *California's Dual Language Learners: Key Characteristics and Considerations for Early Childhood* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, October 2022), https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/mpi-nciip_dll-fact-sheet2022_ca-final.pdf (accessed June 2023).