

Official Language

Over half the countries of the world have an official language. The United States isn't one of them. The debate over whether we need an official language dates back at least to the 1750s.

Today members of Congress continue to try to pass laws making English the official language. According to scholar Dennis Barron:

"Supporters of the [English-Only measures] say that English forms the glue that keeps America together. They deplore the dollars wasted translating English into other languages. And they fear a horde of illegal aliens adamantly refusing to acquire the most powerful language on earth. On the other hand, opponents of official English remind us that without legislation we have managed to get over ninety-seven percent of the residents of this country to speak the national language. No country with an official language law even comes close. Opponents also point out that today's non-English-speaking immigrants are picking up English faster than earlier generations of immigrants did, so instead of official English, they favor "English Plus," encouraging everyone to speak both English and another language.

With over three hundred languages spoken in the U.S. today and if we are going to be a united people, people who understand each other and can collaborate with people from anywhere in the country, we have to have an official national language. Let that language be the language of our fundamental law - the Constitution and our Declaration of Independence. The solution to our linguistic fracturing is quite simple: English. It's not just a language; it's an idea whose time has come. It is one of the common threads that will bind us together as a Nation. It will ensure that we are committed to safeguarding that all Americans share in the economic, social, and political benefits of having a common language.

Having English as our official language simply means that for the government to act officially, or legally, it must communicate in English. It means the language of record is the English language, and that no one has a right to demand government services in any other language and more importantly, if there is a conflict between an English version of a document and the same document in another language, the English version controls.

The term "English only" is inaccurate and is not "English as our official language". We are a "melting pot" of many varied and different cultures and languages and this is not intended to "rid the United States of all foreign language use." No laws should prohibit individuals from using foreign languages in their personal daily lives or government agencies from using other languages when there is a compelling public interest for doing so. These areas include protecting public

health and safety, assuring equality before the law and the rights of the accused, promoting tourism, teaching foreign languages in our schools, and providing for national defense. The Constitution guarantees free speech and religious freedom.

America! What a great place to live.

Thanks, Semper Fi, and Stay Safe !

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