

April 29, 2025

Senator Mike Weissman, Chair  
Senator Tom Sullivan, Vice Chair  
Colorado Senate State, Veterans, & Military Affairs Committee

*RE: Small Business Majority's support for HB25-1153*

My name is Hunter Nelson and I'm the Colorado Director for Small Business Majority, a small business organization with a mission to empower America's diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. I'm pleased to provide testimony in support of HB25-1153, legislation that would require the department of personnel, in collaboration with the Office of New Americans, to conduct or contract to conduct a statewide language access assessment. The assessment covers all principal departments except the department of state, the department of the treasury, and the department of law.

Around [900,000](#) Coloradans speak a language other than English at home. While this is a largely Spanish speaking population, the prevalence of other languages like Mandarin, Cantonese, Amharic and Vietnamese is also growing. The population of Coloradans with 'limited English proficiency' is growing and includes individuals who were born in Colorado, immigrants who are naturalized citizens, and noncitizens with a variety of immigration statuses. Regardless of their language backgrounds, many Coloradans need to interface with state agencies.

This includes startup and established business owners who are seeking to start and grow their business while complying with state laws. For instance, entrepreneurs need to interface with the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) for occupational licensing, the Office of Economic Development & International Trade (OEDIT) for programs related to business support and accessing capital and the Colorado Department of Labor & Employment (CDLE) for workforce needs and support. Interacting with these state agencies is already complicated for many small business owners, and the language barrier for non-English speaking entrepreneurs only exacerbates any difficulties.

This legislation would allow our state agencies to best determine how they can meet the diverse language needs of all Coloradans and implement best practices to increase accessibility. Immigrants account for [13%](#) of Colorado's entrepreneurs and even though many immigrants speak English, many do not. It's important that we support them as they interact with different state agencies to navigate their business operations. We urge you to pass HB25-1153 so that all entrepreneurs, regardless of their native language, can more easily start and grow their small businesses as they contribute to our economy.

Sincerely,

Hunter Nelson  
Colorado Director  
Small Business Majority