

**Testimony to the Education Committee
In Support of HB 5465, An Act Authorizing The Establishment Of A Dual
Language Magnet School And A Stem Magnet School.
March 2, 2016**

Senator Gayle S. Slossberg, Representative Andrew M. Fleischmann and Members of the Education Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit Testimony in support of HB 5465.

My Name is Mrs. Luz Osuba and I'm the President of the Windham Board of Education.

Our dual language program has been in existence since 1980. The "Companeros" program, the district's dual language program, is currently being offered to preschool through eighth grade students. Participants in this program attend different schools throughout our district. The goal of this legislation is to house the program in only one location which would expand its availability to many more families in our community. Since the start of this program we have had great success; these kids not only have the opportunity to learn two languages but also make great strides on their testing benchmarks and now compete equally or exceed their peers.

The Stem Magnet High School would offer a bridge between our existing K – 8 Magnet School. It would offer additional opportunities to our students, families, and surrounding communities. Due to the declining enrollment that we and other school districts are facing, this program would assist in the collaboration of providing additional choices to our students. Additionally, Northeast Connecticut has been overlooked in many ways. It is lacking in opportunities to offer the Stem Curriculum in areas of need during a time when stem skills are essential for careers in fields that are of high demand. This would offer additional opportunities for our students and Connecticut's workforce. We urge your support of this legislation for the sake of our children.

Thank you for your time.

