

FORMATTING NOTE:

In initiatives, legislative bills and other proposed measures, language that is to be deleted from current statutes is represented by a "strikethrough" character and language that is to be added is underlined. Because these special characters cannot be formatted in all Internet browsers, a different set of symbols is used for presenting these proposals on-line. The symbols are as follows:

- Text that is surrounded by (~~{- text here -}~~) is text that will be DELETED FROM the existing statute if the proposed measure is approved.
- Text that is surrounded by {+ text here +} is text that will be ADDED TO the existing statute if the proposed measure is approved.
- {+ NEW SECTION+} (found at the beginning of a section or paragraph) indicates that ALL of the text in that section will become law if the proposed measure is approved.

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INITIATIVE 236

AN ACT Relating to American-English as the official language of Washington state; and adding new sections to chapter 1.20 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

{+ NEW SECTION. +} Sec. 1. (1) The American-English language is the official language of the state of Washington.

(2) As the official language of this state, American-English is the language of the ballot, public schools, and all government functions and actions.

(3) This section applies to:

(a) The legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government;

(b) All political subdivisions, departments, agencies, organizations, and instrumentalities of the state, including local governments and municipalities;

(c) All statutes, ordinances, rules, orders, contracts, programs, pamphlets, and policies; and

(d) All government officials and employees during the performance of government business.

{+ NEW SECTION. +} Sec. 2. The state and all political subdivisions of the state must take all reasonable steps to preserve, protect, enhance, and support the role of the American-English language as the official language of the state of Washington.

{+ NEW SECTION. +} Sec. 3. (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section:

(a) The state and all political subdivisions of the state must act in American-English and in no other language.

(b) No entity to which this section applies may make or enforce a law, order, decree, or policy that requires the use of a language other than American-English.

(c) No governmental document shall be valid, effective, or enforceable unless it is in the American-English language.

(2) The state and all political subdivisions of the state may act in a language other than American-English under any of the following

circumstances:

(a) To assist students who are not proficient in the American-English language, to the extent necessary to comply with federal law, by giving educational instruction in a language other than American-English to provide as rapid as possible a transition to American-English;

(b) To comply with other federal laws;

(c) To teach a student a foreign language as a part of a required or voluntary educational curriculum;

(d) To protect public health or safety;

(e) To protect the rights of criminal defendants or victims of crime; and

(f) For historical or ceremonial functions.

{+ NEW SECTION. +} Sec. 4. A person who resides in or does business in the state has standing to bring suit to enforce this section in a court of record of the state. The legislature may enact reasonable limitations on the time and manner of bringing suit under this section.

{+ NEW SECTION. +} Sec. 5. If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

{+ NEW SECTION. +} Sec. 6. Sections 1 through 4 of this act are each added to chapter 1.20 RCW.

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