

The "ENGLISH ONLY" MOVEMENT and STATE REFERENDA/ ANTI-BILINGUAL INITIATIVES



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The National Language Debate

- ▶ The "English Only" movement has been urging the States and the Federal Government to pass legislation declaring English as our "Official Language."
- ▶ The English Only movement has several splinter camps, some more extremist than the others. All are opposed not only to language diversity in the schools, but also to any burdening of State and national budgets by language and dialect problems, be they in the courts, auto licensing, or any other official function of government.

I'm a "member" of U.S. English, Inc.! See some of the mail I've received under "US English".



31 English Only vs. 4 English Plus

- ▶ **31 States** have passed "English Only" laws, including Louisiana (1811) and Nebraska (1920). Most "English Only" laws were passed in the 1990s, but Arizona's was as recent as 2007.

Four states have gone further than simply defeating English-Only legislation:

Oregon, New Mexico, Rhode Island and Washington State have passed laws embracing the diversity of languages and dialects, and a spirit of openness to all on the part of government.



OREGON'S ENGLISH PLUS RESOLUTION



Senate Joint Resolution 16 (1989)

WHEREAS the diverse ethnic and linguistic communities have contributed to the social and economic prosperity of Oregon; and

WHEREAS it is the welcomed responsibility and opportunity of Oregon to respect and facilitate the efforts of all cultural, ethnic and linguistic segments of the population to become full participants in our community; and

WHEREAS Oregon's economic well-being depends heavily on foreign trade and international exchange and one out of five jobs is directly linked to foreign trade and international exchange; and

WHEREAS we wish to protect and promote the multilingual nature of communication that currently exists in Oregon and to build trust and understanding; and

WHEREAS English is already the predominant language of Oregon and legislation imposing English as the official language of Oregon impairs our pluralistic ideals; and

WHEREAS our federal courts have recognized that English-only rules can have an adverse impact on protected groups and constitutes discrimination; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

That the use of diverse languages in business, government and private affairs, and the presence of diverse cultures is welcomed, encouraged, and protected in Oregon.

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCRAWFORD/or-ep.htm>

http://www.salem-news.com/articles/january172007/oregonenglishbill_011707.php

Oregon Lawmaker Introduces Bill That Would Make English Oregon's Official Language

(SALEM, January 17, 2007) - Oregon State Representative Donna Nelson (R-McMinnville) introduced a house bill (HB 2459) that would make English the official language of Oregon.

"Oregon should follow the lead of such other progressive states as California and Massachusetts that have enacted similar laws," Representative Nelson said.

If passed, state, city, and county governments would not be required to provide services or information, such as voter pamphlets, in any other language other than English. Critics of the plan disagree, citing the lack of opportunities for people in the mid-valley to learn English. Waiting lists for adult ESL (English as a Second Language) classes at Chemeketa College in Salem can take from six months to a year. The less English a person knows, the longer they have to wait.

The current federal government has also reduced funding for ESL, and that means fewer dollars in Oregon are available to teach English. Some educators say it all amounts to an attempt to increase ignorance.

Ron Unz:
State Referenda



State	Anti-Bilingual Initiative
California	Proposition 227 Passed 1998 Petitioner: Ron Unz
Arizona	Proposition 203 Passed 2000 Petitioner: Ron Unz
Massachusetts	Question 2 Passed 2002 Petitioner: Ron Unz
Colorado	Amendment 31 Defeated 2002 Petitioner: Ron Unz

www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/17_03/color173.shtml



Stated Goals of PROP 227



- ▶ "To teach English as rapidly & effectively as possible by heavily exposing LEP children to the language."
- ▶ "To reduce drop-out rates among immigrants."
- ▶ "To reverse low literacy rates and to promote economic & social advancement."

Often, there is little problem with the goals, but the means to those goals.

Omitted Details

- ▶ Teacher shortage – 70% of ELLs were not enrolled in a bilingual program
 - How can you blame bilingual education?
 - What about a LACK of bilingual education?



"It is clear that one-year English immersion programs are inadequate and that mandating such programs are not in the best educational interest of ELLs"
(Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2002, p. 8).

Karie's story as a bilingual teacher

- ▶ 1994 – Beginning teacher, TBE
 - California's Proposition 187
- ▶ 1996 – Moved to Lake Tahoe, TBE
 - Support for bilingual programs
 - Issues/problems
- ▶ 1998 – California's Proposition 227
 - Less than a month before school started
 - Wall decorations, climate
- ▶ 2002 – Moved to Dixon, California, TBE



Through a misguided sense of altruism, many of these proponents [of anti-bilingual initiatives] believe that policies designed to force children to adopt English as their dominant or only language will promote rapid assimilation and increase students' academic achievement. . . .

Sociological and educational research supports the notion that immigrant students who retain their bilingual skills and their ties to their parents' culture of origin are more academically successful and socially well-adapted in the long term than their peers who become English monolinguals (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). These researchers concluded that "forced march assimilation" policies for educating immigrant youth are counterproductive.

~Jill Kerper Mora (2009)

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The political rhetoric and appeals to voters contained scant reference to the credible and growing body of scholarly research on the effectiveness of the different program designs. Further, the polemics focused almost entirely on how language-minority students learn English, neglecting the broader issues of how these students learn language, literacy, and content as they progress through the grades toward high school graduation. Even discussions about the achievement gap between English language learners and native English speakers were distorted because by definition, English language learners are students whose lack of English proficiency prevents them from performing as well as their native-English-speaking peers.

~Jill Kerper Mora (2009)

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Video of Karie debating Rosalie Porter, author of *Forked Tongue* (as seen on Weebly): <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-3268024537271560610&hl=en>

Measure 58, written by prolific ballot measure author Bill Sizemore, would prohibit schools from teaching English learners in their native language after one year in elementary school or two years in high school. A strict time limit set by Sizemore, Hickey and millionaire Nevada inventor Loren Parks, who has bankrolled Measure 58 -- none of whom has expertise in language acquisition -- shouldn't substitute for educators' professional judgment, critics say.

Currently, 85 percent of the state's nearly 70,000 students learning English as a second language are taught exclusively in English, an analysis by The Oregonian found. Their teachers use gestures, visual aids, simplified English, repetition and other techniques to teach them math, history and science while also teaching them to read, write and speak English.

The other 10,000 English learners are taught part of the day in their native Spanish or, less commonly, Russian or Mandarin. Research shows that students who are taught to read and write in their first language end up as stronger readers and writers in English in the long run.

http://blog.oregonlive.com/news_impact/2008/10/measure_58_puts_english_learners/print.html

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon_Ballot_Measure_58_\(2008\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon_Ballot_Measure_58_(2008))

Measure 58

Prohibits teaching public school student in language other than English for more than two years.

Election results: **DID NOT PASS**

No	977,696	56.36%
Yes	756,903	43.64%

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Oregon_2008_Measure_58.svg

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c6/Oregon_2008_Measure_58.svg



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