

DIRECT SPENDING LEGISLATION—AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS FOR RESOLUTION CHANGES—Continued
[Fiscal Years, in millions of dollars]

House Committee	2007		2008		2008–2012 Total	
	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays	BA	Outlays
Revised allocation:						
Energy and Commerce	−1	−1	429	426	530	519
Natural Resources	0	0	0	0	1,886	1,886
Transportation and Infrastructure	0	0	128	0	1,567	0
Ways and Means	0	0	647	647	612	612

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the text of the bill (H.R. 710) “An Act to amend the National Organ Transplant Act to provide that criminal penalties do not apply to paired donations of human kidneys, and for other purposes.”, and

That the Senate agrees in the House amendment to the title of the above-entitled bill.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 2371) “An Act to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make technical corrections.”.

PROMOTING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE UNITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CLAY). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States Congress again. As many of the Members move forward to go home for the weekend and spend time with their families and their constituents and get in touch with the issues of the day, I delayed my transportation, so I have an opportunity to address you and, in the process, address the American people.

It occurs to me that there is subject after subject that doesn’t quite emerge here on the floor of this Congress for an open topic of debate, and there are central issues around which we should be shaping policy, that policy that affects and directs the destiny of our country.

Some would say that the bill that passed here off the floor, the energy bill, will solve our energy problems and move our destiny in the right direction. I am a skeptic of that, Mr. Speaker. I don’t come to address that so much.

But I believe this, that as a people we must be bound together. There is something unique about being an American. It is something unique, that it is different than coming from another nation in the world. We brought together all people from all cultures and all civilizations and assimilated them into this society to produce a common culture, a form of cultural continuity that binds us together as Americans.

As I listen and engage in debate, and as I read and study history and watch the reactions of people around me and think what it must have been like 50 years ago, when I wasn’t quite paying attention in this country, or 100 years ago, when I wasn’t around, or 200 years ago obviously, as America was shaped, what is it that is unique about us? What has given us our vitality? What has bound us together so that we can work together as one people?

There are a number of common denominators. We live in the same geographical area, we share a common history and we adhere to the rule of law. English common law flowed across the Atlantic Ocean and was established here in this continent, actually not too far down the coastline down at Jamestown in 1607 in Virginia. Four hundred years ago English common law arrived here in the United States.

But another thing that has taken place that is a common denominator, that has bound us together, that has been a powerful force for our society, for the American interests, and a powerful force throughout all humanity, is to have a common language.

Now, one can just take the globe at about any time, and let’s just say going backwards across history, generation by generation, recognizing that national boundaries have shifted over time. They shift because of political transformations within the countries and they shift because of wars.

You can take this back to the city-state era before we actually had nation-states, and identify that the boundaries around the city-states and the boundaries around the nation-states from 300 years ago and earlier were often boundaries that were drawn by lines of language.

Languages grew up in colloquial regions, and because people communicated with each other verbally, languages evolved. And because people didn’t travel in those days the way they travel today, then the languages that evolved in certain locales got more and more distinct and more difficult for the neighbors to understand.

Of course, we track language through, and because of commonalities in language, we also track the migrations and histories of people. But a common language has defined the boundaries of nation-states throughout history.

In France, they speak French; in England, they speak English; in Spain, they speak Spanish; in Portugal, they speak Portuguese; in China they speak Chinese; in Russia, they speak Russian.

Why is that? I never hear anybody talk about that. But the reason for that is because common languages, the languages have defined the boundaries of nations, of nation-states.

Why does a nation-state have a boundary that is defined by its languages? It is because they are a common people. Whether they are Italians or Spaniards or French, they are a common people that are bound together by a common language. They have a common cause. They have a common sense of history. They work together. They communicate with each other. They do business together with far less suspicion because they can communicate quickly and effectively and efficiently with a common language.

There are things that come through languages that cannot be written into print, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, for example. There is voice inflections. There are pauses that are parts of communication. There are certain kinds of pronunciations that change the meaning of a sentence. You can write a sentence out in English, and if you change the meaning of the word “read” and “read,” it spells the same but it means something different. There are all kinds of pronunciations and voice inflections throughout all languages that change the meaning of the communications of that language.

Because of all the nuances that come from the languages and because of the difficulty in understanding very many different languages, we tend to bind ourselves together, pulled around a common sense of purpose, which is a common language.

The strength of America is also common with the strength of many of the other nations, the nations that I mentioned. We have had a common language, too. The common language here in the United States has been English. It has been English since the beginning of the settlement in this continent. Yes, there have been challenges to it. We know there was a challenge from the German language. If I remember correctly, it was Benjamin Franklin who said that if we weren’t careful, that the Germans would assimilate the English speakers before they were assimilated into the English-speaking culture.

But we know that didn’t happen. We know that the English language prevailed. And we know that there have been significantly sized enclaves in America that persisted in hanging on to a language other than English, but

eventually, historically, they have assimilated into all speaking this common language called English.

Well, if one were going to shape and develop and devise a nation-state that had the very best prospect of succeeding and prospering, one of those essential components, and perhaps the most essential component, would be that the people of a nation-state speak a common language.

We have understood that in this country since the beginning of the establishment of the United States of America. In fact, Noah Webster I think understood it I think as well as anyone in the history of our country.

When we think about the history of Noah Webster, the author of the original American English dictionary, as he traveled around through the 13 original colonies of his time and he entered into region after region, he noticed that sometimes he couldn't understand what they were saying. They were all speaking English, most of them were speaking English, but they had chosen to use certain terms in a different way. They had adopted definitions on to other words. They had changed their pronunciations of words. And as he watched this and as he traveled and listened, he began to realize that the colloquial regions in the United States were forming and shaping their own unique languages. Even though they were rooted in English for the most part, he didn't believe it would be very long, another generation or two, and the American people would be no longer speaking the same language; that other languages were evolving from the English language that arrived here, and that eventually some regions in the United States wouldn't be able to communicate with their neighbors.

And Noah Webster believed, and I think correctly, that that would have brought about divisions within the United States, and we would eventually not be a unified country because of our inability to communicate with each other. And even though there is always a way to facilitate communication, even though we can do sign language and we can write notes and we can get an interpreter and exchange communications, and we do that, of course, in this country every day in our international trade constantly, that is not the same as having an instantaneous form of communication where everyone understands everybody and we have that ability to exchange ideas and measure the voice inflection and the pronunciation so that the communication of the message is clear.

Noah Webster understood that. So he set about writing the American English dictionary for that purpose, to be able to provide a common use of language, to provide a common language for the United States, an official language for the United States.

It was Noah Webster's dream that in the Constitution of the United States there would be a constitutional amendment that would establish English as

the official language of the United States of America. He didn't see his dream realized, partly because he helped solve the problem by drafting and writing his American English dictionary. He did so for the express purpose of providing a common language, a utilization of the English language that would be universal from Maine to Florida, all the way up and down the coast of the 13 original colonies, because he understood that if people persisted in different pronunciations for the same word and different definitional use of the same word, that eventually the communications would break down among us as a people and we would be pitted eventually against each other. We would begin to see our neighbors as someone other than our friend and our neighbor and our countryman because we couldn't easily communicate with him.

So he wrote the American English dictionary, established a common language in the United States, and to some extent solved the problem, and it was not necessary in those years to pass a constitutional amendment to establish English as the official language of the United States.

That is the history of Noah Webster and that is the contribution that he gave to this country. And I think that he established that principle of a common language of English and protected it and preserved it. And if we never had Webster, if we had not had someone who had the vision to establish a common language for our country, we may not have held together throughout those years. We may not have actually gotten through the Civil War and bonded ourselves back together again. We might not have fought side by side in the Spanish-American War or World War I or World War II. We might not be the world's only unchallenged superpower today, if we hadn't had the wisdom of the early settlers in the United States, if we hadn't had the wisdom of the Founders, if we hadn't had the wisdom of a Noah Webster to establish English as a common language here in the United States of America.

Now, I want to make the point that in those years there were other languages that could have been just as successful. English was the language that was the language of our original settlers here in the largest number. It could have been German, it could have been French, it could have been Spanish. You can make a case for that throughout history.

But whatever that case is, it is English today. And English happens to be also the global language of commerce. It is the language we do business in in the world. It is the language that we negotiate politically in. At the roundtable in Brussels, at the European Union, when we sit around that roundtable and negotiate with all of those member nations, now I can't actually keep track, it was 15 when I was there last, I think it has gone to 25. But the language of negotiations in Eu-

rope around the roundtable at Brussels in the European Union is English. The representatives there, the French speak English, the Spanish speak English, the Portuguese speak English, because there needs to be a common language of communication. What will it be?

What will the documents be printed in? Do they get printed in 300-some languages that we commonly talk of as being the utilized number of languages in the globe? Or can it be printed in one? Well, if you have a common language, one is it. There is only one definition, there is only one understanding, and there is no misunderstanding, at least substantially less misunderstanding, excuse me.

So if a common language, an official language, a language of communications at the European Union in Brussels is English, and if the international language of business and commerce is English, and it is, and the international language of air traffic controllers that commands all airplanes that are flying and being controlled by air traffic controllers in America is English, and it is, and if the language of the maritime industry, the language that tells ships how to avoid running into each other in the fog is English, and English is the common language of the United States of America, and it gives us a competitive advantage with the rest of the world that does not speak English as fluently when it comes to business, and if it is the language we use when we negotiate in our trade relationships with other countries and the language we use when we negotiate our political disagreements and arrive at our agreements is English, then there is no case that I can think of to be made for the official language of the United States being anything else other than English.

□ 1730

And, Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor tonight to promote a piece of legislation, H.R. 997, the English Language Unity Act, and it establishes English as the official language of the United States of America.

I have just made the case that we didn't need to do that in the early 1800s or the early 1900s, because the people of this country understood the utility of having a common language, English, and because many of the people who came here as legal immigrants adopted themselves to and adapted themselves to and assimilated themselves into an English-speaking culture.

One of the examples would be my grandmother, who arrived here from Germany on March 26, 1894, and she walked through the Great Hall at Ellis Island. She came on the ship New York. Her name is on the manifest. And as she traveled across the United States, having made a commitment to this country, she got married to my grandfather. But my father was raised in a German-speaking home. And when he went to kindergarten on his first

day, which is interesting, a German term “kindergarten,” and it is kindergarten all over America even though it is a German term, but he came back from his first day. He went to kindergarten speaking German, he came back from his first day and said hello to his mother in German. And as my grandmother was working in the kitchen and welcomed him home from his first day of school, she turned to him when he had greeted him in German and said to my father, Speaking German in this household is for you from now on verboten. I came here to become an American and I need to learn English. And you shall go to school and learn English and bring it home and teach it to me. And from that moment forward, my father was forbidden from speaking German in his household because his job was to learn English, to embrace America, to embrace this host Nation, and to teach English to his mother, which he did pretty well.

He never taught her I don't think to get rid of her accent, but she certainly spoke English well enough that I never saw within her an inability to communicate. I always understood her when she told me what to do. But that tone, that acceptance of the host country, America, and the need to honor that by learning the language of the country that received the immigrants, English. And in turn, this country has rewarded people who have learned the English language and assimilated themselves into this culture, because they are rewarded through the chain of commerce, the job opportunities that are there.

And, yes, I know, I run into people that are entrepreneurs that didn't learn English and they did well marketing their goods and doing business. And they said, why did I learn English? I will say they could have done better than they did. A good person with English language skills in this country has an advantage over a good person without English language skills in this country. It is true in every culture and every civilization, if you speak the common language of the country that you are in, then you have an advantage when it comes to business, you have an advantage when it comes to education. In fact it is very, very difficult if not impossible to understand the history and the culture of America without understanding the language of this country. I don't know how that could be done without understanding the language of this country to understand it thoroughly. So I believe we need to establish English as the official language of the United States.

This is not a unique concept to the rest of the world, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it is unique that we do not have an official language here in the United States.

I sat down a few years ago and got down a world almanac. And if you turn to the page where the flags are, there is a flag for each of the countries in the world. And I sat next to me the “World Book Encyclopedia,” this is pre-digital

era; now I would look it up on the Internet. But as I turned the pages through the “World Book Encyclopedia,” I looked up every country in the world, every country that had a flag registered in the “World Almanac.” And there in the “World Book Encyclopedia,” in the first paragraph of the description of the countries it will show “official language.” I looked up the official language of every country in the world, and there was an official language, at least one, some have several, but at least one official language on record in the “World Book Encyclopedia” for every nation on this planet except the United States of America.

So when we talk about establishing an official language here, English, the official language of the United States, and I hear people cry out that somehow that is a major inconvenience to people who come here speaking other languages and that we don't need an official language, that kind of argument defies the logic of the rest of the world. The logic of the rest of the world understands that there has to be official documents, there have to be official proceedings. There has to be an agreement on what language means. And if we will accept any language into our official activities here in the Federal Government, then we are forever litigating the differences between the interpretations of those languages.

For example, let's just say that we had two people that came together and signed a contract, and one of them wanted that contract in Vietnamese and the other wanted the contract in Korean. And so they agreed verbally, even though they didn't communicate with each other because of a lack of the common language skill, that they would have a contract each in Korean and Vietnamese. And they each then signed the contract. The one provider who signed the contract was, let's say, the owner who was going to pay to have their house remodeled, they have a misunderstanding. And the contractor who adheres to the Korean language says: I have a disagreement; you've not upheld your end of this contract. And the owner, who might have this contract that he understands in Vietnamese, says: You have not held up your end of the contract.

How do we litigate something like that within the courts of the United States of America when there is a disagreement on the interpretation between two languages that are not common languages in the United States but official languages of the countries where they came from? Can we be litigating those kind of disagreements? Or can we simply say, a contract with the Federal Government is an official document; it shall be in English. If you choose to interpret that into another language for the purposes of the utility of your needs, that is fine with us, but we aren't going to litigate the difference in the courts of America because of people who refuse to use the

official language of the United States, which needs to be established as English. That is one explanation.

Another explanation of this, of that need, would be, as I sat down with one of the ambassadors to the United States from Israel just a few years ago, he explained to the group, and if I remember correctly, it was the Policy Committee that was hosting the ambassador, that Israel had established Hebrew as the official language of Israel in 1954. Mr. Speaker, I would remind you that Israel was established as a nation in 1948, and just 6 years after they became a nation, certainly they had war, they had turmoil, they were at great risk, but they were shaping and laying the foundations for a nation that was going to have enemies surrounding them in all directions.

A very precarious spot for a nation to be in, the most important things needed to be focused upon, and the very best and most effective foundations for a nation needed to be laid, and yet just 6 years after they were established as a country they established Hebrew as the official language of Israel.

And I asked the ambassador, Why did you do this? Why did you establish an official language, and why did you choose Hebrew? And he said, We saw the success in the United States of assimilation from people all over the world coming into the United States and being accepted as Americans. We recognized that we were bringing refugees from all over the world, mostly Jews, to come live in Israel, reaching out to them; and they spoke languages from dozens of different countries and we didn't have a common language in Israel. We needed a language that bound us all together and identified us as Israelis and so we chose Hebrew.

And I asked again, but why Hebrew? Hebrew had been the language that was used primarily and almost exclusively in prayer for the last 2,000 years. The Israelis resurrected basically a dead language as far as street communication, business communication, commerce was concerned, and they brought Hebrew back up again and established it as the official language of their country and taught the Hebrew language to all Israelis. And today, as someone immigrates into Israel, they go to an assimilation center, I will call it; they have a different name which I don't recall, where they are taught in 6 months to learn the Hebrew language and to go out and function and perform within the broader society of Israel. So Israelis that learned Hebrew have that unique identifying quality. They can walk up to any other Israeli, speak to each other in Hebrew, and they will be bound together in the nation of Israel by that common language.

And just as an aside, Mr. Speaker, those who come to Israel who come from countries where they may be illiterate in their native language, the Israelis then teach them to be literate in the written and spoken word of their native language, and then transition

them into Hebrew, teaching them the written and the spoken language of Hebrew. That is about an 18-month process rather than the 6-month process of those who are literate in their own language who come into Israel and are taught Hebrew.

They make this work. This is not a language that is known very much throughout the world. They resurrected a language that wasn't utilized, but they identified that a common language would bind people together in the nation state and that would help them work together and help them struggle together and help them fight together to defend themselves from their enemies from without. And one of the powerful, unifying forces they recognized was a common language.

And, here in this country, we remain the only country in the world that doesn't have an official language. We say English is our common language, but we have forces out here seeking to subdivide us, and we have billions of dollars that flow out of this Congress that go into the hands of people who are promoting division in America and not unity in America. The message that many immigrants get when they arrive here in this country is, if you learn English, and this message is clearly given as part of the debate here on the floor, if you learn English, you give up your own culture. That is the message that we hear.

Not true. In my neighborhood, I look around my neighborhood and certain communities that were ethnic enclaves when they were settled, German, Danish, Irish, Swedish, to name a few in my neighborhood, but the people that came here speaking a foreign language have adapted into English, and hardly any of them speak another language other than English that live there. But you could not convince them that they have given up their culture. You can't convince a German that their culture has changed dramatically because they have adhered to a common language here.

Now, I think utilization of other languages and language skills are a good thing, and I encourage young people to study foreign languages. I use that in the analysis of culture and use that in trade and use that in foreign travel and use that to help open up our negotiations and discussions and reduce the friction and the conflict from nation to nation. Those are all good things. But a common language within a country binds it together, and accepting English as our official language means that the people who do so are tied more to a common sense of history, more to a common cause.

As I listened to testimony that came before the small business community sometime back, we had a witness that came in who was second in command to Elaine Chao, the Department of Labor, and she testified that they had difficulty in finding enough workers who could go into a factory and be taught how to run the punch press or the lathe

or common manufacturing equipment, not because they lacked the education and not because they lacked the intellectual ability, the brain power, so to speak, Mr. Speaker. No, because they lacked the language skills. They didn't understand enough English, so they couldn't be taught how to run a punch press or a lathe. They couldn't work in that environment because of the lack of language skills.

And so I listened to that testimony and I said to the witness, I can understand why you would have that difficulty with first-generation immigrants. But can you tell me, do you encounter second-generation immigrants, people who were born in the United States of America, born into an English-speaking country, that haven't learned to speak English? Are they part of this problem? Do you run across those incidents? And into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD she answered me, Yes, we do. We run into second-generation immigrants, native-born Americans that don't learn enough English to work in that factory. In fact, we have third-generation Americans that haven't learned enough English to go to work in these factories. And they are not included in the opportunities that are provided by the jobs in these regions because, if they haven't learned the language enough to work in the factory by three generations, now how do we convince the rest of the public and how am I to be convinced that they have assimilated into society, that they adhere to the American Dream, that they salute the flag and know the Pledge and say the Pledge?

□ 1745

How do we know that they would put on the uniform of this country and defend America? What would indicate to us that they have embraced this host Nation? If the grandchildren of the immigrants who move here don't learn English, what does that tell us about our society? Have we failed them? Have they failed us? I would submit, Mr. Speaker, it is some of each. They have failed to embrace this country and we have failed to set up a system that brings them in and welcomes them into our society and gives them the skills that allow them to be successful and feel they are part of this great Nation and part of this citizenship of being an American that is such a blessing.

Another argument that argues compellingly for an official language here in the United States goes back to 245 B.C. That is before Christ, for those of you who are getting the modern-day education. So 245 B.C., the first emperor of China, and they have tried to teach me how to say that in Chinese. I have never learned, but it is Qin Shi Huangdi. So Qin Shi Huangdi, the first emperor of China, pronounced correctly by the Chinese, not by me, had a vision. He recognized that there were 300-some provinces in China, separate regional areas. Certainly there were that many different colloquial languages that were in China.

As he traveled around that part of the world that we see today as China, he recognized that they had a common culture. The Chinese people, as we know them today, wear similar clothing and have similar work habits. They had had similar religions across the spectrum to some degree, and yet they didn't speak a common language and so they couldn't communicate with each other, which means that they didn't trade and travel. And when enemies came from without, they were not able to organize themselves to defend themselves from within because they didn't have the communication skills and ability to speak a common language.

So the first emperor of China looked about and decided I am going to establish a common language for China. He hired a group of scribes, scholars of the day, and said go to work and write a common language. I want all of the Chinese people to be able to communicate in the same language.

The scribes sat down and drafted this language, and the language that was created by the scribes under the first emperor of China is a language that has about 5,000 commonly used characters, about 50,000 out at the limits of the expanse of the varieties of the characters, picture words is how they have put that together, and I can't begin to understand it, but I can tell you that the common language that was created, especially the written language of the Chinese, has bound them together. They recognize the writing and they can read script that comes from any corner of the country.

So 245 B.C. is about the era that this began, and the first emperor of China's vision was to unite the Chinese people for the next 10,000 years. For the next 10,000 years. What a dream. We are about a fourth of the way through that and there is no sign that the Chinese people are going to be ununited or disunited. And yes, they have different versions of the Chinese language that they do speak on the continent. Cantonese and Mandarin come to mind, but the written language is the same. And the literate Chinese can read and write it. And it has to be hard to put those pictures together on a Chinese keyboard today, but they do it. And they are bound together as one people.

And the vision of the first emperor of China was that he saw some other commonalities that he wanted to establish. Also, there were sections of the Great Wall of China that were not connected, and so the invaders from without could go around the wall and come in. The first emperor of China connected the sections of the walls of China so it became one Great Wall instead of disconnected sections of the wall.

And he established the terra-cotta guards. He also recognized the widths of the ox carts weren't the same and so the ruts would put stress on the wheels and you might break a wheel. He standardized the axle spacing of the ox carts so they could travel and do commerce. He had a vision, a standardization.

Imagine a train, an engine and a set of cars of a train that has a different width of track. When you reach another set of track, you have to off-load your cargo and put it on a car that will travel on that different width.

What would it be like if every State in the Union had a different width for the railcars? It would debilitate rail travel, so we standardize it. We have one gauge of track that takes you anywhere in the United States of America.

We have had one language that takes you anywhere in the United States of America, until such time as the multiculturalists cut loose here in the last 20 to 30 years and began to try to convince people, don't assimilate into this culture, just simply hang onto the culture you brought with you and dig yourself in in an ethnic enclave and raise two and three and maybe even a fourth generation of people whose hope lies within the enclave and not with the Nation outside the enclave.

It doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker, for us not to have an official language here in the United States because an official language provides a motivation and an incentive for all regions of the country to adapt themselves to an official language.

If they do that, then they will be teaching English within the enclaves in America, the places where I can't go to communicate with anybody anymore. And why do I, in the heartland of America, need to walk into a bank or convenience store and get out my card at an ATM, and I stick my card in there and the first question it asks me is: What language do you want to communicate in? I have to read all of that. If I read it from the bottom to the top, it will burn up to 7 or 8 seconds until I get to the top. Then I push the English button and wait for the transaction to light up the screen. If you push the button wrong, you have to start guessing again to back out of it.

Because we provide multiple languages on street signs or multiple languages on ATMs and multiple languages on directions, it doesn't help people have an incentive to learn English.

Mr. Speaker, it works like this. If I pull up to a stop sign in Kuwait and in Arabic it says "stop" and in English it says "stop," my eyes go to the language that I understand. No matter how hard I try to memorize what "stop" looks like in Arabic, I am never going to learn Arabic because it is always there enabling me to take the English way out, the easy way out, the part that I know.

And if we provide ATMs in foreign languages, I don't have a law that bans that. That is a free commerce idea. Please do what you want to do, bankers. If I have a choice, I will go to the ATM that gives it to me only in English because I don't want the confusion. But that is a free market plan. I don't disagree with that, but I am making the point that multiple language availability does nothing but en-

able people to continue living in the enclave and not assimilate and learn the language.

So official documents and proceedings here in the United States need to be in English. I ask the States to establish and pass the same kind of policy. And there are nearly 30 States that do have English as the official language. Iowa is one of them. I did spend 6 years establishing English as the official language of the State of Iowa. That requires that all official documents and official proceedings be in English. And it has commonsense exceptions like justice. You wouldn't lock up a criminal if they didn't understand the charges against them. We would provide health care to people regardless of whether they understood the language or not.

We do provide driver's license tests in at least six different languages. I disagree with that. I do believe that should not be an exception. But regardless, that is the policy that is out there. A number approaching and maybe actually meeting 30 States have English as the official language in one form or another to pull people together, to bind us together, not to divide us apart.

And the effort to divide constantly comes from this side of the aisle and it pits Americans against Americans. But we understand that the official language is inclusive not exclusive. Every nation in the world has an official language except the United States because it understands the unifying power of a common language.

The polls support this. You can look at polls that show from 82 percent of Americans support English as the official language on up to 88 percent of Americans support English as the official language.

English is a common form of communications currency in this country and in business and in air traffic control and in politics and in maritime industry throughout the world. We need to establish it here because holding that principle together sends the message to people who come here that this Congress, this Nation, the majority of the States from within, expect you to learn English.

They come here expecting to learn English. None of us go to a foreign country and seek to impose our language on the government of a foreign country. If I walk into a service in France, I will have to be doing business with them in French. They don't feel compelled to pay for my interpreter or to print road signs in languages in France other than French.

But one might take a look up to Quebec, a province in Canada, to give some instruction on what happens when a society is split apart by competing languages. Cultures follow down the line of language. When you speak a common language, it pulls your culture together. When you can't communicate with each other, it divides the culture.

So the French speakers in Quebec have been insistent that they continue

speaking French. When you go into Quebec in those regions, the street signs are in French. There have been two votes in my memory, and one of them I believe was about a decade ago, where Quebec voted on whether to secede from the rest of Canada. And thinking about that, it was the Quebecois who had the decision to make. It wasn't put out for the rest of Canada, just the Quebecois. They came within less than 1 percentage point of separating Quebec from the rest of Canada. Had they done that, they would have effectively separated Canada into three separate geographical regions. Everything west of Quebec to the Pacific Ocean would have been a region, Quebec itself a separate region, and the maritime provinces on the east side a separate region. The English-speaking components of Canada would have been the east and west, and in the heart would have been Quebec, the French-speaking province. They came within less than 1 percentage point of seceding Quebec from the rest of Canada. And why? Because they insisted upon not speaking a common language of the nation that they were part of, Canada.

If you ask anybody in Canada that lived through that era and asked them if English had been the official language of Canada from its beginning, had been the language of educational instruction and science and technology and business in all of Canada, the remnants of the French language would have persisted and it would have existed within the culture and been part of the conversational language going on in Quebec, but it wouldn't have been a political divider. The wedge that came down between the Canadians was a wedge driven exactly along the lines of language because the lines of language define the lines of culture, and it separated people politically and pitted them against each other.

If they only communicated in a common language, all French or all English, there never would have been a vote that came up before the Canadian people, and the risk of that nation being fractured apart would never have been faced by the voters. There is always a movement by Quebec separatists, but it seems to have been tamped down recently. But language is the fault line. If you want to erase fault lines in nations, you need a common language for the nation.

So I will make the point, there has never been a successful multilingual nation in the history of the world. The Soviet Union would be a very good example of this. The Soviet Union was put together and cobbled together by force, by military force, by economic leverage. We looked at all of the different regions of the Soviet bloc, and I grew up living with that and doing the air raid drills at the same time, watching the Soviet Union and the distinctions between Russia and the balance of the Soviet satellite states.

If you look at those satellite states today after the wall came down on November 9, 1989, we saw freedom echoed across Eastern Europe all of the way to the Pacific Ocean, losing some of that today, it appears, in Russia. But the Nations that spun themselves off were nations that were distinct by language. The languages in the Baltic states re-established some of their languages as their official language. They were trying to impose Russian on them, and the Baltic states rejected that to some degree.

□ 1800

They've gone back and re-established their native languages as their official language. It binds them together as a people. Polish binds the Poles together. Bulgarian, well, that's another subject. But if we go down into a place like Kurdistan, they speak a distinct language. The languages again are the defined borders of the nation states that emerged when they broke away from the Soviet bloc after the wall came down in 1989. This is a simple concept to understand in history. If you watch the map change, of the world, watch it change historically, and as that map changes, ask yourselves, what are these lines? Are they lines of language? Generally, they are. The lines of language generally match the lines of culture. And if we can speak a common language, it binds us together as a common people.

And so H.R. 997, English is the official language, is a piece of legislation that establishes English as the official language of the United States of America. It requires that all official activities and documents of the government be in English, and provides common-sense exceptions so that we can continue to do business in this country without confusion, without lack of communication, and still, at the same time, we make those exceptions so that no one is disenfranchised that is in this country, at least legally, and has a legal access to some of those benefits.

I think about another form of history, or another experience in history that has to do with the Spaniards as they arrived in the New World and down into the Central American region. And if you remember, as the conquistadores moved their way northward, they went on into the areas of southern Arizona, as we know it today, the Pueblo Indian area. And there you had the Zunis, the Hopis and the Anasazi Native Americans that were in that region. They come to mind as I look back upon the history because, as the Spaniards invaded into that territory and as they came into the communities, the settlements, the Indian villages, it was easy for them to take on one village and raid that village and destroy the opposition within the village and enslave the balance of the Native Americans that were not killed in the invasion and the occupation of the villages.

And the Spanish conquistadores could go, in the 1500s, they could go

from village to village. And even though those neighborhoods were common in culture, the Native Americans in that region wore similar clothing, ate similar foods, had similar habits and practices and similar work habits, they didn't speak a common language because they lived in enclaves. They hadn't traveled and traded. Because they didn't interchange their cultures, because they didn't have a common language, the Spanish were able to divide and conquer the Native Americans in that region in southern Arizona in the 1500s, the Zunis, the Hopis, and the Anasazis, and perhaps others.

But as the Native Americans were enslaved by the Spaniards, they were taken into the missions and there they were converted to Christianity and they were taught Spanish. They imposed the Spanish language on the Native Americans in the southern parts of Arizona.

And guess what happened, Mr. Speaker? The Native Americans, the Zunis, the Hopis and the Anasazis, they figured out that now they had a lingua franca, they had a common language, the common language being Spanish which was taught to them and imposed upon them within the missions in the southern part of the United States; and because now they had a common language they could bind together, maybe they came together, and they threw the Spanish out. For decades they kept the Spanish out of that region and they defended their own neighborhood and their own country because they had learned something from being occupied, and that was they learned a common language. Even though it wasn't their native language, it was the language of their conquerors, they adopted and adapted to the Spanish language and used that common language, that common form of communication as currency, a lingua franca, to throw out their oppressors and their invaders and live free for decades and some will say perhaps as long as 200 years before the Spanish were able to impose their will again on the Native Americans of that region.

That's a piece of history that's hard to find. It's hard to find a place to read. It's hard to find something to study on it. It's a component that I think is quite interesting and instructive.

A common language binds us together. It lets us communicate for a common cause. It's going to move this Nation forward and make us more successful than we have been in the past. It preserves our culture, our history, our heritage. It gives us a common experience. It ties us to our history, and it lets an American go from corner to corner, from Maine to California and from Washington to Florida, and pick up a newspaper or walk into a store or a church or a park or a school or anywhere and be able to communicate in a common form of communications currency, at least with government. And if government uses the common form, the incentive will be there for others to use that common form.

It doesn't discourage learning other languages. I encourage that we learn other languages in order to communicate with other countries. But to be a foreigner, to be a stranger in your homeland, to go to a region of America that 50 years ago was an English-speaking region and today, where people do not speak English, within the United States of America, tells me that we haven't done the job of assimilation. We haven't found the formula to promote this inclusiveness that's necessary to bind us together with the common form of communications currency.

And so the bill establishes English as the official language. It's very simple. It says, official language of the United States. The Federal Government shall have an affirmative obligation to preserve and enhance the role of English as the official language of the Federal Government. And the official functions of government are to be conducted in English. Official functions of the Government of the United States shall be in English. And then the practical exceptions that I mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, are exceptions for the teaching of languages, any requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, any actions, documents or policies necessary for national security, for international relations, trade, tourism or commerce, all excepted within the bill. It has exceptions of language requirements for documents that protect the public health and safety of the United States, or any documents that facilitate the activities of the census.

We need to be able to count people here. And any actions that protect the rights of victims of crimes or their defendants, the legal portion of this, and then any use of terms or art or phrases from languages other than English, and certainly, that would include the geographical regions like Iowa; that's a Native American name.

And so we also have a requirement here in the United States that if you're to be naturalized as an American citizen, you have an obligation, an affirmative obligation to demonstrate proficiency in both written and the spoken English language. And as I watch some of the naturalization ceremonies that we have, and I speak at a number of them, and I watch the reactions of those being naturalized, if I tell a joke in a speech in that environment, Mr. Speaker, those that get the joke laugh. And those that don't understand the language do not. It tells me that we really don't have a very high standard in requiring proficiency in English in order to be naturalized as an American citizen.

That is the law, Mr. Speaker. And the law is written with a vision in mind that we need to be bound together as one people. So I am here to endorse H.R. 997, English as the official language. It will bind us together as one people. It will give us a common form of communications currency. It

will make us a stronger and better Nation and a stronger and better people for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I would yield back the balance of my time.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1585, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

Mr. SKELTON submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 1585) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes:

[The conference report will be printed in Book II of the RECORD.]

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2082, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

Mr. SKELTON submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 2082) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 110-478)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2082), to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—BUDGET AND PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATIONS

Sec. 101. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 102. Classified Schedule of Authorizations.

Sec. 103. Personnel ceiling adjustments.

Sec. 104. Intelligence Community Management Account.

Sec. 105. Specific authorization of funds within the National Intelligence Program for which fiscal year 2008 appropriations exceed amounts authorized.

TITLE II—CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY RETIREMENT AND DISABILITY SYSTEM

Sec. 201. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 202. Technical modification to mandatory retirement provision of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act.

TITLE III—GENERAL INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY MATTERS

Subtitle A—Personnel Matters

Sec. 301. Increase in employee compensation and benefits authorized by law.

Sec. 302. Enhanced flexibility in nonreimbursable details to elements of the intelligence community.

Sec. 303. Multi-level security clearances.

Sec. 304. Pay authority for critical positions.

Sec. 305. Delegation of authority for travel on common carriers for intelligence collection personnel.

Sec. 306. Annual personnel level assessments for the intelligence community.

Sec. 307. Comprehensive report on intelligence community contractors.

Sec. 308. Report on proposed pay for performance intelligence community personnel management system.

Sec. 309. Report on plans to increase diversity within the intelligence community.

Subtitle B—Acquisition Matters

Sec. 311. Vulnerability assessments of major systems.

Sec. 312. Business enterprise architecture and business system modernization for the intelligence community.

Sec. 313. Reports on the acquisition of major systems.

Sec. 314. Excessive cost growth of major systems.

Subtitle C—Other Matters

Sec. 321. Restriction on conduct of intelligence activities.

Sec. 322. Clarification of definition of intelligence community under the National Security Act of 1947.

Sec. 323. Modification of availability of funds for different intelligence activities.

Sec. 324. Protection of certain national security information.

Sec. 325. Extension of authority to delete information about receipt and disposition of foreign gifts and decorations.

Sec. 326. Report on compliance with the Detainee Treatment Act of 2005 and related provisions of the Military Commissions Act of 2006.

Sec. 327. Limitation on interrogation techniques.

Sec. 328. Limitation on use of funds.

Sec. 329. Incorporation of reporting requirements.

Sec. 330. Repeal of certain reporting requirements.

TITLE IV—MATTERS RELATING TO ELEMENTS OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

Subtitle A—Office of the Director of National Intelligence

Sec. 401. Clarification of limitation on colocation of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Sec. 402. Membership of the Director of National Intelligence on the Transportation Security Oversight Board.

Sec. 403. Additional duties of the Director of Science and Technology.

Sec. 404. Leadership and location of certain offices and officials.

Sec. 405. Plan to implement recommendations of the data center energy efficiency reports.

Sec. 406. Comprehensive listing of special access programs.

Sec. 407. Reports on the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea.

Sec. 408. Requirements for accountability reviews by the Director of National Intelligence.

Sec. 409. Modification of limitation on delegation by the Director of National Intelligence of the protection of intelligence sources and methods.

Sec. 410. Authorities for intelligence information sharing.

Sec. 411. Authorities of the Director of National Intelligence for interagency funding.

Sec. 412. Title of Chief Information Officer of the Intelligence Community.

Sec. 413. Inspector General of the Intelligence Community.

Sec. 414. Annual report on foreign language proficiency in the intelligence community.

Sec. 415. Director of National Intelligence report on retirement benefits for former employees of Air America.

Sec. 416. Space intelligence.

Sec. 417. Operational files in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Sec. 418. Inapplicability of Federal Advisory Committee Act to advisory committees of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Sec. 419. Applicability of the Privacy Act to the Director of National Intelligence and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Sec. 420. Repeal of certain authorities relating to the Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive.

Subtitle B—Central Intelligence Agency

Sec. 431. Review of covert action programs by Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Sec. 432. Inapplicability to Director of the Central Intelligence Agency of requirement for annual report on progress in auditable financial statements.

Sec. 433. Additional functions and authorities for protective personnel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Sec. 434. Technical amendments relating to titles of certain Central Intelligence Agency positions.

Sec. 435. Clarifying amendments relating to section 105 of the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004.

Subtitle C—Defense Intelligence Components

Sec. 441. Enhancement of National Security Agency training program.

Sec. 442. Codification of authorities of National Security Agency protective personnel.

Sec. 443. Inspector general matters.

Sec. 444. Confirmation of appointment of heads of certain components of the intelligence community.

Sec. 445. Clarification of national security missions of National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency for analysis and dissemination of certain intelligence information.

Sec. 446. Security clearances in the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.

Subtitle D—Other Elements

Sec. 451. Clarification of inclusion of Coast Guard and Drug Enforcement Administration as elements of the intelligence community.

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

Subtitle A—General Intelligence Matters

Sec. 501. Extension of National Commission for the Review of the Research and Development Programs of the United States Intelligence Community.

Sec. 502. Report on intelligence activities.

Sec. 503. Aerial reconnaissance platforms.