

THE PROENGLISH Advocate

ProEnglish Testifies Before Congress

ProEnglish Chairwoman Dr. Rosalie Porter testified before the United States House of Representatives on August 2 in support of official English legislation. Her testimony was heard in front of the House Judiciary's Subcommittee on the Constitution.

Dr. Porter spoke in favor of Rep. Steve King (R-IA)'s "English Language Unity Act," (H.R. 997), which currently has 122 bipartisan cosponsors. Dr. Porter arrived to the United States with her family at the age of six from Italy. No one in her family knew English when they arrived, however her immersion in the English language allowed her to succeed in this country.



Dr. Rosalie Porter

"If I had not been encouraged to learn English growing up as a child, I might never have earned my under-

graduate and graduate degrees from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst," she stated during her testimony. "Thankfully, I received a wonderful education from this country after learning English, and that is why I am committed to making sure we protect our common language."

Rep. King spoke first in support of his bill and introduced it by stating: "I've always admired my grandmother who sent my father to school as a German-speaking son of an immigrant (...). She said to him, 'You will go to school to learn English and bring it home to teach it to me.'"

"My grandmother realized that learning English enabled generations of Americans to achieve the American dream through opportunity and liberty," Rep. King added. "Learning English decreases reliance on government and increases personal freedom."

After his testimony, Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) voiced concerns that an official English bill would make it more difficult for him to communicate with his constituents in Manhattan and Brooklyn, where a variety of different languages are spoken, in-

cluding "Spanish, Yiddish, Vietnamese, French, Creole, and Russian."

Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) followed this by reading his opening statement entirely in (broken) Spanish: "Lo que nos une no es una lengua, pero los ideales compartidos..." ("What unites us is not a language, but shared ideals...").

After Rep. Conyers remarks, the chairman of the subcommittee, Rep. Trent Franks (R-AZ) said Rep. Conyers remarks showed why we needed an official English law: "I would ask the gentleman in the interest of fairness here, and certainly to Mr. Nadler's district, that would you repeat that in Yiddish and Vietnamese and French as well?"

"Nothing would make the point better than if we conducted all our debates in different languages, and I suppose that makes the case for this bill better than anything else," Rep. Franks added.

The next witness to testify on the "English Language Unity Act" was ProEnglish chairman Dr. Porter. She stated: "Making English the official language of the United States would

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English Language Debate Heats Up in Puerto Rico Ahead of Referendum

While visiting Puerto Rico in March ahead of the GOP primary there, former GOP Presidential candidate Senator Rick Santorum was interviewed by El Vocero radio and was asked about the island remaining Spanish-speaking if it decides to petition for U.S. Statehood. Sen. Santorum replied, "English must be the main language. Other states have more than one language, like Hawaii, but to be a state of the Union, English has to be the main language."

After Sen. Santorum's pronouncement, the news media both in Puerto Rico and within the mainland United States went unhinged, mocking Santorum for daring to recognize longstanding precedent when non-English speaking territories have applied for statehood in the past (for example, states such as LA, NM, AZ, HI, and OK were all required to adopt English as their primary language of government and the schools upon admission as a U.S. State). Geraldo Rivera joined in to attack Senator Santorum's position, so ProEnglish board member Phil Kent joined him on his nationally syndicated radio show to set the record straight.

Later that week, primary rival and presumed presidential nominee Mitt Romney visited the island and took the opposite position. Gov. Romney told Kike Cruz of the Noti-Uno radio station in San Juan that he would not make Offi-

cial English in Puerto Rico a condition of statehood, "I'm not looking for other conditions or other changes." (You can listen to Governor Romney's interview with El Vocero on ProEnglish's YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/ProEnglishOrg).

"The Romney campaign has today insinuated that Gov. Romney opposes an English language requirement of any kind, but why does the Governor oppose making English the language of government and schools in Puerto Rico?" asked ProEnglish board member Phil Kent. Gov. Romney's position on opposing



an English requirement for statehood is problematic. No territory with a primary official language other than English has ever been admitted to the Union and no existing U.S. state government operates in any other language on a day-to-day basis. Puerto Rico would be a striking exception. So this leaves Romney on the opposite side of 87% of Americans who favor official English for the United States. It also ignores Congress' 2010 vote to "un-rig" the referendum process and give Puerto Ricans the option to main-

tain their present status, Commonwealth.

That amendment was offered by Rep. Virginia Foxx of North Carolina and it passed by a vote of 223 to 179. As Romney noted in his radio interview, English is currently a dual official language with Spanish in Puerto Rico, but that hardly ends the debate. If Puerto Rico petitions for U.S. statehood, it would be completely reasonable, and in keeping with precedent for territories with majority non-English speaking populations, that it will be expected to go the way of Hawaii. That is, retaining two official languages but changing its official language policy to de facto English. Hawaii still uses Native Hawaiian for some official ceremonies, documents, etc. But it does not conduct its daily state government business or teach school children in Native Hawaiian. That is done in English.

The Puerto Rican status referendum is fast approaching on November 6th, and to date, Romney has not addressed his policy inconsistency in opposing English for Puerto Rican statehood while espousing that he believes English should be made the official language of the U.S. federal government. Polls continue to indicate that the vote on the question of statehood in Puerto Rico will be a close one, and a clear message from Governor Romney on English may likely help to determine the outcome of the referendum.

The ProEnglish Advocate

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ProEnglish News



Dr. Asgar Asgarov Joins ProEnglish Board of Directors



In June, Dr. Asgar Asgarov was unanimously approved by the ProEnglish Board of Directors to join the board. Prior to this, Dr. Asgarov sat on the ProEnglish Board of Advisors.

Dr. Asgar Asgarov “He is seriously committed to the central place of English as the unifying element in our multi-lingual country” ProEnglish Chairman Dr. Rosalie Porter said. “And what a wealth of languages he adds to our organization with his fluency in Russian, Turkish, French, Japanese, Azeri and English.”

A native from Azerbaijan, Dr. Asgarov is a graduate of St. Olaf’s College (B.A.), Stanford University (M.A.), and holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Maryland. He is the author of American Diplomatic Dispatches about the Internal Conditions in the Soviet Union, 1917-1933. This book addresses early experiences of the Soviet citizenry under Communist rule.

In May, Dr. Asgarov testified for ProEnglish before the Board of County Commissioners in Queen Anne’s County, Maryland in favor of an official English language. (See story on page 4). The ordinance passed four to one.

Dr. Asgarov stated in his testimony: “Passing this ordinance will help promote immigrants’ successful integration into American life, save taxpayer dollars, and set a good precedent for other counties and the Maryland state legislature to follow.”

Tony Casella Begins Summer Internship With ProEnglish

This summer, Tony Casella joined ProEnglish to intern with the organization. He is providing ProEnglish with additional assistance in programs, research, and writing. Mr. Casella is a recent graduate of St. John’s Fisher College in upstate New York, where he is originally from.

Previously, he worked in Washington, D.C. as an intern for FreedomWorks. He helped them set up grassroots events around the country.

“The main thing that I’ve learned from working here at ProEnglish, is how much we’re spending in taxpayer dollars on bilingual education and other unnecessary translation costs,” Mr. Casella said.

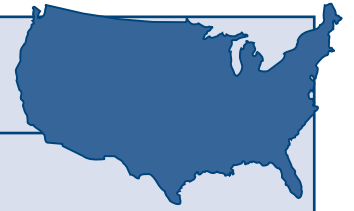
Richard Munro Joins ProEnglish Board of Advisors

ProEnglish welcomes Richard Munro to the Board of Advisors. Mr. Munro is a high school teacher of Spanish in California, and has been teaching for over 25 years. Mr. Munro is passionate about the cause of official English and English language immersion for immigrants. He has his B.A. in Spanish and History from New York University and an M.A. in Spanish Literature from the University of Northern Iowa.

“We’re delighted to have such a talented and committed individual join our board of advisors.”

– Chairman Rosalie Porter

Around the Nation



ProEnglish Participates in "Hold Their Feet to the Fire"



Robert Vandervoort

This past May, ProEnglish attended the annual "Hold Their Feet to the Fire" event in Washington, D.C. that was hosted by the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). The two-day event brought radio personalities from all over the United States

to our nation's capitol to discuss issues of immigration and assimilation. The goal of the annual event is for talk radio hosts to gather at once in Washington, D.C. and to try and hold the politicians "feet to the fire" on these hot button issues.

ProEnglish's Robert Vandervoort and Suzanne Bibby were guests at the event and were interviewed by numerous radio show hosts across the country, from California to Virginia. They spoke at length about bilingual education, multilingual ballots, and current legislation pending in Congress, such as *The English Language Unity Act* (House Resolution 997).

Nationally syndicated radio hosts like Lars Larson and Andy Parks were amazed to learn during their live recordings that English was not the official language of the United States. ProEnglish even cleared up many of the misconceptions about language laws and how the lack of official English hurts the American taxpayer.

Official English issues were well received at "Hold Their Feet to the Fire." ProEnglish educated tens of thousands of listeners all over the country and will be sure be back next year.

Anne's the *second* Maryland county to adopt this type of ordinance. Frederick County, MD was the first to do so in February of this year.

Commissioner David Olds introduced the English ordinance and offered the ProEnglish model language as a substitute amendment, which the commissioners agreed to adopt.

"ProEnglish recommended that the Queen Anne's commissioners amend the proposed ordinance to reflect the ProEnglish model ordinance language, which has proven to withstand legal attack and specifically defines what official English actually means and how the county can effectively enforce it," said ProEnglish Executive Director Robert Vandervoort.

Unlike the public hearing in Frederick County which saw about 20 angry protestors attend the hearing, only one county resident testified to oppose the ordinance in Queen Anne's.

ProEnglish's own board member **Dr. Asgar Asgarov**, a Marylander, testified for ProEnglish in favor of the ordinance at the public hearing in Queen Anne's on April 24th. Dr. Asgarov is a naturalized U.S. citizen and a native of Azerbaijan who was among the first group of exchange students from the former Soviet Union to arrive in the United States in 1993.

Dr. Asgarov testified, **"Language is the glue that binds us together as Americans. This is not an anti-immigrant measure. It's about encouraging assimilation.** This is the language of our nation, and immigrants should be encouraged to learn the language."



Another Maryland County Adopts Official English

Queen Anne's County Board of County Commissioners voted 4-1 in April to approve English as the official language of the county. This makes Queen

ProEnglish hopes that other counties in Maryland will continue to follow the lead of both Frederick and Queen Anne's in introducing and adopting official English, since the state legislature to date has refused to pass a statewide official English law.

Around the Nation



Pizza Patrón

Pizza Chain Offers Free Pizzas for “Spanish-only” Orders

A pizza franchise landed in hot water when they decided to give away free pizza to customers who ordered in Spanish. This past June, Pizza Patrón, a company based in Houston, felt the promotion was a good idea considering 70% of their costumers are Spanish-speaking.

Andrew Gamm, the brand director for Pizza Patrón said, “It makes perfect sense to us. We’re trying to make our bond with the Hispanic community stronger.” But this promotion has made many people very upset.

Peter Thomas, chairman of the Conservative Caucus said, “It seems to punish people who can’t speak Spanish, and I resent that.” He added, “In public areas, people should be speaking English, and that includes pizza parlors.”

Marcela Gomez, president of Hispanic Marketing Group, a Latino marketing firm in Tennessee shared similar sentiments. “Maybe they [Pizza Patrón] thought it was a cute thing to do, but I think it’s discrimination,” said Gomez. “As an advertising agency, I would never recommend this to my client.”

On the other hand, The National Council of La Raza issued this statement: “For people to get offended or upset at this seems a little bit silly. It doesn’t preclude anybody. Anyone can say ‘*por favor*.’”

But this is not the first controversial promo Pizza Patron has done. In 2007, the pizza chain began accepting payment in Mexican pesos.

John Rocker: Preservation through Assimilation

Retired baseball pitcher John Rocker was known for his tremendous fastball, hitless innings, and fiery attitude on and off the field. But his remarkable game play would be overshadowed

by an interview with *Sports Illustrated* in 2000 regarding foreigners and immigrants in New York City. Critics all over the nation crucified and vilified the Atlanta Braves relief pitcher.

Since then, John Rocker has written a book, *Scars and Strikes*, which outlines his rise and fall in the public eye, as well as his side of the story regarding his 2000 interview with *Sports Illustrated*. Rocker continues to speak out against illegal immigration and the lack of assimilation for legal immigrants.

In his book, Mr. Rocker reviews the steady change in our attitudes: “Assimilating into the local community is a concept that is being lost on many of today’s immigrants to America.” He gives readers a dose of what great lengths our ancestors went through to become more American in order to be accepted. “They also understood that the adoption of local customs as well as learning the language was critical to their survival.”

Mr. Rocker takes note of the very serious frustration of millions of Americans dealing first hand with language barriers. His message is simple: adapt by learning our language, discover our cultures and traditions, and the divide between immigrants and citizens will close, thus forming a national bond.

USDA Spends Tax Dollars on Spanish Language Ads Promoting Food Stamps

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is funding a 10-part radio advertisement series in Spanish to promote the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as “food stamps.” The ads are in the style of “novellas” or Spanish soap operas. “Will Claudia convince Ramon to apply for SNAP?” an announcer melodramatically intones in Spanish. “Don’t miss our next episode...”

A public outcry over the revelation, including criticism from ProEnglish, forced the USDA to suspend the program.



In the Courts



English Wins in Florida Court

In June, the Eleventh Circuit Court of appeals upheld a November 2010 U.S. District Court ruling that manufacturers do not have to provide warning labels in languages other than English. The case originated back in 2009 when a woman misused propane heaters and caused a fire in her house.

Lilybet Farias (originally from Cuba) claimed she could not read English well enough to understand the warning labels and that this caused her house to burn down. The U.S. District Court ruled that the woman exhibited “willful ignorance” in using the products.

Steve Zack, a former president of the American Bar Association, said the consumer should make sure they know how to use the products they buy, especially ones that are potentially dangerous.

“Would you operate a product without knowing how to operate it?” Mr. Zack asked. “You have an obligation to know what your limitations are and seek additional help.”

ProEnglish applauds this ruling from the courts. “We hope the court’s decision in this matter will discourage future lawsuits like these,” said ProEnglish Executive Director Robert Vandervoort.

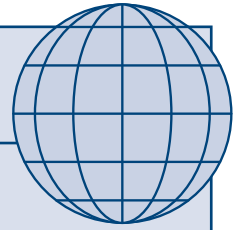
ProEnglish Joins Defense of School’s “English-in-the-Classroom” Policy

Debbie Dunn runs a private school of cosmetology in Lancaster, Pa. Her teachers complained that some of the students were disrupting class by translating for each other in the middle of class lectures. In response to these disruptions, the Lancaster School of Cosmetology instituted a policy that only English was to be spoken during class.

Mariam Rosado, filed a complaint with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (HRC) in *Rosado v. Lancaster School of Cosmetology*. The school reached out to ProEnglish for help. ProEnglish quickly drew parallels between this case and an earlier case in Philadelphia involving the late Joey Vento, the owner of Geno’s Steaks Restaurant. In 2006, he required customers to speak in English when ordering. He was subsequently sued by the HRC, but prevailed in court after ProEnglish assisted.

Earlier this year, ProEnglish Executive Director Robert Vandervoort was invited by the Lancaster School of Cosmetology’s attorneys to participate in a preliminary hearing with the Pennsylvania HRC. A formal hearing was scheduled for May 2012, but the HRC and Ms. Rosado have continually been postponing the hearing. Perhaps having ProEnglish assisting the school is making them reconsider their legal strategy. ProEnglish is confident that the Lancaster School of Cosmetology will prevail as it has violated no laws.

Around the World



Language Controversy Erupts in Ukraine

A country can be defined by its language, culture and borders. If any of these aspects of a country are missing, a divided nation will take form. The relevance of this is made especially clear from current events within Ukraine. Earlier this year, lawmakers forced a bill into the Ukrainian parliament proposing an official Russian-language law. The bill, if enacted, would give Russian speaking natives and officials the ability to use Russian as a first language in legal documents and within government institutions, instead of Ukrainian. This sparked an immediate identity crisis for Ukraine.



This bill has not only enraged local Ukrainians but members of Parliament have spoken out against the bill in its entirety. The chairman of

the Ukrainian Parliament resigned in direct response to the bill, while other legislators took to peaceful protest by refusing to attend parliament while in session. Ukrainian citizens took to the streets in a violent objection outside of the parliament building using sticks, bottles, and pepper spray to fend off police. It was reported that at least ten officers were injured during the dispute.

Those who object to this bill state that this would create a divide within Ukraine that would end all the progress they have made since their secession from the Soviet Union in 1991. After all, Ukraine gained independence in order to become a more unified nation, defining itself through language and culture.

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reaffirm the melting pot ideal and provide a powerful incentive for new immigrants to learn English.”

“Throughout our nation’s history, we have expected new immigrants to assimilate into our common, American culture, and the most important pillar in the assimilation process is learning English,” she concluded. Once the hearing concluded, Chairman Franks came over and personally complimented Dr. Porter on her testimony and expertise in this issue.



Following the hearing, Rep. King held a press conference on the Capitol grounds in support of his bill. Dr. Porter stood alongside Rep. King in support and fielded questions from reporters. NBC, Fox, and other news outlets were on hand to cover the event.

After a successful hearing and press conference, ProEnglish is urging the House leadership to bring H.R. 997 up for a vote. We will keep you informed on its status.

Ways to help win the battle for official English online

1. Join ProEnglish's online action alert network: Make your voice heard on official English, bilingual ballots, bilingual education and similar issues. Sign up to receive email alerts when things are happening in Congress. You will get up-to-the-minute information on upcoming votes, talking points, and contact information you can use to email or call your congressmen. To sign up, visit <http://capwiz.com/proenglish/mlm/signup/>.

2. Contact your elected representatives: Express your support for laws to make English the official language, stop government sponsored multilingualism, or expand incentives for immigrants to learn English. To send emails to your elected representatives at no cost, visit our Legislative Action Center online at <http://capwiz.com/proenglish>.

3. Help ProEnglish grow: Tell your friends about our fight to preserve English as the unifying language of our nation. Send them a link to our website at www.proenglish.org. Mention ProEnglish in every email you send by adding information about ProEnglish to your email signature.

4. Write letters to the editor: Write letters in support of making English our official language. Or respond to news stories about English-on-the-job, English in schools, or the use of English by government agencies.

How to Put ProEnglish in Your Will

ProEnglish is a tax-exempt organization. Thus under IRS rules, any size bequest made to ProEnglish is deductible from the taxable portion of a person's estate. That can reduce a person's estate taxes under certain circumstances. A gift to ProEnglish can be made by simply including the following language in your will, "I hereby give, devise, and bequeath to ProEnglish a project of US, the sum of _____dollars" [or "I hereby give devise, and bequeath to ProEnglish a project of US, _____percent of my residual estate"]. Anyone interested making a gift to ProEnglish in their will should first check with their attorney or tax-advisor.

Keep up the good work. Here is my donation:

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