

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 208—ASSEMBLYMEN STEWART, HANSEN;
ELLISON, GOEDHART, GOICOECHEA, GRADY, HAMBRICK,
HAMMOND, HARDY, HICKEY, KIRNER, LIVERMORE,
MCARTHUR, SHERWOOD AND WOODBURY

FEBRUARY 24, 2011

JOINT SPONSOR: SENATOR HARDY

Referred to Committee on Government Affairs

SUMMARY—Designates English as the official language of the
State of Nevada. (BDR 19-231)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: No.

~

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to governmental administration; pledging the
support of the Legislature to ensure that English is
preserved as the common language of this State;
designating English as the official language of the State of
Nevada; requiring that certain proceedings and records of
this State be in English; and providing other matters
properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

In this bill the Nevada Legislature: (1) pledges to refrain from enacting certain
laws and to take all steps necessary to ensure that English remains the common
language of the State; (2) encourages other state officials to take similar actions; (3)
recognizes the importance of English in unifying the United States; (4) supports
English educational programs; and (5) encourages Nevada residents to master
English and take advantage of all educational opportunities.

This bill also designates English as the official language of the State of Nevada
and requires, with limited exceptions, that all official proceedings of the State be
conducted in English and that all official records of the State be prepared, stored
and made available in English.



* A B 2 0 8 *

WHEREAS, English is the common language of the people of the United States of America and the State of Nevada and should be preserved, protected and strengthened; and

WHEREAS, English is the most widely used language in the industries of finance, trade, technology, diplomacy and entertainment, and is the living library of the last 100 years of scientific and technological advances; and

WHEREAS, There are more persons in the world who speak English as a second language than there are native speakers of English, and the numerous schools that teach English around the world demonstrate that English is soon to become the prevalent language used throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, It is universally accepted that a common language promotes unity and fosters better communication; and

WHEREAS, Knowledge of the different languages existing in today's world enhances competitiveness and growth in world trade and promotes economic expansion; and

WHEREAS, A skilled labor force is crucial to the competitiveness of the State of Nevada in today's national and global economy, and a knowledge of both English and foreign languages enhances communication and diplomatic efforts by fostering greater communication and understanding between nations and promotes a greater understanding between different ethnic and racial groups within the United States; now, therefore,

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 235 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. The Legislature hereby:

(a) Pledges that it:

(1) Will not enact any law which diminishes or ignores the role of English as the common language of this State; and

(2) Will take all steps necessary to ensure that English is preserved and enhanced as the common language of this State.

(b) Encourages other state officials to take appropriate steps to ensure that English is preserved and enhanced as the common language of this State.

(c) Recognizes:

(1) The importance of English as the unifying language of the United States and the importance of speaking English fluently to succeed in American society;



(2) That a command of English is critical to the success and productivity of the children of this State and should be encouraged at all ages; and

(3) That a skilled labor force is crucial to this State's competitiveness in the global economy and the ability to speak one or more languages in addition to English is a significant skill.

(d) Supports educational programs designed to teach English as well as other languages.

(e) Encourages the residents of this State:

(1) To master English as well as other languages; and

(2) To take advantage of all educational opportunities to realize their full potential in the mastery of English as well as other languages.

2. English is hereby designated as the official language of the State of Nevada.

3. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 4:

(a) All official proceedings of this State must be conducted in the English language.

(b) All official records of this State must be prepared, stored and made available in the English language.

4. The provisions of subsection 3 do not apply to:

(a) State employees when conducting official state business orally.

(b) Classes that teach students a language other than English.

(c) Classes that teach students whose proficiency in the English language is limited.

(d) Situations in which the exclusive use of the English language would interfere with the functions and requirements of the judicial system of this State.

(e) Situations in which the exclusive use of the English language would interfere with public health or safety, or the provision of emergency services.

(f) The promotion of international trade or tourism by an officer, employee or agent of this State.

5. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other specific statute:

(a) To the extent not inconsistent with federal law, this State and its political subdivisions do not have any duty to provide copies of statutes, regulations, reports, forms or other documents in a language other than English.

(b) Neither this State nor an officer, employee or agent of this State is civilly or criminally liable for an act or omission committed to carry out the provisions of subsection 3.

