

# Whereas

*Whereas*, our community and communities across America are welcoming many new neighbors, friends, employees and citizens from countries and cultures throughout the world—people for whom English is not their native language; and

*Whereas*, Americans have growing social, cultural and economic ties to the global community, offering great opportunities but presenting new challenges as we seek to communicate with and understand our international partners from different language and culture backgrounds; and

*Whereas*, studying other languages has been shown to contribute to increased cognitive skills, better academic performance and a greater understanding of others, while also providing long-life learning opportunities for people beyond school age; and

*Whereas*, proficiency in other languages enhances Americans career opportunities and provides employers with a workforce with the necessary skills for an international marketplace; and

*Whereas*, foreign language educators are working cooperatively to promote the benefits of language learning to students, parents, business, industry, health and social services leaders, and policy makers throughout the nation; and

*Whereas*, language education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century includes a commitment to the study of long sequences of world languages beginning in the early grades to enable students to develop the levels of proficiency needed to effectively communicate with people from other cultures whether at home or abroad; and

*Whereas*, language educators are urging the public to recognize the value of delivering better education to our students, of expanding the cultural and literary horizons of adult learners, and of strengthening America's position and security around the world;

*Now, therefore*, I, Tom Potter, Mayor of the City of Portland, Oregon, the "City of Roses," do hereby proclaim 2005 as

## *The Year of Languages*

in Portland and urge citizens to support and participate in these programs to gain proficiency not only in English, but in other languages as well.

*Tom Potter*

