

**SENATE . . . . . No. 2289**

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court**  
**(2015-2016)**  
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SENATE, Thursday, May 12, 2016

The committee on the Education to whom was referred the petitions (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 336) of Karen E. Spilka, Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr., Lori A. Ehrlich, Joan B. Lovely and other members of the General Court for legislation to promote global trade and economic development through dual language and bi-literacy and (accompanied by bill, House, No. 422) of Kay Khan and others relative to establishing a foreign language education seal of biliteracy for students,- reports the accompanying bill (Senate, No. 2289).

For the committee,  
Sonia Chang-Diaz

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court  
(2015-2016)**  
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An Act to promote global trade and economic development through bi-literacy.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1           SECTION 1. For purposes of this article, ‘foreign language’ means a language other than  
2 English, and includes American Sign Language.

3           SECTION 2. Chapter 69 of the General Laws as appearing in the 2014 Official Edition is  
4 hereby amended by adding after Section 1P a new section:

5           Section 1Q. The commissioner shall develop criteria and guidelines for a State Seal of  
6 Biliteracy to be awarded by school districts to recognize high school graduates who have met  
7 academic benchmarks, to be determined by the department, in one or more languages in addition  
8 to English.

9           The purposes of the State Seal of Biliteracy are as follows: (1) To encourage students to  
10 study languages; (2) To certify attainment of biliteracy; (3) To provide employers with a method  
11 of identifying people with language and biliteracy skills; (4) To provide universities with a  
12 method to recognize and give academic credit to applicants seeking admission; (5) To prepare  
13 pupils with 21st century skills; (6) To recognize and promote foreign language instruction and

14 native and heritage language instruction in public schools; (7) To strengthen intergroup  
15 relationships, affirm the value in diversity, and honor the multiple cultures and languages of the  
16 Commonwealth.

17         The department shall be responsible for developing and appropriate insignia to be affixed  
18 to the diploma or transcript of the student indicating that the student has been awarded a State  
19 Seal of Biliteracy and making said insignia available to school districts for the preparation of  
20 diplomas. In developing the guidelines for the Seal of Biliteracy, the department shall consult  
21 with the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association.

22         A school district that participates in the program under this section shall maintain  
23 appropriate records in order to identify pupils who have earned a State Seal of Biliteracy and  
24 affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript of each pupil who earns a State Seal of  
25 Biliteracy. State Seals of Biliteracy shall also be available electronically.