

was aimed—I don't want to act as if I am hiding this because we talked about this a year ago. One of the things has been very controversial: At the very end of the Clinton administration was when he passed Executive Order No. 13166, and 13166 essentially said that if you are a recipient of Federal funds, then your documentation can all be done in whatever language you desire, so it could be Swahili, it could be Spanish, or any other language.

Now, what happened a year ago was they passed my amendment—and my amendment was exactly the same as it is today—and it passed by a vote of 62 to 35. Does that sound right? So, 62 to 35. Then right after that, the Salazar amendment—and I see the Senator from Colorado is preparing to respond—was passed, which gutted my amendment, did away with it.

So those individuals who voted for my amendment and then voted for the Salazar amendment—and there are quite a few Democrats and Republicans who did that—voted to make English the official language and then, in the next vote, 3 minutes later, voted to take it away.

Now, I see that this is happening again tonight because, unfortunately, I have to offer my amendment first. I anticipate it will be adopted because it is very popular. Right now, the polling shows that 91 percent of the people in America want English as an official language, and 76 percent of Hispanics believe English should be an official language.

Now, I am prepared to go on and debate this issue. I should not have to do it since 62 Members of this body already voted in favor of it. What I am going to say now, though, is very significant because if you vote for the Inhofe amendment when it comes up tonight, then vote for the Salazar amendment, you are essentially saying you are gutting the Inhofe amendment and you do not want English to be the official or the national language of the United States of America.

The Salazar amendment is exactly the language in the underlying bill. I have it before me. I would be glad to read it. In fact, I am not sure how this time is going to work out. If we have time equally divided, I am going to run out of time. So I will just state that the language is precisely the same in the underlying bill. The underlying bill actually puts into law executive orders, and this specific executive order of 13166, which gives anyone an entitlement to any language he or she wants, will become law. That is the language which is in there right now.

I am attempting to change that language. If my amendment is adopted, it will change. However, the next vote is going to be on the Salazar amendment. I am just saying to you, as my friends out here, do not vote for both of us because if you vote for both of us, you are voting to make English the official language, and then, in the very next vote, you are taking it away and rein-

stating the original language in the bill.

So I hope no one is going to think it is going to go unnoticed if anyone votes for my amendment and then votes to kill the amendment they just supported. That is what is going to happen tonight. I look forward to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). The Senator's time has expired. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I rise to speak in opposition to the proposed amendment by my good friend from Oklahoma. First and foremost, I want to say I believe all Members of this Chamber and the people in the United States understand that English is important and that people, in order to succeed in our society, need to learn English; that the ability to acquire the English language and to speak it well is something we all support, and we support a number of different programs that would assist people who have limited English proficiency to acquire the English language as a keystone to success. I think that goes without saying.

The amendment that is proposed by my friend from Oklahoma would, in fact, do a number of things that I think are problematical and should cause all of us to vote against the amendment.

The first and a very important reason to vote against his amendment is that it is contrary to the provisions of law that exist in many States. For example, in the State of New Mexico, you have in the Constitution—in the Constitution of the State of New Mexico—as my good friend, Senator DOMENICI, would articulate here, a provision that says that many of the documents within that State have to be provided in both English and Spanish. The same thing is true for the State of Hawaii. I believe this is a States rights issue, and those constitutions of those States ought to be respected. There are other States in our Union which have decided they are going to adopt English as their official language. I believe that is a matter the States ought to decide. I do not believe it is a matter we ought to be imposing here from Washington, DC, on the backs of the States of our Union.

Also, at the end of the day, what my good friend from Oklahoma is attempting to do with his amendment is to undo an executive order that has been long recognized by President George Bush, implemented by President George Bush, conceived by President Bill Clinton, and put into law with his signature.

President Clinton's executive order was signed on April 11, 2000, on October 26, 2001. That executive order was recognized by Ralph Boyd with the U.S. Department of Justice under the Bush administration. It was again recognized on January 11, 2002, and again on November 12, 2002, and then again on December 1 of 2003.

If I may take a moment to just read a portion of what was included in that

communication that went out from the U.S. Department of Justice to all of the court administrators across the United States and all of the U.S. district courts. It said the following in the memorandum:

It is beyond question that America's courts discharge a wide range of important duties and offer critical services both inside and outside the courtroom. Examples range from contact with the clerk's office in pro se matters to testifying at trial. They include but are not limited to matters involving domestic violence, restraining orders, parental rights, and other family law matters, eviction actions, alternative dispute resolution or mediation programs. . . .

And on and on.

What both the Bush administration and the Clinton administration recognized in this executive order is that it is important to make sure people who have limited English proficiency receive the kinds of services so they can understand what is going on in terms of the interface between the Government and themselves.

Mr. President, I believe my friend from Oklahoma has an amendment in search of a problem, and I urge my colleagues to vote against it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I will take just a few minutes. I am sorry to interrupt the debate.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT ATTORNEY GENERAL ALBERTO GONZALES NO LONGER HOLDS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE SENATE AND OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to S.J. Res. 14 and send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 179, S.J. Res. 14, relating to Attorney General Alberto Gonzales.

Harry Reid, Richard J. Durbin, Kent Conrad, Bernard Sanders, Jeff Bingaman, Dan Inouye, Jon Tester, S. Whitehouse, Debbie Stabenow, Byron L. Dorgan, Amy Klobuchar, Sherrod Brown, Carl Levin, Chuck Schumer, Barbara Boxer, Jack Reed, H.R. Clinton.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I withdraw my motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

Mr. REID. Thank you, Mr. President.