

Written by Michael Shank  
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**“To improve both our nation’s ability to provide language-appropriate intelligence and security, and America’s capacity to effectively and efficiently deliver government services,” said Rep Honda, “we must be able to retain a federal workforce that is capable of communicating with an increasingly diverse constituency, both within our borders and without.□ My legislation helps us recruit and retain a bi- and multi-lingual skilled federal workforce, while also improving services for persons with Limited English Proficiency who require translation while conducting business with the federal government.”**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over 19% of the U.S. population, or 55 million people, speak a language other than English at home. The native-born population with Limited English Proficiency nearly doubled between 2000 and 2005.

**“I understand the difficulties that immigrants face communicating in English while they acquire fluency,” said Honda. “The bill addresses these challenges by promoting the use of bilingual skills throughout the Federal workforce in order to better serve the public and accomplish the mission of Federal agencies.”**

Currently, there is no standard across federal agencies to compensate workers who make substantial use of their bilingual skills in the workplace, and no incentive for current or potential Federal employees to acquire bilingual skills.

**“By introducing this Bill,” continued Honda, “I am improving the incentives for individuals with multi-lingual skills to apply and stay in Federal Government positions, where they can serve the increasing number of Americans who do not have yet English language proficiency.”**