

March 19, 2010

Governor Gregoire  
Office of the Governor  
Olympia, WA

Dear Governor Gregoire,

On behalf of OneAmerica and immigrants across the state of Washington, I write to urge you to sign HB3026, a bill that will send the powerful message that discrimination is not tolerated in Washington public schools.

Since its inception, OneAmerica has fought to eradicate discrimination from all areas of life. This bill is an excellent step in that direction and gives our state the tools to fight discrimination in our public school by providing the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) with the authority to enforce a range of discrimination laws, including those based on race, religion and national origin. Currently, OSPI only has the authority to enforce laws against discrimination based on sex.

Fighting intolerance in our schools is very important to immigrant parents across the state whose children often face discrimination on many levels, especially when we know from the Achievement Gap committee that discrimination has a detrimental impact on academic achievement and students' ability to learn. Passage of HB3026 will help create a more level playing field for immigrant children by creating more welcoming environments in which they can learn.

While opponents have stressed concerns over the cost of the legislation on schools and their administration, I believe that debate in both chambers of the legislature have demonstrated that these concerns, while genuine, do not hold. HB3026 provides additional avenues for dispute resolution other than lawsuits and does not impose any new mandates on our school districts.

For the reasons outlined above, we urge your support of this important legislation in its current form. Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts on behalf of our state and all of its residents.

Sincerely,



Pramila Jayapal  
Executive Director, OneAmerica

MISSION  
OneAmerica  
advances the  
fundamental  
principles of  
democracy and  
justice at the  
local, state and  
national levels  
by building  
power within  
immigrant  
communities  
in collaboration  
with key allies.