

2010 -- S 2145

LC00494

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2010

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND POLICY AND
ITS DIVERSE CULTURES

Introduced By: Senators Blais, and Maher

Date Introduced: February 04, 2010

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-5.1-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-5.1 entitled "Rhode
2 Island Policy and its Diverse Cultures" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-5.1-1. Policy. --** (a) Diverse ethnic and linguistic communities have contributed to the
4 social and economic prosperity of Rhode Island.

5 (b) It is the welcomed responsibility and opportunity of Rhode Island to respect and
6 facilitate the efforts of all cultural, ethnic, and linguistic segments of the population to become
7 full participants in Rhode Island communities.

8 (c) This state's economic well-being depends on foreign trade and international exchange
9 and many jobs are directly linked to foreign trade and international exchange.

10 (d) If Rhode Island is to prosper in foreign trade and international exchange, it must have
11 citizens that are multilingual and multicultural.

12 (e) While recognizing the value of a multilingual background, the state also encourages
13 all citizens to become proficient in English to facilitate full participation of all groups in society
14 and to promote cross-communication that currently exists in this state should be promoted to
15 build trust and understanding among all of its citizens.

16 (f) It shall be the policy of the state of Rhode Island to welcome and encourage the
17 presence of diverse cultures and the use of diverse languages in business, government, and private
18 affairs in this state.

1 (g) The immigration of Hispanics, Portuguese, Southeast Asian and other non-English
2 speaking peoples to Rhode Island continues; and English is already the predominant language of
3 Rhode Island and needs no legislation to support it.

4 (h) English is and will remain the primary language of the United States, [and the State of](#)
5 [Rhode Island](#), and all members of our society recognize the importance of English to national life,
6 individual accomplishment, and personal enrichment.

7 (i) The ability to communicate in English and other languages has promoted and can
8 further enhance American economic, political, and cultural vitality.

9 (j) The state both affirms the right of every resident to nurture his or her native language
10 and also encourages all citizens to become proficient in English to facilitate full participation in
11 society and promote cross-cultural communication.

12 (k) Native language instruction facilitates the development of English proficiency in
13 limited English-proficient children and boosts the overall academic achievement of such children.

14 (l) Proficiency in a second or multiple languages can be a major tool for economic
15 growth for our state and help overcome this country's disadvantage in the world economy as we
16 move into the twenty-first century.

17 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND POLICY AND
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- 1 This act would establish English as the primary language in the State of Rhode Island.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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