
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 229 Session of
1989

INTRODUCED BY MICOZZIE, FREIND, CIVERA, ADOLPH, FLICK AND
GANNON, FEBRUARY 1, 1989

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, FEBRUARY 1, 1989

AN ACT

1 Designating English as the official language of the Commonwealth
2 of Pennsylvania; and providing for a right of action.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Legislative findings and purpose.

6 (a) Findings.--The General Assembly finds that:

7 (1) English is the common language of the people of the
8 United States of America and the Commonwealth of
9 Pennsylvania.

10 (2) A knowledge of English is essential to the full
11 exercise of constitutional freedoms, citizen checks against
12 government abuses, and individual prosperity and
13 independence.

14 (3) English is our language by custom only and enjoys no
15 special legal protection.

16 (b) Purpose.--It is the purpose of this act to preserve,
17 protect and strengthen the English language.

1 Section 2. Designation of official language.

2 English is hereby designated the official language of the
3 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

4 Section 3. Enforcement.

5 Elected and appointed officers of the Commonwealth shall take
6 all steps necessary to insure that the role of English as the
7 common language of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is preserved
8 and enhanced.

9 Section 4. Limitations.

10 The provisions of this act shall not apply when:

11 (1) Federal law imposes contrary provisions.

12 (2) The public health, welfare, safety and justice
13 require the use of other languages.

14 (3) The religious freedom or priorities of various
15 persons or groups may be adversely affected.

16 (4) Instruction and learning occur in foreign language
17 courses.

18 Section 5. Personal right of action.

19 (a) Creation of right.--Any resident of this Commonwealth
20 shall have standing to bring an action against the Commonwealth
21 to enforce this act.

22 (b) Jurisdiction.--The Commonwealth Court shall have
23 jurisdiction to hear and decide an action brought under
24 subsection (a).

25 Section 6. Effective date.

26 This act shall take effect in 60 days.