

March 19th, 2025

To: House Education Committee

From: Lupita Aguilar

RE: House Bill 2007: Relating to summer learning; declaring an emergency.

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chair McIntire, Vice-Chair Dobson, and Members of the House Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Lupita Aguilar, and I am writing to you with a deep sense of urgency and concern regarding HB 2007. This bill threatens the funding and accessibility of critical after-school and summer learning programs that support our most vulnerable youth — programs that have meant the world to so many of us, including myself.

I am a youth advocate at Adelante Mujeres, but before that, I was a "chica" — a young girl who, through these programs, found her voice, her confidence, and her future. The summer programs I participated in taught me science, technology, art, and most importantly, they connected me to my culture. It was through these experiences that I was able to dream bigger, learn more, and realize that I could achieve anything I set my mind to.

Today, I am proud to be a Youth Advocate, guiding and mentoring the next generation of chicas, and I know how transformative these programs are for our girls. But if HB 2007 passes, these opportunities will no longer be available to the young girls who need them most. We will be taking away their chance to discover who they can become, to find their strengths, and to reach for a brighter future. I cannot stress enough how deeply this will impact them, their families, and our communities.

BIPOC communities, like mine, are already underrepresented and often left behind. Passing HB 2007 would only further marginalize us, pushing our youth aside and robbing them of the tools they need to succeed. These programs are lifelines — they are not just about education; they are about building hope, confidence, and dreams.

I ask you to stand with us, to stand with our future, and to oppose HB 2007. Our girls deserve a chance to lead, to grow, and to thrive, and we cannot let this bill take that away.

Thank you for your time, and for listening to the voices of those who are most impacted by this decision. We are counting on your support to make sure our children have the opportunities they deserve.

With gratitude,

Lupita Aguilar

Youth Advocate, Adelante Mujeres