

SENATE BILL No. 638

September 13, 2011, Introduced by Senators KAHN, GREEN, COLBECK, WALKER, BRANDENBURG, HANSEN and PAPPAGEORGE and referred to the Committee on Government Operations.

A bill to designate English as the official state language; to provide certain rights; and to provide the powers and duties of certain state and local agencies and officials.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. (1) English is designated as the official language of
2 this state.

3 (2) Official actions of this state that bind or commit the
4 state or that give the appearance of presenting the official views
5 or position of the state shall be in the English language.

6 (3) Except as provided in subsection (6), a law, ordinance,
7 decree, program, or policy of this state, or a political
8 subdivision of this state, shall not require the use of any
9 language other than English for any documents, regulations, orders,

1 transactions, proceedings, meetings, programs, or publications that
2 do any of the following:

3 (a) Promote trade, commerce, and tourism.

4 (b) Create or promote state or agency mottoes.

5 (c) Inscribe public monuments.

6 (4) A person who speaks only the English language shall be
7 eligible to participate in all programs, benefits, and
8 opportunities, including employment, provided by this state and its
9 political subdivisions, except when required to speak another
10 language as provided in subsection (6).

11 (5) A law, ordinance, decree, program, or policy of this state
12 or a political subdivision of this state shall not penalize or
13 impair the rights, obligations, or opportunities available to any
14 person solely because a person speaks only the English language.

15 (6) The state and the political subdivisions of this state may
16 use a language other than English for any of the following
17 purposes:

18 (a) To teach or encourage the learning of languages other than
19 English.

20 (b) To protect the public health or safety.

21 (c) To teach English to those who are not fluent in the
22 language.

23 (d) To comply with the Native American languages act, 25 USC
24 2901 to 2906, the individuals with disabilities education act, 20
25 USC 1400 to 1482, or any other federal law.

26 (e) To protect the rights of criminal defendants and victims
27 of crime.

1 (f) To perform acts involving the customary use of a language
2 other than English.

3 (g) To utilize terms of art or terms or phrases from other
4 languages which are commonly used in communications otherwise in
5 English.