

By Mrs. Murray of Cohasset, petition of Mary Jeanette Murray for legislation to designate English as the official language of the Commonwealth. State Administration.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety-Seven.

AN ACT TO DESIGNATE ENGLISH AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 2 of the General Laws is hereby amended
2 by inserting after section 32 the following section: —

3 Section 33. The English language is hereby designated and
4 shall be known as the official language of the commonwealth.
5 Neither the commonwealth nor any political subdivision thereof
6 shall require by statute, ordinance, regulation, order, program or
7 policy the use in the state of any language other than English.
8 Governmental officials and employees shall be bound by the
9 provisions of this act during the performance of governmental
10 business.

11 The commonwealth and all political subdivisions thereof shall
12 take all reasonable steps to preserve, protect and enhance the role
13 of the English language as the official language of the state.
14 Notwithstanding any provision of this act to the contrary, the com-
15 monwealth and its political subdivisions may act in a language
16 other than English (1) to assist students who are not proficient in
17 the English language, by providing educational instruction in lan-
18 guages other than English to provide as rapid as possible a transi-
19 tion to English; (2) to comply with federal laws; (3) to provide
20 foreign language instruction as part of a required or voluntary
21 education curriculum; (4) to protect public health and safety;

22 and (5) to protect the rights of criminal defendants or victims of
23 crime; and that nothing in this act shall prohibit the printing of
24 proper names.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on July first, nineteen
2 hundred and ninety-one.