

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS.

The meeting was called to order by Senator Lana Oleen at 11:10 a.m. on February 1, 1996 in Room 254-E of the Capitol.

Members present were: Senator Oleen, Chair  
Senator Tillotson, Vice Chair  
Senator Jones, Ranking Minority Member  
Senator Gooch  
Senator Hensley  
Senator Jordan  
Senator Papay  
Senator Praeger  
Senator Ramirez  
Senator Walker

Members not present: Senator Vidricksen - excused

Committee staff present: Mary Galligan, Legislative Research  
Mary Torrence, Revisor  
Nancy Wolff, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:  
Elias Garcia, Buena Gente Coalition  
Wendy McFarland, ACLU

Others attending meeting: see attached list

Senator Oleen recognized individuals who wished to appear on **SB528**, English declared the common language of the state; use required in open public meetings and open public records.

The following individuals made their presence known and requested to be heard. Elias Garcia representing the Buena Gente Coalition, testified in opposition to the bill (Attachment 1) and Wendy McFarland testifying for the ACLU spoke in opposition to **SB 528** (Attachment 2). Others submitting testimony but not appearing before the committee, were Lynn Hall, Jr. Vice Commander of the Kansas V.F.W. (Attachment 3) and Paul Fleenor of the Kansas Farm Bureau (Attachment 4) both in support of the bill. Presenting written testimony but not testifying before the committee were, Phil DelaTorre, a law professor at Kansas University (Attachment 5), Chad Lopez, Vice Commander for the Jimmy Martinez GI Forum of Topeka (Attachment 6) and Carolyn Jeffries, Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (Attachment 7).

There being no other conferees making their presence known that wished to appear on **SB528**, Senator Oleen declared the hearings closed.

The committee then took up discussion on the confirmation of **Myron Scafe** as Executive Director of the Kansas Racing Commission. Senator Tillotson made a motion to approve the confirmation of Mr. Scafe and Senator Ramirez seconded the motion. Senator Jordan expressed concerns over the pending court case against Mr. Scafe and Senator Gooch stated that he would vote in favor of the confirmation to move the bill to the floor of the Senate. The motion carried and Senator Hensley voted 'no'.

Senator Oleen then requested the members of the committee to look at senate bills, senate concurrent resolutions and house bills carried over from the last session. The first was **SB27**, Kansas Lottery continued; electronic games of chance authorized at parimutuel racetracks. Senator Tillotson made a motion to report SB27 unfavorably and Senator Jones seconded the motion for the purpose of discussion. Senator Hensley requested information as to why the bill could not be utilized as a vehicle for gaming legislation later in the session. Senator Oleen stated that the bill had been returned to the committee for reconsideration after it had been substantially amended in the House and returned to the Senate. When it came back from the House, it was declared materially changed and re-referred to the committee. Following discussion, it was decided that the committee would meet at the rail following the adjournment of the Senate Session in the afternoon to take action on the bill.

The next bill to be considered was SB300, County museums; exemptions from sprinkler system requirements. Senator Praeger made a motion to report SB300 unfavorably and Senator Jordan seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Senate Bill 364, Distribution of beer manufactured by microbreweries, was recommended unfavorably by Senator Ramirez and Senator Papay seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Senator Ramirez made a motion that **SCR1605**, Constitutional amendment staggering and limiting number of terms that a person may be elected to the Kansas senate and house of representatives, be reported unfavorably and Senator Tillotson seconded the motion. The motion carried and Senator Walker voted 'no'.

Senator Oleen presented information on a bill that would change the numbers of individuals serving on the Legislative Coordinating Council from seven members to eight with four members each from the Senate and the House of Representatives. Senator Ramirez made a motion to introduce the legislation and Senator Papay seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The committee then began work on **SB474**, Kansas whistleblower act, employees of state and local governments and certain public contractors communications with auditors. Senator Oleen distributed a balloon of **SB474** which illustrated proposed changes to the bill and announced that Bob North, Attorney for the Department of Administration was present and would be able to answer questions regarding the same.

As it was then 12:00, the Senator adjourned the meeting and reminded the members that there would be a brief meeting of the committee on adjournment of the Senate, outside the Senate Chambers at the rail. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 6, in 254-E when the committee will continue discussion of **SB474**.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
GUEST LIST

DATE: 2-01-96

NAME	REPRESENTING
A. G. Carr	Deaf Community
Rhoda Ames	TILRC
Carolyn Jeffries	TILRC
Hayzel Brown	KC DHH
<del>Ann</del>	Sen. Majorie Leary
ANN CARLIN OZBEOVIC	DEPT. - HUMAN RESOURCES
MICHELLE BROWN	KACHA
Kim Kreicker	Ks. Dept. of Education
Joe Chase	KNEA
Viviano Reveles	GI FORUM
Arthur Solis	American GI Forum of Kansas
ELIAS L. GARCIA	"BUENA ENTE" COALITION
COLLEEN KEUER	Senator KARR
Brendy West	Senator Hensley
Bill H. H.	American Cancer Society
Maureen Jayne Hellehurst	Kansas Smokers Health Initiative
Fred Isken & Kathryn Isken	Kansas Farm Bureau
Alan Eaton	Kansas Farm Bureau
Daniel Adams	Kansas Farm Bureau
Whitney Dameron	Kansas Bar Association
DAVID SCHLOSSER	PETE MCGILL & ASSOC.
Linda M. Gill	PMA
CAROLYN BURNS	FARM BUREAU
Frederico Peña	US Transportation Secretary
ACLU	ACLU
Terri Roberts	KSNA

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: SENATE COMMITTEE on FEDERAL & STATE AFFAIRS**

**FROM: ELIAS L. GARCIA**  
**"BUENA GENTE" COALITION**

**RE: SENATE BILL 528**

MR. CHAIRMAN AND HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE, MY NAME IS ELIAS L. GARCIA, COORDINATOR FOR THE "BUENA GENTE" COALITION. OUR COALITION WAS FORMED AS A SUPPORT GROUP ON BEHALF OF HISPANIC COMMUNITIES AROUND THE STATE WITH OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVES BEING:

- \*TO EDUCATE OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS OF ALL AGE GROUPS REGARDING THE PROCESSES OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVILEGE OF VOTER PARTICIPATION
- \*TO FACILITATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW FRIENDSHIPS, ALLIANCES AND NETWORKS WITH THE KANSAS HISPANIC COMMUNITY
- \*TO PROVIDE HISPANIC YOUTH WITH RECOGNIZEABLE AND IDENTIFIABLE POSITIVE ROLEMODELS
- \*TO PROMOTE AND ASSIST OUR YOUTH IN THEIR EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER OBJECTIVES
- \*TO SUPPORT THE CONTINUED UPWARD EDUCATIONAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MOBILITY OF HISPANICS
- \*TO ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE KANSAS HISPANIC COMMUNITY

GIVEN OUR COALITIONS CHARGE, WE STAND BEFORE YOU TODAY IN OPPOSITION TO SENATE BILL 528 WHICH WOULD SEEK TO ESTABLISH ENGLISH AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF RECORD IN THE STATE OF KANSAS.

WE FURTHER SUBMIT FOR YOUR REVIEW COPIES OF A PETITION OPPOSING SENATE BILL 528 SIGNED BY APPROXIMATELY 250 MEMBERS OF THE KANSAS HISPANIC COMMUNITY

*Attached  
Exhibit 1  
Federal and State Affairs  
2/1/96*

PLEASE NOTE THAT THROUGH THIS SAMPLING, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE AT LARGE KANSAS HISPANIC COMMUNITY DOES NOT FAVOR NOR DOES IT SUPPORT THIS BILL FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS. FOREMOST OF WHICH IS THAT THIS BILL SEEKS TO RESCIND THE VALUE OF THE GREAT AMERICAN MELTING POT, THE VALUE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY, AND DOES NOT SUBSCRIBE TO THE AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS DOCTRINES WHICH INSURE EQUALITY "...REGARDLESS OF RACE, SEX, AND **ETHNIC ORIGINS**, ...".

FROM A PERSONAL STANDPOINT AND AS A FIRST GENERATION MEXICAN AMERICAN WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE WAS SPANISH, THE RATIONALE FOR THE PASSAGE OF SENATE BILL 528 ESCAPES ME, ALTHOUGH THE INTENT AND RAMIFICATIONS OF THIS BILL DOES NOT!

HISPANICS, NOT UNLIKE OUR NATIVE AMERICAN BROTHERS WERE BORN ON THIS SOIL WE CALL KANSAS AND THE UNITED STATES. PAST GENERATIONS OF HISPANICS CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE FOUNDATION OF THIS COUNTRY, THE BUILDING OF THIS COUNTRY, AND THE SOLIDARITY OF THIS COUNTRY. THROUGHOUT PAST AND CONTEMPORARY HISTORY, HISPANICS AND HISPANIC FAMILIES HAVE PAID THEIR DUES THROUGH THE LOSS OF LIVES, THE LOSS OF CONTRIBUTIONS OUR DEAD COULD HAVE CONTRIBUTED, AND THE LOSS OF LOVE OUR LOST LOVED ONES COULD HAVE SHARED!!

LET US NOT CONFUSE AND OVERSIMPLIFY THE ISSUE. LET US BE CLEAR IN UNDERSTANDING THAT IT IS NOT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE THAT HAS MADE THIS COUNTRY GREAT. IT IS THE AMERICAN HEART THAT HAS MADE THIS COUNTRY THE FINEST IN THE WORLD, AND DESPITE THE USE OR NONUSE OF OUR NATIVE LANGUAGES OR THE COLOR OR OUR SKIN, HISPANIC HEARTS HAVE ALWAYS BLED (AND INDEED WILL ALWAYS BLEED) RED, WHITE AND BLUE IN DEFENSE OF AMERICAN VALUES AND AMERICAN SOIL.

*American Civil Liberties Union  
of Kansas and Western Missouri  
706 W. 42nd Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64111*

*Wendy McFarland, Lobbyist  
575-5749*

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee  
Hon. Lana Oleen, Chair  
Senate Bill 528

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The ACLU believes that English-only laws -- laws that make English the "official" language of government -- and particularly those which broadly restrict the government's ability to use languages other than English in communicating and delivering services to non-English speaking Americans, violate civil rights and liberties. They do so in three ways.

First, by restricting the government's ability to communicate with and provide services to non-English speaking Americans, many of whom are children and elderly citizens, English-only laws deny fair and equal access to government. These limits, especially as they apply to such rights and services as voting assistance, education in a comprehensible language, health services and information, financial assistance such as social security and police protection, infringe upon important and fundamental rights.

Second, by prohibiting the government from communicating with its citizens in any language other than English, English-only laws violate the First Amendment rights of elected officials and public employees. They also impair the First Amendment rights of limited English proficient residents to receive vital information and petition the government for redress of grievances.

Third, English-only laws are unnecessary, patronizing and divisive. They run contrary to the spirit of tolerance and respect of diversity embodied in the Constitution. "Official" English laws impose on official orthodoxy that breeds intolerance. It is intolerance not diversity which threatens our state and national unity.

#### "OFFICIAL ENGLISH" LAWS ARE UNNECESSARY

The primacy of English as America's common language has never been in jeopardy. It is no in jeopardy now. U.S. English, the largest organization dedicated to the establishment of English-only laws since 1983, concedes that 97% of Americans already speak English. Even within the largest single language minority, Spanish-speakers, approximately 80% speak English. Just as significantly, studies show that today's immigrants are learning English just as fast as immigrants of prior years. For instance, half of all recent Mexican immigrants in California already speak English.

"Official English" laws are not needed to teach immigrants the importance of learning English. Immigrants more than any other Americans fully appreciate the importance of learning English. What immigrants need are English classes, not patronizing proclamations. Ironically, "Official" English proposals do nothing to increase resources needed to provide English instruction.

What few services and publications are provided in multiple languages make government more efficient, not less efficient as English-only proponents contend. Barring the

*Attorney  
General  
Federal and State Affairs  
2/1/96*

government from choosing in specific circumstances to communicate with its non-English speaking citizenry in languages comprehensible to these communities will result in miscommunications and hinder the implementation of government policies such as protecting public health (through multi-lingual notices, counselling, etc.), enhancing water and resource conservation (through foreign language bulletins and educational pamphlets), increasing tax collections (by use of bilingual service representatives and tax forms), and ensuring compliance with the law (by providing bilingual investigators, interpreters in administrative and criminal proceedings, etc.). It makes no sense to have a sweeping rule requiring English-only which serves to straight-jacket executive agencies and other governmental bodies from making particularized judgments about the need to utilize languages in addition to English under appropriate circumstances. Indeed, an October, 1995 decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals striking down Arizona's "Official English" law, the Court found that government's use of languages other than English in communicating with limited English proficient residents increased rather than decreased efficiency, and that a law broadly prohibiting the use of different languages served no significant governmental interest.

#### "OFFICIAL ENGLISH" LAWS DENY IMPORTANT AND FUNDAMENTAL SERVICES TO LANGUAGE MINORITIES

The potential mischief of "Official English" laws cannot be overestimated. English-only laws have been interpreted to impose severe restrictions on the use by government and its employees and officials of language other than English. The first of such laws passed in recent times was enacted by Dade County, Florida in 1980. Its effect was to bar distribution of bilingual materials on fire prevention, publication of Metrorail schedules in foreign languages, Spanish language consumer information, prenatal advice by the county hospital in Creole, and funding for ethnic festivals. An "Official English" constitutional initiative passed by 51% of the voters in Arizona in 1988 has been held to bar legislatures from communicating with constituents in Spanish or Navajo and public employees generally from communicating with the public in a language other than English.

English-only laws which ban the provision of government services to non-English speakers unjustly target and disenfranchise language minorities. Such deliberate withdrawal of and ban on services to this already disadvantaged and insular sector of the American public is callous and mean-spirited. It is also unconstitutional.

#### THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The right to vote is a fundamental and inalienable constitutional right. A broad ban requiring the withdrawal of bilingual assistance to limited English proficient citizens (many of whom are elderly have limited English speaking proficiency, but whose English reading ability is insufficient to comprehend complex and lengthy ballots and voting materials) imposes such a burden. That burden will fall most heavily on older Americans, who are the least likely to learn English as a second language and who also have the greatest need for bilingual assistance. The injurious impact upon ethnic minority bilingual voters of such a ban cannot be overstated. A 1982 study for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund found that 70% of monolingual Spanish-speaking citizens would be less likely to register to vote if bilingual assistance were eliminated. If bilingual ballots were unavailable, 72% of the monolingual Spanish-speakers would be less likely to cast a vote.

### "OFFICIAL ENGLISH" LAWS VIOLATE EQUAL PROTECTION PRINCIPLES BECAUSE THEY DISCRIMINATE AGAINST AN ALREADY DISADVANTAGED AND POWERLESS MINORITY

In addition to infringing upon voting rights, English-only laws which systematically limit access of language minorities to governmental services are constitutionally suspect because: (1) language discrimination is functionally equivalent to national origin discrimination, and (2) language minorities are a prime example of a "discrete and insular minority," who deserve heightened judicial protection under the Equal Protection clause. Moreover, English-only laws which impose a sweeping ban on foreign language assistance to language minorities constitute the purposeful disadvantaging of language minorities and are far more insidious than the mere failure to provide such assistance as a result of oversight or lack of funding. These laws disadvantage minorities "because of, not merely in spite of" their limited English proficiency.

English-only laws' discrimination and disenfranchisement of language minorities, a particularly vulnerable group, is profoundly unfair and constitutionally suspect. These minorities could not even seek from the Arizona legislature a statute requiring, funding, or even authorizing language assistance in matters such as voting, job training, or consumer fraud. Preemptive laws which disable the provision of bilingual assistance result in the exclusion of language minorities from equal participation in the normal political process and imposes upon them special burdens not placed on other groups (such as veterans and the disabled) who are free to seek favorable legislation. Barring such a discrete minority from equal access to the political process violates equal protection.

### "OFFICIAL ENGLISH" LAWS VIOLATE THE FIRST AMENDMENT

The prohibition in English-only proposals upon the conduct of government business in any language other than English would bar communication between public employees and the public. The ban on informational materials in other languages significantly and affirmatively interferes with the ability of non-English speaking Americans "to receive information and ideas," an interest protected by the First Amendment. It also interferes with public employees' First Amendment interest in communicating with language minority citizenry.

Enjoining elected government officials from communicating with their constituents in languages other than English would violate both the rights of elected officials under the First Amendment as well as the interests of constituents in receiving important information, to communicate with elected officials, and to participate in the political process.

### "OFFICIAL ENGLISH" LAWS FOSTER BIGOTRY AND INTOLERANCE

Even if "Official English" laws did not ban the provision of particular services in languages other than English and were merely symbolic, the message that underlies the symbolism is unmistakably pejorative of immigrants and imbued with fear mongering.

Legislation making English the "official" language implies that those who do not speak English are somehow less than "official" and thus relegates them to second class status in the eyes of the law. Because these laws are predicated upon false and disparaging assumptions about today's immigrants, they can only fan the flames of prejudice, mistrust and divisiveness. And because the disparaging arguments are directed against today's immigrants who are largely Hispanic and Asian, the racial undercurrents that lay beneath the surface of English-only efforts make these laws doubly dangerous and divisive. Rather than inspiring cohesion



and unity, such legislation will, in the end, exacerbate societal discord and ethnic tension.

**"ENGLISH-ONLY LAWS UNDERMINE THE SPIRIT OF TOLERANCE AND  
PLURALISTIC IDEALS EMBODIED IN OUR CONSTITUTION"**

Undergirding the proponents' argument in favor of English-only laws is the assertion that the English language is the "common bond" or "social glue" that holds our diverse society together, and that multi-lingualism jeopardizes the fragile social cohesion singularly owed to the English language. The proponents often cite the Quebec secessionist movement and even the conflict between Serbs and Croats as examples of societal discord and disintegration that occurs in the absence of a common tongue.

This assertion is wrong both empirically and as a matter of principle. Linguistic diversity need not lead to social conflicts. Switzerland for instance has four official languages. There is no single "official" language for the European Common Market. On the other hand, one need only look to the conflicts in Northern Ireland and Bosnia to see that a common language does not assure social tranquility. (It should be noted that Serbs and Croats do speak a common language, Serbo-Croatian.)

Indeed, America's own history dispels the notion that an "official" language is needed to preserve national unity. As noted previously, from the founding of this nation, there have been substantial populations of speakers of languages other than English.

A specific example is New Mexico with its historically large Spanish-speaking population and its proud history of tolerance and acceptance of Spanish heritage. New Mexico, which has been officially bilingual since 1912, has printed all government documents in English and Spanish. Far from ethnic balkanization, Hispanics in New Mexico enjoy one of the highest rates of political participation (and hence integration into the political mainstream) in the nation.

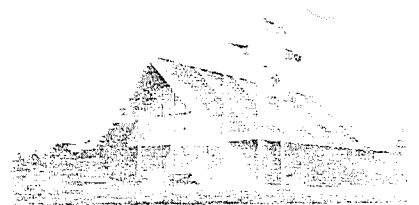
Where social tensions have arisen over language conflicts, language tension are the manifestation, not the cause, of underlying social problems. Racial and ethnic hostility are fostered not by language diversity, but by the attempts of certain language groups to suppress the use of other languages in political and social discourse.

In closing, the ACLU does not question the importance of having a common language; obviously a common language (or set of languages) is necessary as a practical matter for government and society to function efficiently. But the predicate assumption of English-only proponents -- that English is the "social glue" that holds our society together -- is facile. The common bond that unites Americans of all backgrounds, origins, and languages is our shared belief and commitment to freedom, democracy and liberty. That bond runs deeper than the English language. It is intolerance not diversity which threatens our nation's unity.

The ACLU urges this Committee to reject SB 528 and other "English-Only" proposals as unwise, unfair and unconstitutional.



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



DEPARTMENT OF KANSAS

01-31-96

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB528

AN ACT designating English as the common language and requiring its use as the language of public record and public meetings.

At the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States National Convention in Phoenix, Arizona, in August 1995, the delegates present passed the attached Resolution #103 in support of the basic provisions of Kansas' Senate Bill 528.

The over 43,000 members of the Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars organization stands in support of the VFW National Resolution which represents over 2.1 million members world-wide.

Your favorable consideration of SB528 will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted:

*Lynn Hall*

Lynn Hall  
Junior Vice Commander  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Department of Kansas

*Darrell F. Bencken*

Darrell F. Bencken  
Adjutant-Quartermaster  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Department of Kansas

DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS, P.O. BOX 1008, TOPEKA, KS 66601-1008  
Phone (913) 272-6463 - Fax (913) 272-2629

*Attachment*

*Exhibit 3*

*Federal and State Affairs*

ROY WILLIAMS  
State Commander  
1419 Hale Drive  
Junction City, Kansas 66441-1830

GERALD MANGOLD  
State Sr. Vice Commander  
R.R. 1, Box 29  
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State Jr. Vice Commander  
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DARRELL F. BENCKEN  
State Adjutant Quartermaster  
P.O. Box 1008  
Topeka, Kansas 66601-1008

*2/1/96*

Resolution No. 103

MANDATE ENGLISH AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, the people of the United States have brought to this nation the cultural heritage of many nations; and

WHEREAS, the United States has been greatly enriched by such cultural diversity; and

WHEREAS, the people of the United States, despite their many differences, have lived together harmoniously and productively as citizens of one nation; and

WHEREAS, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is an association of men and women who as soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and nurses served this nation in wars, campaigns and expeditions on foreign soil or in hostile waters and air; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States provides that all VFW Posts shall conduct their meetings in no other language than the English language; and

WHEREAS, the English language has always been our strongest common bond and has contributed substantially to our social cohesiveness; and

WHEREAS, English is our language by custom only and enjoys no special legal protection; and

WHEREAS, other languages have been promoted as alternatives and have gained a measure of government acceptance through bilingual education and bilingual voting ballots; and

WHEREAS, the erosion of English and the increased official usage of other languages is a divisive force within our nation; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we reaffirm mandates of previous conventions to seek legislation mandating English as the official language of the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we seek legislation to: 1) limit bilingual education to short term transitional programs only; 2) effect a speedy return to voting ballots in English only; 3) make more opportunities available to immigrants for learning English and maintaining the English languages a condition for naturalization; and 4) enact legal protections for the English language, at state and national levels through the designation of English as our official language.

Submitted by Commander-in-Chief

To Committee on AMERICANISM AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



## Kansas Farm Bureau

2627 KFB Plaza, P.O. Box 3500, Manhattan, Kansas 66505-8508 / (913) 587-6000

January 30, 1996

**COPY**

Senator Lana Oleen, Chairman  
Federal and State Affairs Committee  
State Capitol  
Room 136-N  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Senator Oleen:

You have before your Committee on Wednesday of this week a very important piece of legislation concerning the designation of English as the common language for public records and public meetings.

We would like for you and your fellow committee members (who will be receiving a copy of this letter) to know our support of that piece of legislation. It relates to a policy contained in the American Farm Bureau Federation's book of policies which says this:

**"We recommend that English be established by law or a constitutional amendment as the official language of the United States."**

We do not have a specific Kansas resolution or policy position on this, but we do adhere to those things which our members help make a part of the policy book for American Farm Bureau Federation. This is one. We ask for your favorable consideration of this position as you take under consideration Senate Bill 528.

Respectfully,

Paul E. Fleener, Director  
Public Affairs Division  
Kansas Farm Bureau

cf



*Attachment  
Exhibit 4  
Federal and State Affairs  
2/1/96*

TESTIMONY

to: members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
from: Phillip E. DeLaTorre  
re: H.B. 528 (English as the common language)  
date: January 31, 1996

My name is Phil DeLaTorre. I am a law professor at the University of Kansas. I am a native Kansan, having been born and raised in Chanute in the southeast corner of the state. I received my Bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas, which is also where I met my wife, the mother of my two children. We live in Lawrence. The only times I have lived in any place other than in Kansas have been my three years of law school on the East Coast and the few times when I've been a visiting professor at some other law school. I am completely and totally a Kansan.

My parents were also born and raised in Chanute. All four of my grandparents came from Mexico. Their primary language was Spanish. I remember a few words and phrases from my grandparents, and I remember a little of the Spanish that I learned while I was an undergraduate student at K.U. My language is English. I speak English. I have often been told by friends from other parts of the country that I speak English with a Kansas drawl, and I've always been proud of that.

When I hear that some legislature is considering an English-only bill, I think about the experiences of my own father and mother. Their first language growing up in southeast Kansas was Spanish, but today they speak English without any accent

*Attached to  
Exhibit 5  
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whatsoever. When it was their turn to raise their own children, they consciously chose not to teach us Spanish. They knew that my brothers, my sister, and I would be trying to succeed in an English-speaking society. I think they were right in their view.

This experience is why I oppose Senate Bill 528. My parents made their choice voluntarily. They didn't need the government to tell them what was in their own best interest. They were able to honor the heritage of their ancestors, but at the same time they made their own choice about how to prepare my brothers, my sister, and me for our future.

This highlights one of the great ironies of this proposed statute. The Republican battle-cry has always been to get government off our backs and out of our lives. We don't need the government to tell us what religion to join. We don't need the government to tell us that we are a Christian nation. And we don't need the government, in the form of a Republican legislature here in Topeka, to tell us what language to speak. We ought to be able to make that decision all by ourselves.

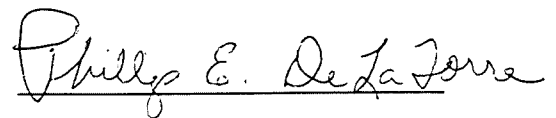
And even if the government did tell us what language to speak, it would be a futile effort on the part of the government. People are going to speak the language that they want to speak, even if the legislature in Topeka tells us that English is the only "official" language, or the only "legal" language, or the only "common" language. You might as well try to convince us by legislation that the sky is some color other than blue.

So if this proposed statute is futile and unnecessary, why is

it here before you today? I believe that the timing of this bill is suspect. We in Kansas have experienced periods of immigration over the decades, primarily from northern and western Europe. During those decades, there was never any effort to proclaim English as the "official" language or the "legal" language or the "common" language. It is only when we have a predominance of immigrants from Central and South America and from East Asia that all of a sudden there is the perceived need to circle the wagons around the English language. I repeat: I believe that the timing of this bill is suspect. It is a slap in the face of all the good people in this state -- loyal to the United States, loyal to the state of Kansas -- who happen to speak languages other than English. Surely you can understand why people like me, as English-speaking as can be, are nevertheless wary about a bill that, in effect, tries to stigmatize all languages of the world except English.

H.B. 528 serves no useful purpose. It goes against our tradition of honor and respect for our nation's multi-faceted makeup. And it goes against our tradition of honor and respect for individual choice. This bill is un-American and is not worthy of the people of this state. It deserves to be defeated.

Respectfully submitted,



Phillip E. DeLaTorre

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION  
TO SENATE BILL 528

Madam. Chair Person, Members of the Committee:

I am Chad Lopez, Vice Commander of The Topeka American GI Form.

I appear before you today to voice my opposition to Senate Bill 528 which designates English as the common language of the State and requiring its use as the language of public record and public meetings. I am proud to exercise the freedom of speech before you and I am gratified that I am bestowed that right. I am able to communicate my opposition in English, not because of a law which requires communication in the English language when appearing before this venerable tribunal, but because such is the custom in this industry. Thus, a law is not necessary to designate English as the common language of this State.

On its face the Bill appears to affect only official public documents, records, or meetings. Currently, public documents, records and meetings are all transcribed or documented in English. Section 3, subsection (a) of the Bill specifies that foreign language courses may be taught in a language other than English. Currently, this is already in effect without the need for a law to specify the same. Subsection (b) allows the instruction of students in languages other than English to mainstream these students into classes taught in the English language. Again, this practice is currently in effect. Subsection (c) allows the use of foreign languages to promote international commerce, tourism or

*Attachment  
Subject 6  
Federal and State Affairs  
3/1/96*



sporting events. Again, these revenue-generating ventures are currently fostered in languages other than English. No law is necessary to continue this custom. Subsections (d) and (f) allow non-English languages to be used in the justice system. Currently, due process requires the use of interpreters in the Courtroom for non-English speaking individuals. Thus, no further law is essential to the promotion of due process guaranteed by the federal and state Constitutions. Subsection (e) allows the use of languages other than English when the public safety, health or emergency services require its use. Authorization is given to printing informational material or publications in a language other than English to inform non-English speaking individuals of necessary protections. Today, this is a routine undertaking in the United States. No law is necessary to perform these fundamental courtesies.

Though the text of this Bill appears benign and the need for the Bill may be rationalized to merely codify what is *de facto* the spirit of our State, it, nonetheless demeans a vast majority of learned individuals who realize that in this precious and culturally diverse state some constituents are not all English-only speaking individuals. Legislation such as this demoralizes the very fabric of our cultural wealth. This noble State does not need

this type of legislation to-function. Balanced against the deep-seated harm to the passions of the State's non-English speaking taxpayers and electorate, the rationale to rank English as a superior language is just too great a risk to take.

Legislation such as this opens the door to more intrusive means of segregation. The worst scenario illustrates that once this legislation is enacted it is only a matter of time before the exceptions delineated in Section 3 of the Bill are eroded under the guise of Legislative power. Because the language of the Bill is superfluous it invites interpretation. In the malevolent hands of individuals awaiting the opportunity to close the gates of cultural diversity, this Bill will wreak havoc. I appeal to your intellect in asking that you oppose this Bill.



Offices located in  
the Historic Crawford Building

# Topeka Independent Living Resource Center

---

(913) 233-4572 V/TDD • Fax 913-233-1561 • Toll Free 1-800-443-2207  
501 SW Jackson Street • Suite 100 • Topeka, KS 66603-3300

Testimony to  
Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
regarding Senate Bill 528  
January 31, 1996

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today on Senate Bill 528. My name is Carolyn Jeffries. I am representing the Topeka Independent Living Resource Center (TILRC). TILRC is a resource center which provides services, advocacy, information and assistance for persons with disabilities.

Basically, our goal is to see that the dignity and the civil and human rights of every person is respected.

The Topeka Independent Living Resource Center does not support SB 528. Although it is important for all citizens to learn the language of the country they live in, the passing of this bill would deny participation, by those using other languages, in community life.

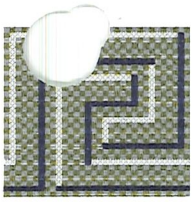
As a Deaf person, I use American Sign Language (ASL). ASL is recognized as a language (KSA 72-1119.) Would the passing of this bill interfere with my and other Deaf persons rights to have an interpreter provided at official public meetings?

I am also saddened by the language used in line 31, The provisions of this act do not apply "when deemed to interfere with the needs of the justice system." It is too often that interpreters are not provided even though it is the "need of the person to effectively comprehend and to be understood when going through the justice system."

As American citizens we *must not deny any citizen* the right to participate fully in American life. We must continue to respect and embrace diversity in culture and language.

Advocacy and services provided by and for people with disabilities.

Attachment  
Exhibit 7  
Federal: State Affairs  
2/1/96



FEB 5 1996

8

# Hispanic Coalition

3995 E. Harry Suite D-12 • Wichita, Kansas 67218 • Telephone (316) 685-6300 • Fax (316) 685-6300

**Yolanda Barrera-Camarena**  
HISPANIC WOMEN'S NETWORK  
President

**Mary Navarro**, Counselor  
NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

**Celia Chin**, Owner  
RICO'S

**Larry Garcia**, Fire Chief  
WICHITA FIRE DEPT.

**Lola Laredo**, KACHA  
Wichita Representative

**Jaime Lopez**  
PROJECT FREEDOM FAMILY AND YOUTH COALITION  
Coordinator of Hispanic Truancy Project

**Lisa Reyes**, Sgt. of Arms  
AMERICAN G.I. FORUM

**Rachel Jauregui**, President  
MEX.-AM.CULTURAL ASSOC.

**Mary Hernandez**  
MEXICAN FESTIVALS INC.

**Nakita Vance**  
Native American Community Activist

**Laura Stroud**, SPANISH INTERPRETER

**Delia Garcia**, State Sec.  
American GI Forum

**Sylvia Hernandez**, Secretary  
FUTURE LATINO LEADERS of WICHITA

**Rosie Castor**, Philosophy Major  
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

**David Rodriguez**, Cross Country Runner  
WEST HIGH SCHOOL

**Israel Rodriguez**, Student  
WEST HIGH SCHOOL

**Nina Sanchez**, Founder  
SANCHEZ TUTORING PROJECT

**T.D. Sanchez**  
KANSAS NEWMAN COLLEGE  
Interior Decorator Graduate

**J.P. Castro**, Student  
BISHOP CAROL HIGH SCHOOL

**Teresa Castro**, Student  
BISHOP CAROL HIGH SCHOOL

**Juanita Leal**, Senior Citizen

**Chole Soria**, Senior Citizen

**Jeff Wieble**  
WICHITA POLICE DEPT.  
Community Police Officer

**Rita Chavez**, State Chairwoman  
AMERICAN G.I. FORUM

**Vanessa Chavez**,  
AMERICAN G.I. FORUM  
State Queen Coordinator

**Rebecca Gutierrez**, Dance Coordinator  
LOS NINOS del NORTE

**Gloria Johnico**  
Native American Community Activist

**Connie Dean**, MANA

**Victor Rizo**, President  
LATINO DREAMS CAR CLUB

**Yolanda Cruz-Orozco**  
MULTICULTURAL WOMEN'S  
LEADERSHIP NETWORK  
President

**Martha Sanchez**  
WSU, MINORITY STUDIES

**Carmelita Lane**,  
CATHOLIC CHARITIES

**Margarita Hunt**  
HISPANIC AWARENESS COUNCIL

**Paul Sanchez**, RED CROSS

**Anthony Ramirez**, President  
MEXICAN FESTIVALS INC.

**Al Rodriguez**  
WICHITA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**Tomas Gonzales**, Dir.  
FAMILIA COMMUNITY CENTER

**Frank Macias**, Volunteer, USD 259

**Veronica Triana**, Coordinator  
NATURALIZE NOW

To: The Honorable Lana Oleen  
The State Senate  
Topeka, KS 66612

Date: January 30, 1996

Re: Senate Bill Number 528

My name is Jaime Omar Lopez, I am currently serving as President of the Hispanic Coalition comprised of 82 Latino community leaders whose primary focus is to facilitate inclusiveness, cultural sensitivity, and respect for one another. Many of us, as yourself, recognize the importance of learning English and quite honestly are some of your strongest advocates. But we also recognize the importance of retaining and respecting ones' culture by way of language. As Hispanics, like Americans, we too carry the same traditional values of Religion, Patriotism, and a strong work ethic in our culture and yet continue to be unaccepted as true partners in society and continually isolated. Spanish, the language that binds us, is also the language that too often times , as in this case, is often the source of polarization and discrimination. Although many Hispanics have fought to defend the principles of this country we are continually perceived negatively for either our language, accent, or skin color.

As a Hispanic and concerned Wichitan I am troubled by the mixed message Senate Bill Number 528 is sending to the Hispanic community. On one hand we have many powerful businesses whose very livelihood is dependent upon blue collar Hispanic employees. They capitalize and minimize their overhead while maximizing their profits on the backs of our people by exploiting their lack of English skills and cultural understanding. Yet when community leaders, such as the Hispanic Coalition, rally efforts of promoting Bi-lingual education, and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs these very same interests hide behind the cloak of requesting politicians kill so called "mis-spent" and "unbeneficial" programs in the name of frugality.

As one of the fastest growing minority groups I am troubled by the recent conservative messages that our government and politicians are disguising as issues that will promote unity and yet I can only perceive the divisiveness this bill creates. Our children, who will be the adults and leaders of tomorrow, are and will be under-educated and unskilled labor unable to compete in a competitive global market and subsidize a tax system that you and I will possibly be counting on. We continually hear that our children need every opportunity to succeed and yet when reports show that drop-out rates among Hispanics, Vietnamese, and Native


7-2

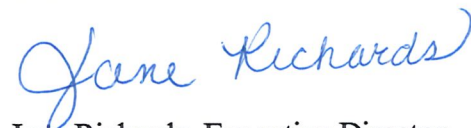
American are often linked to language and cultural discontinuity many of our leaders scoff at the idea.


Not wanting to become part of the problem, it is our hope to find a solution equitable to your needs as well as our own. Our concerns were never meant to cause anyone any undue stress but rather, serve as catalyst and a conduit in the process of facilitating language, cultural sensitivity, and respect for cultural diversity.

I respectfully request that Senate Bill No. 528 be killed in committee. I have found that many of the attitudes prevalent among our brothers and sisters come from the lack of understanding and sensitivity to differences. Rather than embracing our differences as an opportunity to grow and truly live in harmony we seem to be heading towards an arena of caring for your own. Even though many of the studies that have been conducted with regard to this issue emphatically show that linguistic minorities are more apt to acquire the language of the majority if they are accepted (*feel a sense of belonging*) in the social, economic arenas of a country. And without this, second language learning will be hampered or delayed. This great Country and State was founded on the principles which guarantee the right to free speech and yet rather than progressing in our way of thinking we seem to be regressing into an era of distrust and divisions along racial lines. Haven't we as a society learned from the mistakes of our past ?

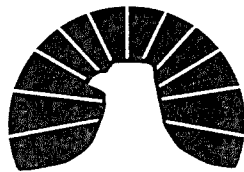
Thank you for your time and consideration.

  
Jaime O. Lopez, Acting President  
Hispanic Coalition

  
Jane Richards, Executive Director  
Project Freedom Family and Youth Coalition

  
Rita S. Chavez, Co-Founder  
Mexican American Cultural Association

*Called 2/5/96.  
left message with Secretary  
Part of official record -*



*Riojas*

ENTERPRISES, INC.

January 31, 1996

**TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS,  
Chairperson: Lana Oleen; Vice Chairperson, Carolyn  
Tillotson; Nick Jordan; Lillian D. Papay; Sandy Praeger;  
Al Ramirez; Ben Vidricksen; Sherman Jones; Rip Gooch,  
Anthony Hensley, and Doug Walker.**

**SUBJECT: Senate Bill No. 528, "English as the common  
language".**

In an effort to assist you in your deliberations regarding Senate Bill No. 528, "An ACT designating English as the common language and requiring its use as the language of public record and public meetings", we offer the following:

Hispanics know, beyond any reasonable doubt, that is essential to speak English if one wishes to succeed in this country. Hispanics know that one must know the laws of this country if we are to be considered responsible citizens.

S.B. 528 particularly is offensive because it creates barriers to "right to vote" because "public documents" include the ballot. Please refer to the attached editorial which was printed in the Kansas City Star.

S.B. 528 is reminiscent of the poll tax and the literacy test which were established in the South to prohibit African-Americans from voting. It then became the obligation of the African-American to become educated and earn enough money in order to have the opportunity to vote. Ultimately, the poll tax and the literacy test were declared unconstitutional.

We know that this "English Only" movement, whether verbalized or not, is aimed at those people from Mexican parentage. And if they cannot speak or read English, they will not be able to vote.

For too long Hispanics, especially those of Mexican descent, have been treated as second class citizens. Our gravest sin was that we spoke Spanish, ate tortillas, frijoles and tamales. For too long Hispanics have been denied full access to the political, educational and economic systems.

"English Only" is just another subterfuge to deny Hispanic taxpayers, whether they speak English or not, their full rights. And studies show that Hispanics are of strong work ethic and strong family values which means that we contribute to the economy in a very substantial way. We are entitled to all services just as any other taxpayer.

We also believe that this legislation would create economic barriers between Kansas and those countries where it wishes to export its goods. Many of these goods comprise a critical component of Kansas' economy. "English Only" creates the perception that languages other than English are of little value.

Midwestern states, like Missouri and Michigan, have recognized the potential economic windfall and have established trade offices in Mexico, Central and South America. These states recognize the importance of building economic bridges rather than debilitating their trade relations through social and economic roadblocks.

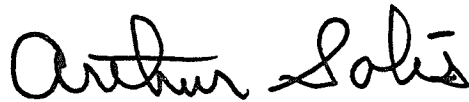
We urge the Senate Committee to take the same action on Senate Bill 528 that the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs took in 1995 on a comparable bill, that is, kill the bill in Committee.

We thank you in advance for opposing Senate Bill 528 and for ensuring that all taxpayers in Kansas are treated in a fair and just manner.

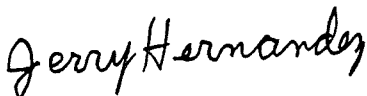
Sincerely,



Ana Riojas  
Vice-Chair  
Kansas Association for  
Hispanic Republicans



Art Solis  
State Commander  
American GI Forum of  
Kansas



Jerry Hernandez  
Hispanic Organization for  
Justice and Equality  
(HOJE)



Ascension Hernandez  
State President  
League of United Latin  
American Citizens  
(LULAC)

# 'English Only' movement is a real danger

By ANA RIOJAS

Former Chairperson,  
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of  
Greater Kansas City

The article "Opponents of 'Official English' misjudge Hispanics" by Luis Acle Jr. in the April 17 *Kansas City Star* was read with a great deal of interest and disgust.

The Hispanic community does not, nor will it ever, encourage its people to make their official language Spanish.

Even in countries such as Mexico and Puerto Rico, not to mention Central and South America, it is considered business as usual when people speak more than one language. And (gasp) these Hispanics are even encouraged to learn to speak English as soon as possible after they enter school.

Hispanics know, beyond any reasonable doubt, that it is essential to speak English if one wishes to succeed in this country. Hispanics know that one will earn more money in this country when one is able to speak English.

Hispanics know that one must know the laws of this country if we are to be considered responsible citizens.

We also know that anyone who speaks two languages is more language-proficient.

However, for those of us who work with Hispanic children in an effort to help lower the high school dropout rate, it is indeed chilling to read an article authored by one of us that defends the English Only movement.

Educators know that children who drop out of school tend to suffer from low self-esteem. Low self-esteem can be caused by many factors, one being the situation where that child constantly finds himself or herself feeling different from the "mainstream" child, and that difference is viewed in a negative manner by the child.

Educators also recognize that children can suffer from low-self

## ON THE OTHER HAND

esteem when the child perceives that his or her manner of expressing oneself is "wrong." When a child feels that he/she must be "made over" for the purpose of fitting in, that, by inference, suggests the child is lacking in some very important way.

And the crazy part of this whole debate is that "non-Hispanics" are saying things that exhort Hispanics to be multilingual. "The most important foreign language for a successful business career in the next 20 years is Spanish." (*The Wall Street Journal*, Sept. 28, 1989) And Bonnie Brunkhorst, president of the National Science Teachers Association, said at their annual convention that "Traditionally the (minorities) have been excluded from participating in science... white males no longer can carry the load. For many years, experts have warned that the presence of women and minorities in science must increase if America is to remain internationally competitive."

At the same convention, Dr. Alvin Pouissant, a psychiatrist at

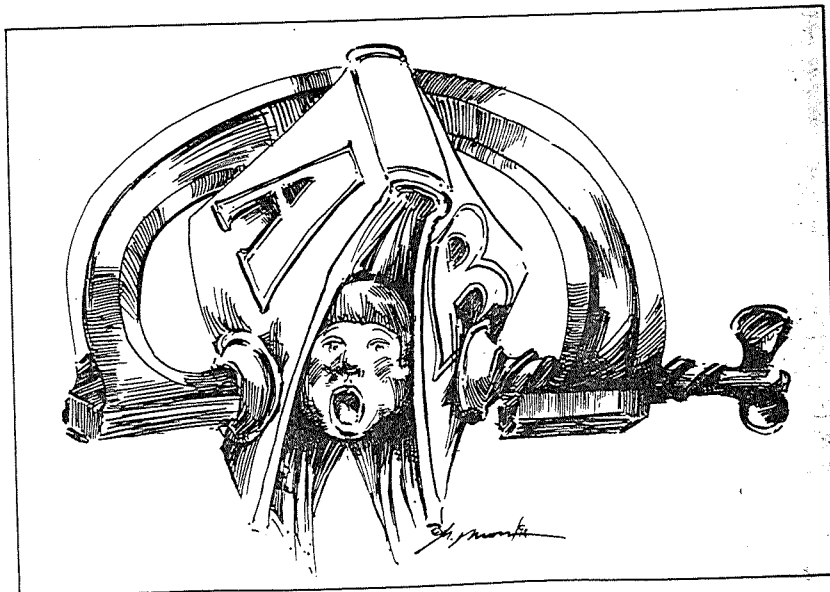
Harvard University Medical School, urged teachers to be aware of subtle ways they may use stereotypes and preconceptions.

And Able Employment, Inc., the company of which I am owner and president, is hard-pressed to provide bilingual workers because our Hispanic children were not encouraged to maintain their language while learning another. Our Hispanic workers, who were encouraged to "mainstream" by their parents, friends and teachers, earn \$2 less per hour on the job. You see, to "mainstream" in this country means to speak only English.

Companies interested in profit and loss know that in order to reach the Hispanic market, foreign and domestic, they must have workers who are bilingual.

People who know more than one language and one culture have more to offer, not less.

For too long, Hispanics, especially those of Mexican descent, have been treated as second-class citizens. And our gravest sin was that we spoke Spanish, ate tortillas, frijoles and tamales. For





too long Hispanics have been denied full access to the political, educational and economic system.

This movement for "English Only" is racist and discriminatory. For we all know, whether it is verbalized or not, that this is aimed at those people from Mexican parentage.

The proposed law in Missouri states that "English will be the official ballot language." That means that those people who cannot speak or read English will not be able to vote. Therefore, they will be denied the right of selecting who will represent them. And this is not cause for alarm?

The poll tax and the literacy test in the South were established to prohibit the African-Americans from voting. Then it follows that the obligation was on the African-American to become educated, and earn enough money in order to have the opportunity to vote.

Won't we ever learn?

We must learn to rejoice that there are people who do speak a different language. And let us try to convince them that we want to know that language, too. They should help us learn their language. They should be made to feel obligated to help us increase our knowledge just as they are increasing theirs. After all, I do not wish to be viewed as an illiterate by others who speak more than one language.

I intend to continue to encourage our children who know a language other than English to continue to speak it. And I will also say to them what my father always said to me, "You are a very special person because you can speak more than one language, and they can only speak one. You have two cultures, and they only have one. You have two different ways of looking at a problem, and they only have one. Someday you will be rewarded for this knowledge.

*Y saben que*; that someday is today.

FEB 6 1996

**TOM H. HYNES**

518 EAST LOULA STREET  
(913) 782-4971

OLATHE, KANSAS 66061-5402  
FAX (913) 764-2689

February 1, 1996

Senator Lana Oleen  
Kansas Senate  
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Senator Oleen,

I am a resident in Senator Bud Burk's district but I direct this letter to you in your position of Chairman of the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee.

This is about Senate Bill 528, English as the Official Language. I oppose making English the official language of Kansas. I believe there are times and places where making English mandatory would work a hardship and deprive honest citizens an opportunity for full understanding of their rights, duties and obligations.

When I bought my last camera the booklet that came with it was in English, German, Spanish and French. Although the camera may have been sold in countries where the common (vernacular) language was a language other than English it was important enough to the company to provide instructions in the various languages.

The 90 census showed that 77 percent of the US population was Anglo. Only 12 percent were African-American, 8 percent Latino and other nationalities represented a scant 3 percent. It is predicted that these so called minorities will swell by 2001. We're seeing this already in California but percentage increases are expected to sweep to the other Western and Midwestern states.

We would be better off directing our efforts to encourage bilingual education. It is said by futurists that young people able to converse in only one language and raised in suburbs will become culturally disadvantaged in the late 90's and on,

Far too often people think of non English speaking residents only as Latinos. That isn't a fair conclusion. The Asian population is growing and is also predicted to continue. For these reasons and other, I oppose making English the official language of Kansas.

Thanks for your attention, I am

Respectfully,

*Tom Hynes*

*Called 2/5/96  
left message on  
machine -*

7-7

Feb. 2, 1996

Senator Lana Oleen  
Kansas State Capitol  
Room 136-N  
Topeka, KS 66612

Senator Oleen,

As a member of a Kansas community known more for ethnic diversity than anything else, as a native and lifetime resident of our state, and as a citizen who speaks only English, I'm writing to let you know that I think the worst thing the Federal and State Affairs Committee could possibly do is advance any measure to declare an official state language.

Here in Garden City, where I grew up and have lived most of my 39 years, many people speak Spanish or Vietnamese, and I can assure you that I have never seen or heard of documents printed in two dozen languages. I certainly question the validity of David Schlosser's statement to that effect this week before your committee, as well as the credibility of his other statements.

It's clear to me, and to many other people in our community, that the vast majority of immigrants here are learning English without any prompting by official policy. It's a simple matter of economics that to obtain a good job, it's crucial to learn the primary language. In fact, you'll find our local Adult Learning Center packed shoulder to shoulder with immigrants almost every evening, all studying English -- more than 1,500 last year alone.

What is also clear to me, and to many others, is that efforts to declare English the official state language, besides running counter to First Amendment concepts, are rooted more in prejudice and ignorance than in any desire to provide good public policy. If my Hispanic and Southeast Asian friends and neighbors choose to speak their native languages, that's fine with me, because they also speak English. It's not unusual in our community to occasionally hear Spanish or Vietnamese in a private conversation, but I have yet to hear anything but English ever employed in an official capacity.

Further, wouldn't it seem that to be true to the principle behind a policy of official English, numerous commonly-used words would need to be erased -- words of Latin, Greek, Spanish, French, German and other origins that are employed daily in business, conversation, law, medicine, the church, education, and even legislation? And wouldn't that long list of non-English words have to include the Native American-Spanish hybrid which we adopted in 1861 as the name of our state?

In addition, since we have entered a new political era in which central control at the state and federal levels is being diluted in favor of local autonomy, why on Earth would we need a centralized directive from Topeka to specify how people should speak and write when

conducting affairs in their own communities? Certainly, official English laws have become trendy among legislative bodies across the nation, but I believe the legislature in Kansas has always had the integrity to rise above what's merely popular, and focus instead on what is right. I hope it still does.

It's obvious, especially to those of us who live where non-English languages are more prevalent than anywhere else in Kansas, that any law designating English as official would be needless, pointless and redundant. It would also, as Arthur Solis pointed out to your committee this week, border on racism and discrimination.

The reason we should have no official state language is the same reason we should have no official state religion, political party, or ethnic heritage. The reason is freedom.

Sincerely,



Steve Quakenbush  
129 W. Hazel  
Garden City, KS 67846  
316-275-1042

cc: Senator Steve Morris  
Senator Carolyn Tillotson  
Senator Nick Jordan  
Senator Lillian Papay  
Senator Sandy Praeger  
Senator Al Ramirez  
Senator Ben Vidricksen

Senator Sherman Jones  
Senator U.L. Gooch  
Senator Anthony Hensley  
Senator Doug Walker  
Representative Robin Jennison  
Representative Terry Presta

*Called 2/5/96  
left message on  
Machine -  
Will make a part  
of record.*