

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 70—ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART

PREFILED DECEMBER 12, 2008

Referred to Committee on Government Affairs

SUMMARY—Designates English as the official language of the State of Nevada. (BDR 19-576)

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

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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:**

1 In this bill the Nevada Legislature pledges to refrain from enacting certain laws  
2 and to take all steps necessary to ensure that English remains the common language  
3 of the State. The Legislature also: (1) encourages other state officials to take similar  
4 actions; (2) recognizes the importance of English in unifying the United States; (3)  
5 supports English educational programs; and (4) encourages Nevada residents to  
6 master English and take advantage of all educational opportunities. This bill also  
7 designates English as the official language of the State of Nevada, requires, with  
8 limited exceptions, that all official proceedings of the State be conducted in English  
9 and requires all official records of the State to be prepared, stored and made  
10 available in English.

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

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



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

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

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

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

18  
19 THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
20 SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:  
21

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

24 ***1. The Legislature hereby:***

25 ***(a) Pledges that it:***

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

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

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

33 ***(c) Recognizes:***

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

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

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

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

45 ***(e) Encourages the residents of this State:***



- 1           (1) *To master English as well as other languages; and*  
2           (2) *To take advantage of all educational opportunities to*  
3 *realize their full potential in the mastery of English as well as*  
4 *other languages.*  
5           2. *English is hereby designated as the official language of the*  
6 *State of Nevada.*  
7           3. *Except as otherwise provided in subsection 4:*  
8           (a) *All official proceedings of this State must be conducted in*  
9 *the English language.*  
10           (b) *All official records of this State must be prepared, stored*  
11 *and made available in the English language.*  
12           4. *The provisions of subsection 3 do not apply to:*  
13           (a) *State employees when conducting official state business*  
14 *orally.*  
15           (b) *Classes that teach students a language other than English.*  
16           (c) *Classes that teach students whose proficiency in the*  
17 *English language is limited.*  
18           (d) *Situations in which the exclusive use of the English*  
19 *language would interfere with the functions and requirements of*  
20 *the judicial system of this State.*  
21           (e) *Situations in which the exclusive use of the English*  
22 *language would interfere with public health or safety, or the*  
23 *provision of emergency services.*  
24           (f) *The promotion of international trade or tourism by an*  
25 *officer, employee or agent of this State.*  
26           5. *Notwithstanding the provisions of any other specific*  
27 *statute:*  
28           (a) *No court of this State has jurisdiction to hear a claim*  
29 *against this State that is based solely on the failure of this State to*  
30 *provide copies of statutes, regulations, reports, forms or other*  
31 *documents in a language other than English.*  
32           (b) *Neither this State nor an officer, employee or agent of this*  
33 *State is liable, civilly or criminally, for an act or omission*  
34 *committed to carry out the provisions of subsection 3.*

