107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 9

Entitled the "English Plus Resolution".

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2001

Mr. SERRANO submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was
referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Entitled the "English Plus Resolution".

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

Whereas many residents of the United States speak native languages other than English, including many languages indigenous to this country, and these linguistic resources should be conserved and developed;

Whereas this Nation was founded on a commitment to democratic principles, and not on racial, ethnic, or religious homogeneity, and has drawn strength from a diversity of languages and cultures and from a respect for individual liberties;

Whereas multilingualism, or the ability to speak languages in addition to English, is a tremendous resource to the

United States because such ability enhances American competitiveness in global markets by permitting improved communication and cross-cultural understanding between producers and suppliers, vendors and clients, and retailers and consumers;

Whereas multilingualism improves United States diplomatic efforts by fostering enhanced communication and greater understanding between nations;

Whereas multilingualism has historically been an essential element of national security, including the use of Native American languages in the development of coded communications during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War;

Whereas multilingualism promotes greater cross-cultural understanding between different racial and ethnic groups in the United States;

Whereas there is no threat to the status of English in the United States, a language that is spoken by 94 percent of United States residents, according to the 1990 United States Census, and there is no need to designate any official United States language or to adopt similar restrictionist legislation;

Whereas ''English-only'' measures, or proposals to designate English as the sole official language of the United States, would violate traditions of cultural pluralism, divide communities along ethnic lines, jeopardize the provision of law enforcement, public health, education, and other vital services to those whose English is limited, impair government efficiency, and undercut the national interest by hindering the development of language skills needed to

enhance international competitiveness and conduct diplomacy; and

Whereas such "English-only" measures would represent an unwarranted Federal regulation of self-expression, abrogate constitutional rights to freedom of expression and equal protection of the laws, violate international human rights treaties to which the United States is a signatory, and contradict the spirit of the 1923 Supreme Court case Meyer v. Nebraska, wherein the Court declared that "The protection of the Constitution extends to all; to those who speak other languages as well as to those born with English on the tongue": Now, therefore, be it

1   *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*

2 *concurring),* That the United States Government should

3 pursue policies that—

4   (1) encourage all residents of this country to

5   become fully proficient in English by expanding edu-

6   cational opportunities and access to information

7   technologies;

8   (2) conserve and develop the Nation's linguistic

9   resources by encouraging all residents of this coun-

10   try to learn or maintain skills in languages other

11   than English;

12   (3) assist Native Americans, Native Alaskans,

13   Native Hawaiians, and other peoples indigenous to

14   the United States, in their efforts to prevent the ex-

15   tinction of their languages and cultures;

1   (4) continue to provide services in languages

2   other than English as needed to facilitate access to

3   essential functions of government, promote public

4   health and safety, ensure due process, promote equal

5   educational opportunity, and protect fundamental

6   rights; and

7   (5) recognize the importance of multilingualism

8   to vital American interests and individual rights, and

9   oppose "English-only" measures and other restric-

10   tionist language measures.

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