

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 49th Legislature (2004)

HOUSE CONCURRENT

RESOLUTION HCR1049:

Lindley

AS INTRODUCED

A Concurrent Resolution welcoming and encouraging the use of diverse languages and the presence of diverse cultures in Oklahoma; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, English is the language of the United States and of Oklahoma, and all members of the society recognize the importance of English to national and state life and individual accomplishment; and

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

WHEREAS, it is the welcomed responsibility and opportunity of Oklahoma 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, the economic well-being of Oklahoma depends heavily on immigrant labor and one out of five jobs is directly linked to the growing need for immigrant labor; and

WHEREAS, the ability to speak languages in addition to English is a tremendous resource for Oklahoma, enhancing its global market competitiveness and improving communication and cross-cultural understanding between producers and suppliers, vendors and clients, and retailers and consumers; and

WHEREAS, English is already the predominant language of Oklahoma and legislation imposing English as the official language of Oklahoma conflicts with our American pluralistic ideals; and

WHEREAS, the United States federal courts have recognized that English-only rules, policies, and legislation can have an adverse impact on protected groups, deny equal access to governmental services, and constitute discrimination.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 49TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:

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

THAT the use of English-only policies, laws, or legislation is not supported or welcomed and is viewed as unnecessary, divisive, and unwarranted. English-only rules, policies, and legislation limit future economic growth, promote loss of international trade opportunities, project a negative and intolerant image of the diverse citizens of this state, promote myths and misunderstandings of indigenous languages, tend to devalue the important contributions by the many ethnic and cultural peoples of this state, disenfranchise diverse groups from the democratic process, and hinder equal protection under the law and foster adversarial relationships and disharmony among our communities, thus increasing litigation and loss of scarce resources.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to the Governor's Advisory Council on Latin American and Hispanic Affairs, the Governor's Advisory Council on Asian-American Affairs, the Indian Affairs Commission, the Vietnamese-American Community of Oklahoma and the Metropolitan Areas, the Asia Society of Oklahoma Associations, the Chinese Association of Greater Oklahoma City, the India Association of Oklahoma, the Indonesian American Association of Oklahoma, the Iranian American Cultural Society of Oklahoma, the Japan-American Society of Oklahoma, the Korea Society of Oklahoma, the Laotian Women's Association of Oklahoma, the Philippine American

Civic Organization of Oklahoma, the Sao Vict Association, the Taiwanese Association of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Association for Bilingual Education, the Tulsa Global Alliance, the Oklahoma Conference of Churches, the Oklahoma Interfaith Alliance, the League of United Latino American Citizens, and the Coalition of Language Diversity.

49-2-8205

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