

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 52nd Legislature (2009)

3 HOUSE JOINT
4 RESOLUTION 1015

By: Osborn

5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7
8 A Joint Resolution directing the Secretary of State
9 to refer to the people for their approval or
10 rejection a proposed amendment to the Constitution of
11 the State of Oklahoma by creating a new Article XXX;
12 declaring the English language to be the official
13 language of this state; requiring the business of
14 this state be conducted in English; providing
15 exceptions; defining term; providing ballot title;
16 and directing filing.

17
18
19 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE OF THE
20 1ST SESSION OF THE 52ND OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

21 SECTION 1. The Secretary of State shall refer to the people for
22 their approval or rejection, as and in the manner provided by law,
23 the following proposed amendment to the Constitution of the State of
24 Oklahoma by creating a new Article XXX to read as follows:

ARTICLE XXX

Section 1. A. The English language is the official language of
the State of Oklahoma.

B. All official business of this state shall be conducted in
English absent compelling circumstances. All official documents,

1 regulations, orders, and publications shall be printed in English
2 and all official programs, meetings, transactions, and actions
3 conducted by, or on behalf of, this state and all its political
4 subdivisions shall be in English.

5 C. Other languages may be used by government officials, and in
6 official documents, whenever necessary to:

- 7 1. Protect the health, safety, or liberty of any citizen;
- 8 2. Teach or study other languages;
- 9 3. Protect the rights of criminal defendants or the victims of
10 crime;
- 11 4. Promote trade, tourism, or commerce;
- 12 5. Facilitate activities pertaining to the compilation of any
13 census;
- 14 6. Comply with the federal Individuals with Disabilities
15 Education Act;
- 16 7. Use proper names, terms of art, or phrases from languages
17 other than English; or
- 18 8. Comply with the Constitution and laws of the United States
19 of America.

20 D. Except in exigent circumstances, when an official government
21 document is translated into any language other than English pursuant
22 to this amendment, an English translation will also be provided in
23 the same document, appearing in such a manner as to afford the
24

1 reader with the opportunity to observe the English translation of
2 all phrases used.

3 E. Nothing in this Article shall be construed to:

4 1. Diminish the usage of, prevent the study or development of,
5 or discourage the use of any Native American language in any context
6 or for any purpose;

7 2. Prohibit any elected official from speaking to any person in
8 a language other than English while campaigning or providing
9 constituent services, although such officials are encouraged to use
10 English as much as possible to promote fluency in English; or

11 3. Disparage any language other than English, or discourage any
12 person from learning or using a language other than English.

13 F. As used in this Article, "official" means any government
14 action or document that binds the government, is required by law, or
15 is authorized by law.

16 SECTION 2. The Ballot Title for the proposed Constitutional
17 amendment as set forth in SECTION 1 of this resolution shall be in
18 the following form:

19 BALLOT TITLE
20 Legislative Referendum No. _____ State Question No. _____

21 THE GIST OF THE PROPOSITION IS AS FOLLOWS:

22 This measure amends the Oklahoma Constitution. It would add a
23 new Article 30. This amendment makes English the official
24 language of the state. All official state actions will be done

1 in English. This amendment provides exceptions when languages
2 other than English can be used, such as to protect public health
3 and safety. This amendment provides for the use of Native
4 American languages and the use of other languages for
5 educational purposes.

6 SHALL THE PROPOSAL BE APPROVED?

7 FOR THE PROPOSAL - YES _____

8 AGAINST THE PROPOSAL - NO _____

9 SECTION 3. The Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives,
10 immediately after the passage of this resolution, shall prepare and
11 file one copy thereof, including the Ballot Title set forth in
12 SECTION 2 hereof, with the Secretary of State and one copy with the
13 Attorney General.

14
15 52-1-5383 SDR 01/12/09
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24