



## Policy Alert: Establishing a National Language in the US

*Updated 06 March 2025*

**Action:** Executive Order "[Designating English as the Official Language of The United States](#)"

**What it does:** The Executive Order establishes English as the official language of the United States and revokes [Executive Order 13166](#), "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," which President Clinton issued on August 11, 2000. That Executive Order had required Federal agencies to ensure programs and activities are accessible to persons with limited English proficiency, which often includes making documents available in different languages. The new Executive Order rescinds the previous requirement but leaves tangible action to the discretion of agency leaders. The order states that "Agency heads are not required to amend, remove, or otherwise stop production of documents, products, or other services prepared or offered in languages other than English."

### Key Insights

- The designation follows years of [hearings](#) and proposed legislation by Members of Congress, including then-[Senator JD Vance](#), to establish English as the official language of the US. Shortly after the President issued the Executive Order, Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL) introduced a [bill](#) to codify the designation.
- [Thirty states](#) recognize English as their official language, with Oklahoma becoming the most recent in 2010. Further, Arizona has an English-only law established by a

ballot measure that passed in 2000, [Proposition 203](#), which prohibits the use of other languages in schools.

- While the Executive Order does not include mandates or target specific programs, it may signal the future of existing Federal programs that support English-learners, including initiatives of the [Office of English Language Acquisition](#) in the US Department of Education.

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