



# **AB 246**

**Ballots for All: Improving Language Access for Nevada Voters**

## Background

### **1** Understanding The Issue

- Survey collection
- Listening session
- Seven out of seventeen counties participated.

### **2** Lessons Learned

- A state law is necessary.
- Funding is critical for implementation.

### **3** Opportunity

- Legislators and the SOS office can help address the language barrier many voters face in our state.

# Federal Overview

## **Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA):**

- Native American, Asian American, Alaskan Native, or Hispanic.
- Must equal to 10,000 citizens *or* make up 5% of the voting age of one of the protected groups and be Limited English Proficient (LEP).
- Have an illiteracy rate higher than the national average.

# Section 203 and Nevada

## Section 203

- Clark County provides material in the following languages:
  - Spanish and Tagalog
- Nye County provides translation/interpretation services for all voting materials in:
  - Shoshone

## **Voluntarily:**

- Washoe County provides bilingual sample ballots and ballots in English and Spanish.

# U.S. Census Data and Nevada

- Nevada is diverse, and the 2020 Census ranked us as the third-most diverse state in the country.
- Fourth-largest population of residents who identify as Asian and Pacific Islander (AAPI) and the fifth-largest population who identify as Hispanic.
- 29.9% of the population speak a language other than English at home
- 19.2% of the population is foreign-born, with 51.9% of those being naturalized citizens.
- 471,016 Nevadans who are over the age of 18 reported a language other than English.
- 135, 442 Nevadans over the age of 18 are Limited English Proficient.

# Nevada Top Languages and Limitations

- The top seven languages spoken in the state per the U.S. Census data are Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Amharic, and Thai.
- Census data does not capture all languages spoken and only reports 42 languages. Examples include:
  - Persian - includes Farsi and Darsi.
  - Amharic - includes Somali or other African languages.
- Community collaboration is needed to identify other languages that are not currently being captured by the U.S. Census data.



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- Recognizes that our state is diverse.
- Calls for inclusive policies to encourage participation to communities that have historically been disenfranchised from the ballot box.
- An opportunity to go beyond federal guidelines and help increase civic engagement and political participation for voters who don't speak English as their first language.

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## 2021 VRA Section 203 Language Determination - Based on ACS 2015-2019 5 Yr Estimates

COUNTY	LANGUAGE	Population	Voting Age	Voting Age Citizen	Voting Age Citizen LEP
Clark	Hispanic	679,400	458,700	303,100	59,350
Clark	Filipino alone or in comb.	143,900	109,900	90,820	13,740
Clark	Chinese (including Taiwanese) alone	46,190	37,010	27,870	9,566
Washoe	Hispanic	111,700	73,890	51,820	8,764
Clark	Korean alone or in comb.	18,020	14,290	11,580	3,122
Clark	Vietnamese alone or in combination	14,650	10,420	8,743	3,106
Clark	Thai alone or in combination	7,968	6,352	4,900	1,674
Washoe	Filipino alone or in combination	13,960	10,550	8,469	1,415
Carson City	Hispanic	13,230	8,761	5,940	1,230
Clark	Asian Indian (including Sikh) alone	13,160	10,220	7,213	1,048



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## 2021 VRA Section 203 Language Determination - Based on ACS 2015-2019 5 Yr Estimates

STATE	LANGUAGE	Population	Voting Age	Voting Age Citizen	Voting Age Citizen LEP
Nevada	Hispanic	853,000	574,000	385,300	71,990
Nevada	Filipino alone or in combination	162,000	123,300	101,600	15,370
Nevada	Chinese (including Taiwanese) alone or in combination	52,540	41,810	31,800	10,370
Nevada	Japanese alone or in combination	26,220	20,130	17,580	1,061
Nevada	Korean alone or in combination	20,420	16,120	13,080	3,425
Nevada	Asian Indian (including Sikh) alone or in combination	17,850	13,510	9,263	1,548
Nevada	Vietnamese alone or in combination	16,970	12,090	10,180	3,501
Nevada	Thai alone or in combination	9,006	6,995	5,446	1,841
Nevada	Total Population			<b>2,019,000</b>	