Culture Wars: The Fundamental Connection between the English-only Movement and Anti-Immigration Sentiment

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The debate over establishing English as the United States’ national language has been raging for over two centuries. Since the late 1800s, laws restricting the official use of languages other than English have been passed in response to fears over increased immigration. In the early 1980s, the modern English-only movement was established in response to a new wave of immigration into the United States. The modern English-only movement advocates the enactment of legislation at the federal, state, and local levels that will prohibit the government from providing any services in a non-English language. While some English-only laws simply declare English to be the official language of a state or locality, other English-only legislation prohibits governments from providing assistance in non-English languages as the laws “restrict bilingual education programs, prohibit multilingual ballots, or forbid non English government services in general—including such services as courtroom translation or multilingual emergency police lines.” Since its beginning in the early 1980s, the English-only movement has seen twenty-five states pass legislation declaring the states’ official language to be English while over thirty cities have passed similar, and often more restrictive English-only legislation.

Proponents of the English-only movement argue that the enactment of English-only legislation preserves America’s cultural identity and helps immigrants by encouraging them to learn the English language. Conversely, critics of the movement, like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), contend that the English-only
movement is racist and intolerant and is simply a reaction to increased waves of immigration. Critics also argue that English-only legislation is “inconsistent with the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment” as the legislation can, among other things, ban the use of bilingual ballots, which can interfere with citizens’ right to vote. Finally, those opposed to the English-only movement assert that English-only laws are unnecessary as over ninety-seven percent of Americans “speak English well, a level of linguistic homogeneity unsurpassed by any other large nation in history.”

Dr. John H. Tanton, a retired ophthalmologist from Petoskey, Michigan, is considered to be the founder of the modern English-only movement as he, along with then-Senator S.I. Hawakaya, a Californian, founded the U.S. English organization in 1983. The U.S. English organization has been an influential voice in many English-only movements throughout the United States as the organization, and its 1.8 million members, has lobbied for the enactment of English-only legislation at the federal, state, and local levels. Dr. Tanton’s fundamental role in founding and managing this organization illustrates the connection between the English-only movement and anti-immigration sentiment as, in addition to being a proponent of the English-only movement, Dr. Tanton is considered to be “an influential activist in efforts aimed at reducing immigration levels in the United States.”

According to Tom Negri, the manager of Loews Vanderbilt Plaza and a leading opponent of the English-only movement in Nashville, “a fundamental connection between the English-only movement and anti-immigration groups can certainly be seen in the John Tanton network of groups, which he either founded or assisted in founding.”

Dr. Tanton’s founding of the Federation of American Immigration Reform (FAIR), an
organization that seeks “to improve border security, to stop illegal immigration, and to promote immigration levels consistent with the national interest” illustrates this fundamental connection. However, Dr. Tanton’s anti-immigration feelings are best illustrated by a 1986 memo he authored about the English-only movement in Arizona. In this memo, Dr. Tanton expresses deep concerns about the negative effect immigration could have on United States’ politics and culture. Throughout the memo, Tanton used derogatory rhetoric when referring to immigrants as he asks: “Will Latin American migrants bring with them the tradition of the mordida (bribe), the lack of involvement in public affairs, etc?” These remarks eventually compelled Dr. Tanton to resign from the board of U.S. English. Yet, Dr. Tanton is still deeply involved in the English-only movement as he is the co-founder and director of the ProEnglish organization, which has been linked to hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Dr. Tanton’s fundamental role in founding and supporting the English-only movement throughout the United States aids in demonstrating that the movement is often about much more than language as English-only movement is, in many ways, an attempt to restrict immigration by appealing to citizens who feel “that their country, their language, (and) their very identity” is under attack.

When the English-only movement made its way to Nashville, Tennessee in the fall of 2006, Nashville seemed to be a fitting test site for expansion of the English-only movement. It was a city experiencing an unprecedented wave of immigration when, during the 1990s, immigration numbers tripled as over ten percent of Nashville residents had previously immigrated to the United States. This wave of immigration carried over into the twenty-first century when, in 2008, Tennessee became home to the fourth fastest-
growing foreign born community in the nation since 2000. By 2008, approximately 11,000 Kurds, constituting the largest Kurdish population in the United States, and 5,000 Somalis lived in Nashville. Although the city’s exploding immigrant population seemed to make Nashville a perfect test site for the English-only movement, the actual percentage of immigrants living in Nashville remained lower than the national Census Bureau figure for the percentage in the United States. This disparity, along with Nashville’s reputation for friendliness and inclusiveness, put the city at odds with the English-only movement from the beginning.

In the fall of 2006 first term Metro Councilman Eric Crafton sponsored legislation that would prohibit Nashville’s metropolitan government from providing services in a non-English language. Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation passed the Metro Council in February 2007 but Mayor Bill Purcell vetoed the legislation, since he believed it would make Nashville “less safe, less friendly, and less successful.” Despite this legislative defeat, Crafton continued to be a strong advocate for the English-only movement as he collected the necessary 12,500 signatures to have the legislation placed on the ballot as a Charter amendment. After his legislation was blocked from the November 2008 election ballot, Crafton was successful in petitioning for a special election on January 22nd, 2009. This special election was a referendum on Crafton’s English-only legislation and another Charter amendment, sponsored by Crafton, which would make it easier to change Nashville’s Metro Charter via referendum. While polling showed almost 55% of Nashville residents to be in favor of Crafton’s English-only legislation, both Charter amendments were defeated by broad margins on January 22nd, 2009.
Nashville’s two year debate over English-only legislation, which culminated in the legislation’s defeat via referendum, was unique as it divided the city’s residents into two diverse coalitions that were defined by its members’ cultural and socioeconomic status. The *Nashville For All of Us* campaign was formed by members of the Nashville community who opposed Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation. This coalition was composed of Nashville’s business leaders, its immigrant community, progressive politicians, and young, college educated, and progressives. On the other hand, polling by the Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group demonstrated that voters who supported Councilman Crafton’s legislation could best be characterized by their age (above 50), their level of education, and their ethnicity. Crafton’s campaign to pass English-only legislation also received the vast majority of its financial support from ProEnglish, the national English-only organization founded by John Tanton.

Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation divided the Nashville community along cultural and socioeconomic lines that are, in many ways, parallel to the cultural and socioeconomic divisions that occur in communities over the issue of immigration. It is the purpose of this study to demonstrate that the English-only movement is fundamentally connected to anti-immigration sentiment. This premise will be supported through a comparison of polling data that links the supporters of English-only in Nashville to individuals who oppose immigration by their age, level of education, political ideology, wealth, and even religion. In addition, the findings from the Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group’s survey in which over sixty percent of Nashville voters found Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation to be directly connected to anti-immigration sentiments will lend evidence to this study’s premise. Personal interviews
with key actors in the debate surrounding Nashville’s English-only movement will also demonstrate the movement’s close connection to anti-immigration sentiments. My premise will be buffered by other researchers who have found the English-only movement to be a form of symbolic politics closely related to anti-immigration sentiments.

Nashville’s English-only movement

To understand the origins of the English-only movement in Nashville, Tennessee, one must first become familiar with the background and motivations of the man behind Nashville’s English-only movement, Metro Councilman Eric Crafton. Eric Crafton was born in Nashville on October 15th, 1967. Crafton first earned distinction as a young man when he received an ROTC scholarship to Vanderbilt University upon graduating from Hillwood High School. Crafton succeeded at Vanderbilt as he graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Math/Economics while simultaneously paying for part of his tuition.

Immediately after graduating from Vanderbilt in 1989, Crafton enrolled in the Navy where he briefly attended a war college in Rhode Island before being stationed onboard the U.S.S. Mobile Bay in Jacksonville, Florida. Soon after being assigned to be the electrical engineer onboard the U.S.S. Mobile Bay, Crafton learned that his ship was being re-stationed to Yokosuka, Japan. It was at this moment that Crafton first considered the far reaching implications that language could have on a society. Before embarking from Jacksonville for Japan, Crafton decided to learn the Japanese language so that he could effectively communicate in Japan’s society. While most sailors played cards or watched movies to pass the time during the long voyage to Japan, Crafton studied
Japanese by "Cribbing from books-on-tape and for-dummies manuals he'd grabbed before shipping out, (and) arm(ing) himself with stacks of 3x5 flash cards."11 Through his studies on the U.S.S. Mobile and real experiences in Japanese culture, Crafton quickly learned to speak Japanese fluently. By the time he returned to the United States in 1994, Crafton "had found a way not only to incorporate (Japanese culture) into his own life but use it to his advantage" as he returned to the United States in 1994 "with a combat medal, a fluent grasp of Japanese and having met his future wife."12 The time Eric Crafton spent in Japan is significant since it instilled in Crafton a "hardened view of how the world works and how it doesn't."13 This hardened worldview played a major role in Crafton’s decision to bring the English-only movement to Nashville as Crafton’s time in Japan instilled in him the resolute belief that immigrants should learn to speak their new nation’s language.

By 1996, Crafton had returned to Nashville, with his Japanese-American wife Miko, and become a homebuilder. In 2003, Crafton first entered local politics when he was elected to represent Nashville’s 22nd district, which encompasses Bellevue, a growing, middle class district, in the Metro Council. During his first years in office, Councilman Crafton was a relatively quiet member of the Council as he focused much of his time on improving public education. Crafton became a strong advocate for measuring the academic performance of the Nashville public school system against the performance of other state districts. Crafton believed that this system of measurement would increase accountability throughout Nashville public schools. Councilman Crafton’s past experiences accounted for his ardent desire to improve Nashville’s public education system as he explained that "I got a scholarship to Vanderbilt with a public education so I
know the system can work. I hate to see children not taken care of 'cuz that's the equalizer." By 2006, Councilman Crafton would be drawing on his past experiences in Japan in order to promote the new English-only legislation that he had introduced to the Metro Council.

According to his close friend, Jon Crisp, Crafton first considered bringing the English-only movement to Nashville “during one of his (Crisp) and Crafton’s regular spitball sessions.” In a December, 2008 interview with the Nashville Scene, Nashville’s progressive, weekly newspaper, Crisp described the “regular spitball sessions” that he and Crafton share and articulated the early motives behind Crafton’s decision to bring the English-only movement to Nashville when he said “Eric and I pick up on topics that are timely, and you know as well as I do that any given day I can make an issue out of illegal immigration.” Tom Negri, a leading opponent of the English-only movement in Nashville, believes that John Tanton’s ProEnglish organization played a major role in bringing the English-only movement to Nashville although it “is unclear whether Crafton approached ProEnglish…or whether ProEnglish contacted him.” Crisp’s statement, along with Negri’s suspicions about ProEnglish’s role in fomenting the movement, makes clear that Councilman Crafton was at least somewhat concerned with the issue of illegal immigration when he first introduced English-only legislation to the Metro Council. However, when introducing his English-only legislation, Councilman Crafton used his past experiences and rhetoric to cover his concern about immigration.

In September, 2006, Councilman Eric Crafton introduced English-only legislation to the Metro Council that required all Metro communications to be conducted in English only. When first introducing his legislation, Councilman Crafton began by speaking
Japanese and saying, "Kono jyoukyou wa Kaeru bekidesu" which in English means: "This situation must change." Councilman Crafton’s use of Japanese during the introduction of his legislation successfully underscored the fiscal benefits of English-only legislation since the Metro government was required to pay a translator to interpret Crafton’s speech into English so that Council Members and other citizens attending the meeting could understand it. In addition, Crafton’s use of Japanese was successful in portraying Crafton as an intelligent, well-intentioned, legislator who advocated English-only legislation because of a genuine belief that it would help immigrants prosper in Nashville. In many ways, Crafton—"the magna cum laude bilingual success story"—was "the perfect front man" for Nashville’s English-only movement as his background and rhetoric convinced many citizens that English-only legislation could provide multiple fiscal and social benefits to Nashville.\(^{19}\)

However, Crafton’s rhetoric and multicultural background failed to convince many Council members, immigrants, and progressive citizens that English-only legislation would benefit the Nashville community. Immigrants and progressive citizens described Crafton’s bill as “mean-spirited and divisive” and worried that its enactment would strip immigrants of their constitutional rights.\(^{20}\) Many Council members were most concerned about the legal ramifications of Crafton’s legislation since Crafton’s proposal was considered by many legal experts to be unconstitutional. Council members feared that the enactment of Crafton’s legislation would lead to lawsuits against the Metro government as the legislation seemed to deny non-English speaking Nashville citizens the equal protection under the law that is guaranteed by the Equal Protection Clause in the 14\(^{th}\) Amendment. By enacting a law that was unconstitutional, the Council made the
Metro Government vulnerable to costly lawsuits and the potential loss of federal grants. With this concern in mind, many council members refused to support Crafton’s proposal unless it was amended so that it would be in compliance with federal law.

In order to allay the concerns of his worried colleagues, Councilman Crafton decided to “water-down” his English-only legislation. In order to gain the necessary votes in the Council, Crafton changed the title of his legislation from English-only to English-first. In addition, Crafton amended his legislation so that it contained “an exemption for multilingual communications required by federal rules and situations necessary to protect or promote public health, safety or welfare.” Crafton explained the implementation of this amendment by saying “We want to be good citizens and help people when they need help.” Councilman Crafton’s amendment to his English-only proposal allowing for multilingual communications when required by federal rules and emergency situations was successful as it alleviated the legal and fiscal concerns held by many Council members. The Council passed the resolution during the meeting on the first of three required readings. While the Council seemed to be satisfied by Crafton’s amendment, many progressive citizens and immigrants were not. Ahmed Dahir, a Somali refugee who attended the Council meeting with other concerned immigrants, told The Tennessean, Nashville’s daily newspaper, that Crafton’s legislation did not fulfill immigrant needs for “more ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, more education and more tolerance.”

As Councilman Crafton’s diluted English-first proposal passed a first reading of the Metro Council during its meeting on September 19th, 2006 and continued to gain popularity, many key actors throughout the city, who were opposed to Crafton’s
proposal, began to criticize the bill and its potentially detrimental effects. In late September, *The Tennessean* authored an editorial in response to an op-ed piece Councilman Crafton had written for the newspaper a week earlier. In his op-ed, Crafton did not seem to be concerned with the issue of immigration as he claimed that his proposal would help immigrants enjoy a more prosperous life. Crafton reasoned that when immigrants were not pressured to learn English through the implementation of English-only laws, they were forced “into a segregated, low-achieving strata of society.”²⁵ The Tennessean’s editorial board responded to the op-ed by calling Crafton’s proposal “misguided.”²⁶ The editorial went on to argue that if Crafton and his colleagues on the council were truly concerned about helping non-English speakers assimilate into American culture, they should “fund appropriate programs including English Language Learner programs in public schools.”²⁷

Criticism of Councilman Crafton’s proposal continued to increase in the days leading up to the second reading of the legislation on November 21st, 2006. On Thursday, November 16th, the Executive Committee of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce unanimously passed a resolution opposing the English-first proposal. In the Sunday November 19th issue of *The Tennessean*, Michael A. Carter, the vice chairman of small business for the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, articulated the Chamber’s view on Crafton’s English-first legislation in an op-ed. Carter reasoned that Crafton’s English-first proposal, if enacted, would be detrimental to Nashville’s economic well being as the proposal would “damage Nashville’s international reputation as an open, inclusive and increasingly diverse community” by sending an “unwelcoming message to relocating companies, particularly international companies that employ large numbers of foreign-
born populations. Carter underscored the potential damage that Councilman Crafton’s proposal could have on the Nashville business community by noting that Nashville had been enjoying an unprecedented level of business expansion and relocation as Louisiana Pacific (L.P), Nissan North American, Caremark, and Quanta Computers had recently relocated their headquarters to Nashville. In addition to Carter’s op-ed on behalf of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, The Tennessean published another editorial on Tuesday November 21st, the day when the Metro Council would be voting on the second reading of Crafton’s legislation. The editorial condemned Crafton’s legislation when it judged that the “English language issue has become one of the many facets of the immigration debate.” The editorial asked all Metro Council members to vote against the misguided measure. Again, the editorial questioned why Crafton and his supporters did not attempt to institute English Language Learner programs that would actually help immigrants become proficient in English.

Despite opposition from the Nashville’s business and immigrant community, along with the media, Councilman Crafton’s English-first proposal passed a second reading of the Metro Council by a vote of 21-10; five members abstained while four members did not vote. The legislation did not enjoy overwhelming support since it only received the minimum number of votes (21) needed for passage in the 40-member Metro Council. Proponents of the legislation, like conservative Councilman Michael Craddock defended the morality and legality of the legislation by saying “This country’s immigration and naturalization laws say you have to be able to construct sentences in English to become a citizen.” Those opposed to the measure held much different sentiments as over one hundred opponents of the proposal, including Kurds, Somalis,
Japanese, and Colombians, filled the Council chamber. These concerned citizens feared that Crafton’s legislation would send the wrong message about Nashville’s tolerance for diversity, damage the vitality of the city’s economy, and potentially infringe on the rights of non-English speaking citizens.

In spite of intense lobbying efforts by the Nashville business community, immigrant coalition groups, and progressive citizens, the Metro Council passed Councilman Eric Crafton’s English-first legislation on its third reading on February 6th, 2007. By passing the third reading by a vote of 23-14, Crafton’s legislation became Metro law contingent upon Mayor Bill Purcell’s approval. In the immediate aftermath of the Council’s passing of Crafton’s English-first legislation, many interested citizens wondered whether Mayor Purcell, who was in the last year of his second and final term as Nashville’s mayor, would veto the bill. While it was clear that the mayor desired to veto the English-first legislation because of its perceived anti-immigrant undertones, some believed that Purcell would allow the bill to become law as the mayor had expressed interest in seeking the Governor’s office in 2010. By allowing Crafton’s English-first legislation to become law, Purcell would increase his chances of success in a statewide election since the state of Tennessee had already passed a symbolic resolution making English its official language in 1984. Instead of signing the legislation or simply doing nothing and allowing it to become law, Purcell took the tough political course by issuing a written veto of the legislation on Monday, February 14. In his written veto, Purcell declared “This is not who we are” and stated that “If this ordinance becomes law, Nashville will be a less safe, less friendly, and less successful city.” Mayor Purcell’s decision to veto the English-first legislation made national and international headlines as
newspapers in London, San Diego, Chicago, New Orleans, New York, and Las Vegas all reported on the story. Cynthia Tucker, a columnist for The Atlanta-Journal Constitution, even proclaimed “Profiles in political courage are rare, indeed but there’s an early contender for the awards that Caroline Kennedy hands out every May: Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell.” While Mayor Purcell’s veto helped Nashville’s public image and ensured that Councilman Crafton’s legislation could not become law through the legislative process, it only marked the beginning of Crafton’s efforts to implement his legislation through a public referendum.

In the aftermath of Mayor Purcell’s veto of the English-first bill, Councilman Crafton, understanding that he could not garner a two-thirds majority of Council votes necessary to override the Mayor’s veto, declared that he would put his English-first initiative directly to Nashville voters in a proposal to alter the Metro Charter. Despite this declaration, Crafton temporarily shifted his focus away from his English-first proposal when both he and his colleagues on the Council began to focus intently on their re-election campaigns. The Metro government held elections in August 2007, as every Council seat and the mayor’s office were up for grabs. While Crafton and many of his colleagues on the Council were re-elected by their constituents with relative ease, the mayor’s race became particularly contentious as five major candidates, Councilman David Briley, Congressman Bob Clement, Metro Law Director Karl Dean, Councilman Buck Dozier, and Vice-Mayor Howard Gentry, all conducted serious campaigns for mayor. The race for the mayor’s office went to a runoff election between Congressman Clement and Karl Dean when no candidate could garner a fifty-percent majority in the general election. In the runoff, Councilman Crafton and Jon Crisp, his friend and political
adviser, strongly supported Congressman Clement’s campaign while opposing the Dean campaign, since they understood that only Congressman Clement was not vehemently opposed to Crafton’s English-first movement. According to Jim Hester, Karl Dean’s campaign manager and presently a senior adviser in the mayor’s office, Crafton and Crisp attempted to form a Political Action Committee (PAC) that would collect funds in order to launch negative TV and radio ads against Dean. While Crafton and Crisp were not successful in their attempts to form this PAC, their strong support of Congressman Clement and passionate opposition to Karl Dean’s campaign illustrated their continued commitment to the English-only movement.

On September 21, 2007, Karl Dean was sworn in as the sixth mayor of Metropolitan Nashville. Crafton’s strong support for Congressman Clement, the frontrunner in the race, had not paid off as Crafton was forced to begin his second term on the Council with another mayor who was avidly opposed to his English-first movement. However, by the middle of 2008, the economy had slowed down and Tennessee’s unemployment rate rose from 5 to 6.9%. According to Dan Cornfield, a Vanderbilt Sociology Professor, Councilman Crafton’s English-only movement gained support in the summer of 2008 when “anti-immigrant sentiment seemed to mobilize as the economy slowed down.” As a result, Councilman Crafton quickly began to assemble the support necessary to place his English-only legislation on the next ballot in November 2008. By early June 2008, Councilman Crafton and a small group of English-only supporters began to gather signatures in support of Crafton’s English-only legislation when they mailed roughly “33,000 petition postcards to active Davidson County voters.” In addition, Crafton, judging that he could implement a more restrictive
language law via referendum, altered the language of his proposed charter amendment as it now limited “all government business, publications and meetings to English, with no exceptions for health and safety.” While Crafton’s actions received little media attention, they aggravated opponents of the English-only movement who had hoped that the issue had been put to sleep. Councilman Ronnie Steine, a career politician who had once been vice-mayor of Nashville and a candidate for Congress, introduced a non-binding resolution to the Metro Council that “urge(ed) voters not to sign Crafton’s petition cards” and not to support his Charter Amendment in the case of a referendum. Steine accounted for the introduction of his non-binding resolution by stating “It’s important that the public understand that while one council member is supportive (of the English-only movement), not all of us are. It’s not in the best interests of the community.”

Immediately before the vote on Councilman Steine’s non-binding resolution on August 7, Mayor Dean, in a rare move, invoked the mayor’s right to address the full Council. In his address, Mayor Dean sought to ensure that the Council understood “the consequences of passing a law that will tie our hands in the global economy, that will detract from our appeal as an international tourist destination and that will damage our reputation as a welcoming and friendly city.” The council followed the mayor’s recommendation and voted in favor of Councilman Steine’s non-binding resolution when it urged Davidson County voters to oppose Councilman Crafton’s English-only Charter Amendment. The Council’s 23-11 vote in favor of Steine’s resolution was almost the exact reverse of its 23-14 vote in favor of Crafton’s English-only legislation eighteen months earlier. This reversal can be accounted for by the large turnover, because of term
limits, on the Council as twenty new members were elected to the Council in the 2007 elections; the votes of these new members provided for the passage of Steine’s non-binding resolution. After the passage of the resolution, an indignant Councilman Crafton again down-played his proposed Charter Amendment’s relation to anti-immigration sentiments when he said: “This week I have been burned in effigy, called a racist and compared to Adolf Hitler … To me, I just can’t get my mind around how this (the English-only Charter Amendment) is mean, or a slight to immigrants.” While Mayor Dean, Councilman Steine, and other opponents of the English-only movement were successful in convincing the Council to pass a non-binding resolution urging voters to oppose Eric Crafton’s English-only Charter Amendment, they were not able to stop Crafton and his supporters from gaining the signatures necessary for the placement of the English-only Charter Amendment on the November 4th ballot.

On August 15th, just eight days after the Metro Council passed its non-binding resolution urging voters to oppose Councilman Crafton’s English-only movement, Crafton delivered over 12,500 petition cards, signed in support of his proposed English-only Charter Amendment, to the Metro Clerk. The 12,500 signatures were over two thousand more than the necessary 10,103 signatures required for Crafton’s Charter Amendment to appear on the November 4th ballot as Crafton believed that the extra two thousand signatures would “account for unqualified voters or signatures that can’t be verified.” After receiving the signed petition cards, workers at the Davidson County Election Commission began to verify the authenticity of each voter’s signature by comparing the signatures and addresses on petition cards to scanned images of voter registration cards. Upon completing this tedious process, the Election Commission
determined that Councilman Crafton had procured enough signatures to have his English-only Charter Amendment placed on the November 4th ballot.

Initially, both advocates and opponents of Crafton’s English-only movement believed that the Charter Amendment would be approved by Davidson County voters in a landslide. Crafton and his opponents understood that the November 4th election would produce a record high turnout among voters across the country since the failures of the George Bush administration and Barack Obama’s candidacy for the Presidency were compelling voters to go to the polls. With past polling indicating that most voters were inclined to support English-only legislation, it seemed a high voter turnout on November 4th would almost certainly provide for the passage of Crafton’s Charter Amendment. As a result of this reality, opponents of the English-only movement looked for a way to get Crafton’s Charter Amendment off the November 4th ballot.

On August 26th, Sue Cain, Metro’s Legal Director and a key member of Mayor Dean’s administration, issued a legal opinion advising the Davidson County Election Commission to leave Councilman Crafton’s Charter Amendment off the November 4th ballot since it was a violation of Metro law. Cain’s opinion stated that it was illegal for the English-only Charter Amendment to appear on the November 4th ballot because “by law, two votes on a petition-driven Charter Amendment cannot take place in a single two-year period.”42 A vote on a Charter Amendment that gave Nashville voters some control over Metro tax increases was held on November 7th, 2006. As a result of this 2006 vote, Cain opined that the English-only Charter Amendment could not appear on the November 4th ballot since it was three days short of the required two-year interval between petition-driven amendments. Cain’s opinion was made all the more controversial
when Lynn Greer, the Davidson County election commissioner, disagreed with Cain’s opinion and declared that Crafton’s proposal should be allowed to appear on the November 4th ballot since the Metro Law governing the interval between petition-driven Charter Amendments applied to two-year political terms instead of simple two-year periods. Greer’s disagreement with Cain over the meaning of the Metro Charter’s laws regarding petition driven amendments created controversy as it led many critics to believe that Cain’s position in Mayor Dean’s administration compelled her to issue the advisory opinion.

Councilman Crafton seemed to share this sentiment when he reacted to Cain’s legal opinion with outrage. He told The Tennessean: “We expected they (the Metro Legal Department) would twist the meaning of the Metro Charter and concoct some sort of opinion that supports the mayor’s opinion on this (the English-only movement)...What they are trying to do is create a stalling tactic to keep the people from voting on the measure.” When asked what he would do if the Davidson County Election Commission listened to Cain’s advisory opinion and voted to keep his Charter Amendment off the November 4th ballot, Crafton declared that he would take the issue to court. Less than a week later, the Davidson County Election Commission listened to Sue Cain’s advisory opinion and voted 3-2 to leave Crafton’s Charter Amendment off the November 4th ballot. As promised, Crafton responded to the election commission’s decision when he filed suit in the Davidson County Chancery Court seeking to place the English-only measure back on the November 4th ballot.

Opponents of the English-only amendment reacted to Councilman Crafton’s efforts to have his amendment placed on the ballot through the judicial process by filing a
joint motion to intervene in Crafton’s lawsuit. Multiple organizations that were opposed to the English-only movement, including the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee (ACLU), and the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC), were all parties to the joint motion since they believed that the implementation of the English-only amendment would “effect their ability to complete their work, fulfill their missions, (and) comply with federal law.” While the filing of this joint motion illustrated the growing strength and cohesiveness of the groups opposed to Crafton’s English-only amendment, it did little to affect the outcome of the lawsuit as Chancellor Claudia Bonnyman validated Sue Cain’s advisory opinion and the election commission’s vote by ruling that the English-only amendment could not appear on the November 4th ballot.

By September 10th, only six days after Chancellor Bonnyman ruling, both the Tennessee Court of Appeals and the Tennessee Supreme Court had denied Crafton’s request for an expedited appeal. These denials effectively ended any chance of Councilman Crafton’s Charter Amendment being placed on the November 4th ballot. Having his English-only Charter Amendment left off of the November 4th ballot constituted a devastating blow to Crafton’s English-only movement and a huge victory for its opponents as Tom Negri admitted: “Had the election occurred on November 4th, we would not have been prepared in the manner that we were and would have had to convince many more (voters) to oppose the amendment.” Now, Crafton could wait until the next major election, which was over two years away, to have his amendment placed on the ballot or he could gather 2,473 signatures necessary to have a special election referendum on his amendment. While it was clear to both Crafton and those opposed to
the English-only movement that the English-only amendment would be most likely to succeed when placed on the ballot during a major election because of the guarantee of a high voter turnout, Crafton, perhaps motivated by his increasing political fame or fearful that the support behind his English-only movement would dissipate before the next major election, decided to try and implement his English-only amendment through a special election referendum.

In the days after the Tennessee Supreme Court’s denial of his request for an expedited appeal, Councilman Crafton and supporters of his English-only movement began mailing new petition postcards in an effort to attain the 2,473 signatures required for a special election referendum on his Charter Amendment. Less than two weeks later, Councilman Crafton and his supporters went a long way to ensuring that there would be a special election referendum on the English-only Charter Amendment as the Davidson County Election Commission verified the authenticity of over 5,000 petition cards signed by supporters of Crafton’s English-only movement. Although the election commission verified that Crafton had received the signatures necessary to hold a special election referendum on his English-only amendment, the commission still had to vote on Monday, November 17th to approve the implementation of the special election referendum on Thursday January 22nd. In the roughly forty days between the election commission’s verification of Crafton’s petition cards and its vote on implementing the special election referendum, Councilman Crafton sought to quiet the growing opposition to his English-only amendment by again altering the amendment’s language in order to allow the Metro Council to make exceptions to the amendment for health and safety reasons. The altered, and contradictory, Charter Amendment now read:
English is the official language of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee. Official actions which bind or commit the government shall be taken only in the English language, and all official government communications and publications shall be in English. No person shall have a right to government services in any other language. All meetings of the Metro Council, Boards, and Commissions of the Metropolitan Government shall be conducted in English. The Metro Council may make specific exceptions to protect public health and safety. Nothing in this measure shall be interpreted to conflict with federal or state law.46

Crafton hoped that his altering of the amendment would demonstrate, to those opposed to his English-only measure, "that we're try to be reasonable, that we want to listen to what people are saying while still making English the official language (of Nashville)."47 However, the language in the amendment seemed to be in conflict with itself as it clearly stated that no one had the right to services in any language but English (a clear violation of the 14th amendment) while also declaring that the amendment would comply with federal law. Councilman Crafton's attempts to placate those opposed to his English-only movement by altering the language of the Charter Amendment failed as the debate about his English-only amendment only became more intense.

In the days after the election commission's verification of Crafton's petition cards, the debate over the English-only movement intensified when Councilman Crafton began receiving a series threatening phone calls and emails. Metro Police spokesman Don Aaron told reporters that while the messages "did not detail specific acts of harm, one who received them would deem them to be threatening."48 Although the threatening messages quickly ceased when local media outlets began to publicize the on-going police investigation, the messages came to constitute a publicity coup for Crafton and his English-only movement as Crafton and his family were depicted as victims of sick personal harassment. Even The Tennessean's editorial board, in an editorial published on
October 19th, sympathized with Crafton when it stated: “It is deflating that the subject (English-only) has stirred such passion that Crafton himself was subjected to alleged personal harassment…Crafton has every right to do what he is doing and does not deserve such sick abuse.”49 Although The Tennessean condemned the abusive messages that Councilman Crafton received on account of his English-only Charter Amendment, the newspaper’s editorial board became even more critical of the English-only movement when it expressed “great dismay that so many people need to go to the polls for the specific purpose of having to say Nashville is tolerant. The vote never should have been necessary.”50

Despite the increasingly fiery rhetoric of his English-only measure’s opponents, Councilman Crafton, along with his attorney, Jim Roberts, announced plans to try and place another Charter Amendment on the January 22nd special election referendum ballot. This Charter Amendment would change Metro law by “allow(ing) voters to petition for Charter Amendments at least once a year” instead of only once every two years.51 Crafton and Roberts also announced that they had launched a website, www.hearthepeople.org, in support of the new Charter Amendment and were already beginning to send out petition-cards in order to garner the 2,473 signatures necessary to have the amendment placed on the January 22nd special election referendum ballot. On November 3rd, the Davidson County Election Commission verified that Crafton and Roberts had attained an adequate number of signatures to have their second Charter Amendment placed on the January 22nd special election referendum ballot. The election commission’s decision on Monday, November 17th would determine if Davidson County
voters could vote on Councilman Crafton’s two Charter Amendments in a special election referendum.

On Monday, November 17th, the Davidson County Election Commission voted to call a special election in order to hold a referendum on Councilman Crafton’s two Charter Amendments. In the immediate aftermath of the commission’s vote, election commission Chairman Eddie Byran asked Crafton if “he’d be open to holding the English-only vote at the next general election in August 2010” in order to save the $350,000 it would cost the city to hold a special election.\textsuperscript{52} Crafton vehemently rejected this proposal and reiterated his desire to hold the special election on January 22\textsuperscript{nd} because he feared that pushing the English-only issue to the next general election would give opponents of his amendment “time to mount a campaign against the English-only plan.”\textsuperscript{53} As a result, the election commission called for a special election referendum on Councilman Crafton’s two Charter Amendment to be held on January 22\textsuperscript{nd}.

Opponents of the English-only Charter Amendment quickly responded to the election commission’s decision to hold a special election referendum on Crafton’s two Charter Amendments. First, a diverse variety of individuals and organizations coalesced and formed the Nashville For All of Us campaign to combat Crafton’s new Nashville English First Campaign. Second, opponents of Crafton’s English-only amendment who were well connected in Nashville’s immigrant community convinced Rosa Quinteros, “a citizen of El Salvador and legal immigrant given temporary asylum status because of conditions in her country”, to file a lawsuit in Davidson County Chancery Court claiming Councilman Crafton’s English-only amendment to be unconstitutional since it called on the local government to treat individuals with limited English proficiency differently.\textsuperscript{54}
Quinteros, who had limited proficiency in English, and her attorneys filed the suit against
Nashville’s Metro government and the Davidson County Election Commission for
allowing Crafton’s English-only amendment to be placed on a ballot as they argued that
“Davidson County taxpayers- anyone who has contributed to its sales tax revenue- should
not have to foot the bill for a special election where a single unconstitutional measure
will appear on the ballot.”55

In addition, the suit sought a restraining order that would effectively bar the
election commission from making preparations for the January 22nd special election and
the early voting set to start on January 2nd. David Randolph Smith, Ms. Quinteros’
attorney, provided a simple explanation of his client’s complaint when he told reporters
“Just because you have 5,000 people willing to sign a petition to put this thing on the
ballot doesn’t mean its legitimate. If you’ve got 5,000 citizens willing to say red-headed
people can’t vote, you can’t put that on a ballot.”56 Upon learning of Quinteros’ suit,
Councilman Crafton claimed that Quinteros and her attorney’s were trying to “suppress
democracy and suppress the people’s right to govern themselves.”57 Jim Roberts, Eric
Crafton’s attorney and a key supporter of the English-only Charter Amendment, engaged
in more inconsiderate, anti-immigrant, rhetoric when he told reporters: “I think there is
going to be some backlash at immigrants for (the Quinteros suit)...Here’s a woman to
whom we’ve stretched out our hand and she’s kicked us in the shins.”58

Metro Legal director Sue Cain became involved Quinteros’ increasingly
contentious case when she and her office were required to defend the Metro government
and the Davidson County Election Commission against Quinteros’ complaint. The Legal
Department judged, just as Quinteros’ attorney’s had argued, that Councilman Crafton’s
English-only amendment was indeed unconstitutional since requiring English-only was a surrogate for race discrimination. According to Sue Cain’s analysis,

the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals has held that “laws that explicitly distinguish between individuals on racial grounds fall within the core of the Equal Protection Clause’s prohibition” and no inquiry into legislative intent is needed. *Farm Labor Organizing Committee v. Ohio State Highway Patrol*, 308 F.3d 523, 534 (6th Cir. 2002). The U.S. Supreme Court has indicated that discrimination based upon language usage may be treated as a surrogate for race discrimination and constitute an equal protection violation. *Hernandez v. New York*, 500 U.S. 352, 371-372, 111 S.Ct. 1859, 114 L.Ed.2d 395 (1991) (“We would face quite a different case if the prosecutor had justified his preemptory challenges with the explanation that he did not want Spanish-speaking jurors. It may well be, for certain ethnic groups and in some communities, that proficiency in a particular language, like skin color, should be treated as a surrogate for race under an equal protection analysis.”)\(^{59}\)

While Cain’s legal opinion clearly declared that Crafton’s English-only amendment was “a surrogate for racial discrimination and a violation of the Equal Protection Clause”, the Metro Legal Department argued that, under Tennessee law, Crafton’s English-only amendment should be placed on the ballot since the amendment would have to be passed by voters before a court could decide it to be unconstitutional.\(^{60}\) Chancellor Claudia Bonnyman, the same judge who had ruled that the English-only Charter Amendment could not appear on the November 4th ballot, seemed to agree with this argument when she ruled that the special election referendum should proceed as planned. Any chance of keeping the English-only Charter Amendment off the special election ballot ended when the Tennessee Supreme Court twice denied Quinteros’ request for an expedited appeal. Chancellor Bonnyman’s ruling that the English-only Charter Amendment would appear on the January 22nd ballot provided for almost seventy-five days of contentious campaigning that fundamentally divided the Nashville community along cultural and socioeconomic lines.
On January 22nd, after almost seventy-five days of intense campaigning by both advocates and opponents of the English-only Charter Amendment, Nashville became the first municipality in the United States to reject English-only legislation via referendum. Nashville voters defeated the measure by nearly 10,000 votes; the final tally was 32,144 for the amendment and 41,752 against it. About 19% of registered voters voted in the special election. This turnout constituted the largest turnout for a Metro Nashville special election in a decade.61 The efforts, or lack thereof, of the Nashville For All of Us Campaign and the Nashville English First campaign best account for Nashville’s unprecedented rejection of Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation.

The Nashville For All of Us Campaign

After Chancellor Bonnyman’s ruling, leading opponents of Crafton’s English-only amendment were faced with the stark reality that, in less than forty days, early voting would begin on an English-only Charter Amendment. Therefore, these leaders, “in coordination with members of the religious community and of the music and tourism industry, began meeting” to discuss how to defeat Councilman Crafton’s English-only amendment.62 By late November 2008, Tom Negri, John Lamb, and other leading opponents of the measure had judged that 27,000 votes would be needed to defeat the amendment since they “thought that the (voter) turn-out would be in the 50,000 range.”63 Understanding that an organized campaign would be required if 27,000 votes were to be cast against the amendment, Negri, Lamb, and other community leaders formed the Nashville For All of Us campaign. This campaign brought a diverse group of individuals and organizations together in a concerted effort to defeat both Charter Amendments. Diverse organizations like Catholic Charities, the Islamic Center of Nashville, the Jewish
Federation of Nashville and Middle Tennessee, the Davidson County Democratic Executive Committee, League of Women Voters Nashville, The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau, United Steelworkers of America-District 9, the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, the ACLU of Tennessee, the Nashville Peace and Justice Center, the Nashville Community Organization (NCO), along with a plethora of community leaders including Mayor Karl Dean, Governor Phil Bredesen, and Nashville’s eight college and university presidents, provided the foundation of the Nashville For All of Us campaign. The fledgling campaign immediately hired a campaign manager, Jim Hester, reached out to McNeely Piggot & Fox Public Relations and MMA Creative to help coordinate the effort; provide a unifying theme, messaging and media strategy; and provided discipline to the existing grassroots efforts under way.  

When looking for a campaign manager, the Nashville For All of Us campaign found a perfect fit in Jim Hester. Hester had made a career out of managing political campaigns throughout Tennessee. In 2006, Hester had managed Congressman Harold Ford Jr.’s unsuccessful campaign against former Chattanooga Mayor Bob Corker in the race to fill the United States Senate seat vacated by Senator Bill Frist. After this defeat, Hester resurrected his career in late 2006 when he signed on to manage Karl Dean’s campaign for mayor. Hester guided Dean, who only garnered 3% name recognition in January 2007, to an electoral victory over Bob Clement, who had served six terms as Nashville’s Congressman, in September. As a result of his exemplary work, Hester landed a job as a senior adviser to Dean in the Mayor’s office. To leading members of the Nashville For All of Us campaign, it seemed that Hester’s strong opposition to the
English-only movement, along with his newfound proclivity for producing electoral miracles, made him a perfect fit to run the Nashville For All of Us campaign. Mayor Dean and other community leaders convinced Hester to take a two month unpaid leave of absence from the Mayor’s office to run the Nashville For All of Us campaign.

By joining the campaign, Hester “brought the technical expertise of how to run a political campaign, without which (the Nashville For All of Us campaign) might have had a lot of passion but little practical tools with which to have any influence.” Therefore, Hester began his duties as campaign manager by simply organizing the campaign. Hester quickly realized that it was crucial for the Nashville For All of Us campaign to develop one, cohesive, message to combat the English-only movement as the campaign’s effectiveness was hindered by a lack of organization in messaging voters. Religious and pro-immigrant organizations within the campaign desired to frame the campaign’s message around the amendment’s mean-spirit and divisiveness while business organizations and political leaders desired to focus on how the amendment would curb the city’s economic growth, hurt Nashville’s public image, and cost the city millions of dollars in federal grants. Therefore, Hester commissioned Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group, which conducts polling for ten Senators, five Governors, and numerous Congressmen, “to develop a poll that would identify the profile of the anti-English-only voter and messages that would motivate them to go to the polls.” From December 9-11, Garin-Hart-Yang conducted this survey of registered Nashville voters.

When Fred Yang called Hester to go over the poll’s results, he expected Hester to be disheartened by the 54%-36% lead that the English-only amendment enjoyed in the ballot testing. However, Hester was unfazed since he “polled to test arguments ...(and)
didn’t care about election numbers.”67 According to Yang, the most effective argument, in the eyes of voters targeted by the poll, against the English-only amendment was the amendment’s unwelcoming message, its potential to hurt Nashville’s economy, and its waste of taxpayer money. In particular, voters responded well to the argument that “passing this (English-only amendment) will do absolutely nothing about the issue of illegal immigration. It will not stop one single person from coming to Nashville or receiving money or assistance from the Metro government.”68 Polling proved arguments about the “human element of the issue” to be detrimental to the Nashville For All of Us campaign since few voters had sympathetic attitudes towards immigrants.69 Data from the Garin-Hart-Yang poll showed young, college educated, Nashvillians under fifty years of age to be most likely to oppose the English-only amendment. The data also illustrated that women were more likely to oppose the amendment than men. Finally, the polling data showed that the more affluent and progressive areas of the city, East and West Nashville, were much more inclined to oppose the amendment.

Garin-Hart-Yang’s data also helped Hester and the leaders of the Nashville For All of Us campaign understand that voters’ attitudes about the English-only amendment were subject to little change as only 1% of the amendment’s supporters changed their opinion when “presented with pro and con information” about the amendment.70 With this fact in mind, Hester began to form a campaign strategy that was focused on contacting likely opponents of the measure quickly and in every way possible in order to get out the vote (GOTV) during the early-voting period. These likely opponents would be educated about the amendment’s unfriendly message and potential for causing negative economic ramifications. Hester judged that the campaign would have to be limited as a
highly visible campaign against the English-only amendment would only compel more voters, who supported the amendment, to go to the polls. In an interview, Hester quipped that his most important responsibility was “keeping the campaign tamped down.”

Hester and the leaders of the Nashville For All of Us campaign began relaying the campaign’s message to voters when they launched a web site, www.nashvilleforallofus.org. This web site was designed to catch the attention of the young, educated Nashvillians most likely to oppose the measure as it contained links to social media tools like Facebook, YouTube, and blogs. The site also allowed opponents of the amendment to sign up to volunteer and donate money online.

Soon after the launching of its website, the campaign began to directly contact targeted voters through Facebook messages, email blasts, direct mail, and canvassing efforts. These tools sought to educate voters about the English-Only amendment’s potential to negatively impact Nashville as they detailed how voters’ enactment of the amendment would send the wrong message about Nashville, hurt the city’s economy, and waste taxpayers’ money. The campaign’s literature described the consequences of the amendment’s unfriendly message by detailing how the measure would harm Nashville’s thriving tourism industry and reputation for being “America’s friendliest city.” The campaign also explained the ways in which the amendment’s unfriendly message would harm the economy, since international businesses would be reluctant to relocate to a city that had enacted English-only legislation. Finally, the campaign declared that enactment of the amendment harmed the Metro government and constituted a waste of taxpayers’ money for two fundamental reasons. First, the enactment of the English-only amendment would only save the Metro government about $100,000 annually in translation fees.
Second, and most importantly, the amendment’s language, unless altered by the Council in the aftermath of its enactment, would put the Metro government in conflict with the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. As a result of this conflict, the Metro government would no longer receive the federal grants that were crucial to the city’s prosperity. The loss of these grants would severely inhibit the government’s ability to serve Nashville taxpayers. To help voters better understand this compelling argument, Hester created a spreadsheet that compared the number of federal grant dollars received by some Metro department to the amount the departments paid to provide foreign language services to Nashvillians. (See below).  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metro Government</th>
<th>Total Invoices Paid to Language Line Services for FY09 through 12/26/08</th>
<th>Federal Grants for FY09 by Grantor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department</strong></td>
<td><strong>Amount Paid</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total Award Amount</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Court</td>
<td>$39.32</td>
<td>$1,160,178.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>$1,026.47</td>
<td>$8,728,178.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>$20.27</td>
<td>$1,677,765.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Department</td>
<td>$30,153.55</td>
<td>$19,908,871.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>$565.28</td>
<td>$21,082,391.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and Sewer</td>
<td>$3,409.30</td>
<td>$3,161,040.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordeaux Hospital</td>
<td>$15.25</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITS</td>
<td>$24,489.89</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total Paid FY09</strong></td>
<td><strong>$59,719.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$55,718,424.06</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hester hoped to compare the total amount of federal grants awarded to the Metro government to the cost of language line services in order to show voters how the passing of the English-only amendment would waste their federal tax dollars and severely cripple Metro’s ability to provide basic services to taxpayers. Despite the compelling nature of this argument, it was rarely cited as a key reason for opposing the amendment by the Nashville For All of Us campaign since many voters had trouble understanding the argument.  

73

74
Throughout December and January, the campaign sent six pieces of direct mail to frequent voters who fit the Garin-Hart-Yang poll’s profile of likely English-only opponents. In addition, the campaign purchased voter lists and attempted to personally contact likely supporters through neighborhood canvassing. The campaign utilized volunteers from the Nashville Community Organization (NCO), also known to leaders of the campaign as “the Obama ground troops” because of their efforts on behalf of Barack Obama’s Presidential campaign, to conduct the actual canvassing. Their canvassing was limited to neighborhoods in East and West Nashville since polling data showed individuals in these communities to be most likely to support the Nashville For All of Us campaign. In both the direct mail and canvassing efforts, the campaign sought to “educate voters about the potential ramifications” of the English-only amendment.

Both volunteers and campaign literature communicated to voters how the amendment wasted taxpayer money and had the potential to hurt Nashville’s economy and public image.

Hester also began to make contact with likely voters through televisions ads. Instead of hiring a media group to produce costly television ads, Hester, with the help of United Methodist Communications, produced a television ad, featuring Mayor Dean, Catholic Bishop David Choby, TV personality Anastasia Brown, African-American Reverend Sonnye Dixon, businessman Tom Oreck, who had recently relocated his vacuum-cleaner business from New Orleans to Nashville, and former Mayoral candidate Buck Dozier. In the ad, the leaders ask Nashvillians to vote against the English-only measure as “it sends the wrong message to national and international companies investing in Nashville” and “is a waste of taxpayers money.” However, no leader mentioned
immigration in the ad for fear of alienating voters. When buying airtime for this ad, Hester only bought time on cable channels while refusing to buy time on any major networks since people above the age of fifty (likely supporters of the English-only amendment) were most likely to watch major networks. In an interview, Hester said he bought time for the ad on “The Colbert Report, The Daily Show, Fox News, CNN, 30 Rock, Desperate Housewives, and during Obama’s inauguration” in order to make contact with the young, college educated, Nashvillians. Hester also bought airtime on Lightning 100, a soft rock radio station with many young, educated listeners, for radio ads that used the same text as the television ads. Hester and the campaign only purchased radio ads on stations with older listeners in a response to an ad campaign by Councilman Crafton’s English-first group.

In addition to Hester’s efforts to defeat the amendment, multiple groups within the Nashville For All of Us campaign “reach(ed) out to their members and act(ed) on their own, independent(ly) but in support for Nashville For All of Us.” Religious groups affiliated with the campaign organized and hosted the Clergy For Tolerance Breakfast which culminated in the “reading of a joint statement against English-only, signed by 240 clergy leaders.” In addition, McNeely Piggot & Fox, Nashville’s most prominent public relations firm, coordinated “an almost two-mile walk to the polls with (Tennessee) First Lady Andrea Conte, Anne Davis, wife of Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, and Martha Cooper, wife of U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper, to cast early votes against English-only.” This First Ladies’ walk was successful since it brought a number of women to the polls and produced national media coverage. Governor Phil Bredesen and Mayor Dean also worked to increase voter turnout by making a joint show of force to urge the
defeat of the English-only amendment amid heavy media coverage. Finally, a number of African-American groups involved in the campaign, including the NAACP, the Urban League, the Interdenominational Ministers Fellowship, and the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, held a press conference outside of the Davidson County Election Commission in an effort to get African-American voters to the polls.

McNeely Piggot & Fox, reached out to both local and national media groups in a proactive effort to gain positive coverage for the Nashville For All of Us campaign. The public relations firm “coordinated national and international media interviews, including The Associated Press, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, BBC News, CNN, CNN International, Fox News National, ABC News Radio, and MSNBC.” However, the public relations firm’s most fundamental effect on the campaign came through their efforts to provide for the publishing of op-eds, columns, and editorials in local newspapers that would support the Nashville For All of Us campaign. The firm was especially successful in communicating the campaign’s message to The Tennessean. Although the paper had voiced its opposition to Nashville’s English-only movement since its beginning in 2006, McNeely Piggot & Fox’s proactive work resulted in the publishing of various columns, op-eds, and editorials that were passionate in their opposition to Crafton’s movement. In one column on the day of the election, Gail Kerr, who is widely regarded as The Tennessean’s most popular columnist, illustrated the paper’s vehement opposition to the amendment when she wrote: “It (the English-only amendment) is about hating people who are a different color and speak a different language. It is not about helping Nashville. It does nothing to better a city that is running just fine without such an asinine law.”
The Nashville For All of Us campaign constituted an effective campaign against Councilman Crafton’s English-only amendment for a number of key reasons. The campaign, under the leadership of men like Tom Negri, John Lamb, and Steven Fotopulos, was able to recruit a diverse coalition of groups to the Nashville For All of Us campaign, hire Jim Hester, who Tom Negri credits for bringing a “calm, cool, organized, and direct” approach to managing the campaign, develop an organized and coherent campaign message, and implement an organized and efficient campaign strategy in its effort to defeat the amendment. Finally, the work of individual groups associated with the campaign cannot be underestimated. In an interview, John Lamb accounted for the Nashville For All of Us campaign’s effectiveness by declaring: “The most crucial method was the leverage of existing organizations to reach out to their members and act on their own, independent of but in support for Nashville For All of Us. That was a force-multiplier. We won’t ever be able to catalog everything that was done in this campaign for that reason, and it’s a good problem to have.”

Nashville English First Campaign

In preparation for the January 22nd special election referendum, Councilman Eric Crafton and a core group of English-only supporters formed the Nashville English First Campaign to promote the English-only amendment. The campaign utilized its spokesman Eric Crafton, direct mail, email blasts, and radio ads to deliver its message to voters. In formulating a message, the Nashville English First campaign quickly adopted a moral high ground stance as it sought to depict the English-only amendment as being “about keeping Nashville united, not divided and encouraging immigrants to learn English and pursue the American dream…and about keeping costs and taxes low, by not making city
agencies operate in multiple languages." In addition to this basic message, the campaign attempted to cast individuals opposed to the English-only amendment as liberal elites who were "anti-English". However, the Nashville English First campaign failed to gain the support of Nashville's citizens. The campaign enjoyed little public support from Nashvillians as it had few volunteers and only managed to raise $8,000 from local donors. The campaign made up for this lack of local support by accepting over $96,000 from ProEnglish, the Arlington, Virginia based group founded by John Tanton. The campaign's lack of organization, along with its inability to engender local support, was fundamental in causing its failure.

In early December 2008, Councilman Crafton and other English-only supporters formed the Nashville English First Campaign as they constructed a website, ran radio ads, and began sending direct mail and email blasts to likely supporters. While these efforts were successful in bringing some English-only voters to the polls, they paled in comparison to the organized, efficient, and expensive campaign being conducted by the Nashville For All of Us organization. Unlike the Nashville For All of Us operation, the Nashville English First movement failed to coalesce into an organization that resembled an organized campaign since the movement lacked a campaign manager, effective fundraisers, and a support structure that would allow for neighborhood canvassing and phone banks. Instead of attempting to get out the vote through an organized campaign, Councilman Crafton and the campaign seemed to rely on the English-only movement's popularity to provide for the enactment of the amendment. As a result of this calculation, Crafton and his supporters sought to gain as much publicity for the amendment as possible. Councilman Crafton conducted numerous interviews with both the local and
national media in an effort to achieve this aim. The campaign, unable to produce television ads because of inability to raise money, also sought to publicize the amendment through radio ads.

In its efforts to publicize the amendment, the Nashville English First Campaign formed a message that depicted the English-only amendment to be beneficial for all of Nashville as the measure would use language to unite the city. In a message to voters, the Nashville English First website claims English-only is “about more than saving money...It’s about keeping Nashville united, not divided by language and encouraging immigrants to learn English and pursue the American dream.” The campaign’s radio ads also seemed to echo this sentiment. With God Bless America playing in the background, the first ad tells listeners that English is under attack, since some Americans don’t understand English to be the common bond that has united the United States throughout its history. The ad also details how New York City, at a huge cost to its taxpayers, offers government services in seven different languages. In the campaign’s second, and last, radio ad, Eddie Garcia, a Spanish and Italian speaking immigrant, tells voters that he supports the English-only amendment when he declares:

There are many proud moments as Americans we can all experience...to hear the National Anthem at a baseball game from the first base line, to hear the invocation of a newly built Navy ship in Newport News, VA., to ring in the New Year from any American city, to feel the goose bumps of a Fourth of July parade’s presentation and fireworks, to witness the inauguration of a new President, to stand and salute our flag at the memorial service of a soldier, to be witness of the embodiment of what America stands for in a democratic debate for an elected position, but nothing is better or more American than participating in such a historical and everlasting event than listening to it and understanding it in English.
By using these arguments to formulate its message, the Nashville English First campaign sought to present the English-only measure as a benevolent and unifying force.

Although the Nashville English First campaign was successful in formulating a clever, and even misleading campaign message, the campaign lacked both the grassroots and financial support necessary to articulate its message to the voters. Without grassroots support, the campaign could only conduct radio ads and was forced to rely on heavy financing from ProEnglish, John Tanton’s organization that had been linked to various hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center. By the end of the campaign, ProEnglish had contributed $96,500 of the over $104,000 the Nashville English First campaign raised.

ProEnglish’s heavy involvement in the campaign constituted a public relations disaster for the Nashville English First campaign as Councilman Crafton, worried about the electoral ramifications that publicity surrounding ProEnglish’s involvement in the campaign would have, broke Tennessee state law by failing to disclose his campaign’s donors on January 17th, only five days before the election. In a letter to Davidson County Election Commission Administrator Ray Barrett, Jon Crisp, the President of Nashville English First, cited fears that the disclosure of the campaign’s donor list would lead to backlash against supporters of the English-only amendment by individuals opposed to the amendment. The campaign’s decision to withhold its campaign disclosure forms until after the election caused considerable repercussions throughout Nashville since the Nashville For All of Us campaign, along with members of the media opposed to the amendment, was quick to point out that Crafton’s failure to file his campaign disclosure could point to heavy funding from ProEnglish. Those opposed to the amendment also
emphasized that the Southern Poverty Law Center had linked ProEnglish to multiple hate
groups. Crafton’s failure to file campaign disclosure forms only days before the special
election did considerable electoral harm to the Nashville English First campaign as the
campaign became inextricably linked with ProEnglish in the minds of many Nashville
voters.

The Nashville English First Campaign failed to attract the necessary local support
for a number of reasons. First, the group failed to hire individuals that could properly
provide for the management of a countywide campaign. Instead of being managed by a
veteran campaign manager, Nashville English First was coordinated by Eric Crafton and
John Crisp, two men with no real experience in managing a county-wide campaign.

Without a management team that understood how to conduct a campaign, the Nashville
English First was unable to educate voters about the English-only amendment through
canvassing or phone banks since the campaign lacked grassroots support. Also, the
campaign’s inability to raise funds from local donors severely inhibited its ability to
communicate its message to voters and respond to television ads, paid for by the
Nashville For All of Us campaign, that criticized the English-only amendment. In fact,
the Nashville English First Campaign was only able to claim one major local donor,
Toyota dealership owner Lee Beaman. In the aftermath of the special election,
Councilman Crafton conceded: “When they (the Nashville For All of Us campaign)
started running TV ads one right after the other, and then reported raising $300,000…we
knew it (the campaign) would be tough.”\textsuperscript{89} Also, Crafton and his supporters often seemed
to believe an organized campaign to be unnecessary, since the movement’s natural
popularity among older voters and funding from ProEnglish would provide for the
enactment of the amendment. Crafton illustrated this view when he told CNN’s Lou Dobbs on January 14th that early-voting was tilting in his campaign’s favor, not on account of his campaign’s get out the vote effort or accurate exit polls, but because the average age of early voters, according to Crafton, was fifty-five. When asked to account for the failure of the Nashville English First campaign, Mayor Dean quipped, “Crafton got lazy and thought he could just sit back and not do any work.”

While the Nashville English First campaign’s failure to provide for the passing of the English-only amendment can, in many ways, be attributed to problems with the campaign’s organization and management, it can also be linked to various external factors that were never in the campaign’s control. First, Chancellor Claudia Bonnyman’s decision to prohibit the placement of the English-only amendment on the November 4th Presidential ballot was a fundamental factor in the amendment’s failure. Had the amendment been placed on the November 4th ballot, a record number of voters would have been introduced to the amendment in the ballot box. This large turnout would have undoubtedly favored the Nashville English First Campaign as polling data demonstrated that the majority of registered voters in Davidson County were in favor of the amendment. Instead, the amendment’s placement on a special election ballot ensured a comparatively low turnout among voters since only voters who cared about the issue went to the polls. Also, the special election ballot gave the Nashville For All of Us campaign time to launch an organized and effective campaign against the English-only amendment. John Lamb articulated the special election ballot’s fundamental effect on the failure of the English-only amendment when he asserted:

“I think the ballot initiative is the key…(because) we didn’t have any voters at the polls whose first time to hear about the issue was in the ballot box. Anyone voting
in the special election was going for that purpose. I think the number of people who are passionately in favor of English-only is a small number, so we just had to do our outreach to reveal to Nashville the kind of threat English-only represented.”

President Barack Obama’s campaign for the Office of the President had a huge effect on the English-only amendment’s failure as it ignited unprecedented political participation among young, educated, Americans. In Nashville, these young Obama supporters, who had campaigned at the grassroots level throughout the fall, quickly harnessed their resources, under the guise of the Nashville Community Organization (NCO), to provide the Nashville For All of Us campaign with hundreds of volunteers. Nashville For All of Us leader Tom Negri described the NCO’s efforts as extraordinary. Finally, the spirit of the Nashville community played a major role in providing for the English-only amendment’s failure. While factors like the unprecedented wave of immigration Nashville experienced in previous years made Nashville seem like a fitting test site for the English-only movement, the city’s diverse and educated citizenry impeded the success of the English-only movement. It seems more plausible that Nashville would become the first city to reject English-only legislation when one understands that Nashville voters have displayed inclusive attitudes at the ballot box as Nashville’s last three mayors were from the Northeastern United States. In addition, Nashville’s intellectual and cosmopolitan spirit, provided by the plethora of colleges and universities in the city, was a crucial factor in Nashville’s decision to reject Councilman Crafton’s English-only amendment.

Nashville’s three-year English-only movement was simultaneously standard and unique throughout its duration as it followed the same trends as previous English-only
movements in various states and municipalities while also becoming the first
municipality or state to reject English-only legislation via referendum. The initial path
and duration of Nashville’s English-only movement seems to fall into the same trends as
other English-only movements throughout the United States. According to Wayne A.
Santoro, most English-only legislation is first introduced in a legislative forum. In these
forums, which Dr. Santoro refers to as constrained political environments, English-only
legislation does not always pass as actors fundamentally opposed to the English-only
legislation have access to legislators, and even mayors, considering the English-only
measure.93 In Santoro’s view, city governments with a mayor-council structure, like
Nashville, are more likely to reject English-only legislation than a government with a
council-manager structure as those opposed to English-only legislation, especially
Latinos, have more “access to local elites in the cities with mayor-council rather than
council-manager forms of government.”94 Nashville’s early experiences with English-
only seem to fit Dr. Santoro’s premise as English-only legislation in Nashville was
initially introduced into a legislative forum and then rejected by mayoral veto.
Nashvillians opposed to Councilman Crafton’s legislation had access to Mayor Bill
Purcell which may have influenced his decision to veto the bill. Also, the Metro
Council’s decision to pass Crafton’s English-only legislation fits Santoro’s argument as
in 2007 the Metro Council was a legislative body with a conservative composition. In
Santoro’s view, conservative, southern, legislatures are most likely to support English-
only legislation.95

After his legislative defeat, Councilman Crafton’s attempt to implement his
English-only legislation, with the backing of ProEnglish through a public referendum,
was typical of previous English-only movements. Santoro judges that voters have often “ratified English-only laws through citizen-initiated referenda after their state legislatures did not pass such measures.”96 Santoro details this assertion when he notes that national English-only organizations funded public referendum campaigns that were successful in enacting English-only legislation in states whose legislatures had previously rejected English-only legislation (Arizona, Colorado, and Florida). With this fact in mind, one can better understand why Councilman Crafton relied on precedent when believing that his Nashville English First campaign, which was largely driven by ProEnglish, would be successful in providing for the enactment of English-only legislation in Nashville.

Throughout the Nashville English First campaign, Councilman Crafton and his supporters sought to emulate previously successful English-only movements. First, the message the Nashville English First campaign articulated to voters was typical of previous English-only movements. The campaign tried to equate English-only to nationalism and convince voters, through radio ads, direct mail, and email blasts, that the language was under attack in the United States. This effort is best illustrated by the fact that God Bless America played in the background of a Nashville English First radio ad. In multiple interviews, Councilman Crafton, himself, also sought to convince voters that English was under attack. This message seems to fit with a previous U.S. English ad which “makes the point more graphically: A knife bearing official bilingualism slash(ing) through a map of the United States.”97 In its message, the Nashville English First campaign also tried to persuade voters that the English-only amendment would be beneficial to immigrants since the amendment would help immigrants assimilate into American culture. This argument is consistent with the arguments employed by other
English-only movements that have supposedly “launched their campaign(s) for the immigrants’ own good.” Like past English-only movements, Nashville’s movement employed this argument while failing to take the immigrants’ actual situations into account by advocating for the implementation of English-language learning classes. Finally, the Nashville English First campaign’s focus on the burden that Metro’s bilingual programs place on taxpayers (a comparatively small one) fits with the criticisms of government bilingual programs by national English-only organizations. Geoffrey Nunberg accounts for these criticisms by noting that government bilingual programs are “the most accessible to direct political action.”

In its effort to convey its English-only message to voters, the Nashville English First campaign resembled previous English-only campaigns as it lacked a “grass-roots constituency.” Like previously successful English-only campaigns, Nashville English First relied on a national English-only organization, ProEnglish, and the legislation’s natural popularity among the electorate to provide for the enactment of the English-only amendment. However, the Nashville For All of Us campaign constituted an unprecedented campaign against English-only legislation. The campaign did mirror past opposition campaigns in its decision to limit exposure through the banning of public protests as “fighting to prevent the adoption of a widely supported policy (English-only) set limits on the use of extra institutional activity.” However, the campaign was unique as a diverse coalition of businesses, non-profits, religious organizations and politicians joined forces to oppose the amendment. By using innovative campaign techniques, the Nashville For All of Us campaign was able to gain widespread support. In past referendums on English-only legislation, the movement’s widespread support made it
politically and socially difficult to form an organized and effective resistance movement. Because of this difficulty, no state or local electorate had ever rejected English-only legislation via referendum until Nashville did so on January 22nd, 2009.

It seems that Nashville’s unparalleled rejection of Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation via referendum occurred because of characteristics unique to Nashville, not an overall weakening of the English-only movement’s popularity with the voters. In short, Nashville’s English-only movement occurred in the wrong place and the wrong time. The unique demographic and social composition of Nashville was a major factor in the city’s rejection of English-only legislation. Before the referendum on the English-only amendment, Nashvillians, especially registered voters, had demonstrated their support for progressive policies by voting both Mayor Karl Dean and President Barack Obama into office. In the 2007 mayoral election, which occurred fifteen months before the special election referendum on English-only, an overwhelming majority of voters came from West Nashville, one Nashville’s most affluent, populated, and arguably progressive regions; this large majority of progressive voters is most responsible for providing for Mayor Dean’s election and the defeat of Councilman Crafton’s English-only amendment. In the September 11th, 2007 mayoral election, Dean lost twenty-two of the thirty-five precincts but carried West Nashville (mostly composed of Districts 22-25) by overwhelming margins.
2007 Mayoral Runoff Election: (Figure 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>% Votes for Karl Dean</th>
<th>% Votes for Bob Clement</th>
<th>% Turnout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 22</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 23</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 24</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 25</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Districts (complete election totals)</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, Dean received a considerably higher level of support in Districts 22-25 than he did in the rest of Davidson County as he never garnered more than 57% of the vote in each district while only receiving 52% of the vote when all the Districts’ election numbers were compiled. Also, the comparatively high turnout in Districts 22-25 helped Dean overcome losses in other Districts where the turnout was not nearly as high. Dean’s overwhelming victories in Districts 22-25 were largely responsible for his electoral victory. Similarly, voters in Districts 22-25 played a major role in providing for the defeat of the English-only Charter Amendment as they voted down the measure by comparatively broad margins.

2009 Special Election Referendum on English-only: (Figure 1-1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>% Voters in Favor of English-only Amendment</th>
<th>% Voters opposed to English-only Amendment</th>
<th>% Turnout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 22</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 23</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 24</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 25</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Districts (complete election totals)</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above figure illustrates that a considerably higher percentage of voters in Districts 22-25 opposed the English-only measure than did other voters in Davidson County. With the exception of District 22, which happens to be the Metro Council District represented by Eric Crafton, no fewer than 68% of voters in Districts 23-25 opposed the English-only amendment while only 57% of voters countywide opposed the amendment. Also, the turnout in Districts 22-25 was significantly higher than the countywide average of 19%. In the 2007 mayoral election and the English-only special election referendum, progressive voters in Districts 22-25 played a fundamental role in providing for the Mayor Dean’s electoral victory and the defeat of the English-only Charter Amendment.

Nashville’s reputation as America’s friendliest city and the Athens of the South were also major factors in the city rejecting English-only. Many Nashvillians judged that the enactment of English-only legislation would tarnish these reputations and thereby make Nashville a less attractive place to live and visit. Individual Nashvillians were also crucial in fostering the defeat of the English-only amendment. Individuals like Tom Negri, John Lamb, Jim Hester, Stephen Fotopulos, Mayor Dean, and countless others showed remarkable courage in standing against such a popular movement. Without their leadership, there would have been no organized campaign against English-only. Finally, the timing of the referendum on Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation may have been most responsible for the amendment’s rejection. By holding a special election referendum on the amendment, a low voter turnout was ensured as only voters who cared passionately about the English-only issue went to the polls. If the referendum had been placed on the November 4th Presidential ballot, a record number of voters would have gone to the polls with little understanding of the English-only amendment’s
ramifications. Also, the amendment’s placement on the special election ballot was crucial as it gave the Nashville For All of Us campaign time to mount an organized campaign against the measure. Eric Crafton’s English-only movement failed in Nashville because of characteristics unique to the city, not on account of a larger nation-wide trend against the movement.

**English-only’s Connection to Anti-immigration Sentiments**

After studying Nashville’s English-only movement, it is clear that Nashvillians who voted in favor of the English-only amendment did so for a variety of reasons. However, Nashville’s experience with the English-only movement also demonstrated the fundamental connection between the English-only movement and anti-immigration sentiments as Councilman Crafton’s English-only legislation divided the Nashville community along cultural and socioeconomic lines that are, in many ways, parallel to the cultural and socioeconomic divisions that occur in communities over the issue of immigration. A comparison of data in a nationwide Pew Research Center Poll, conducted from February 7th thru March 8th, 2006, on immigration to data in the Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group Poll, conducted for the Nashville For All of Us campaign from December 9th-11th, 2008, on English-only in Nashville, confirms the fundamental connection between the English-only movement and anti-immigration sentiment. The two polls illustrate that voters who support English-only legislation or harbor anti-immigration sentiments can be linked together by their political affiliation, level of education, race, and age. This fundamental linkage between English-only supporters and individuals who hold anti-immigration attitudes seems to confirm assertions, by multiple scholars, that the English-only movement is merely a form of symbolic politics.
The Pew Research Center’s poll, *America’s Immigration Quandary*, is a survey of United States opinion on a wide range of issues directly relating to immigration. The poll surveyed five major metropolitan areas, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Chicago, Raleigh-Durham, and Washington DC, in its collection of data. On the other hand, the Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group conducted an in depth survey of four hundred and three Nashville voters about the English-only movement in Nashville. In the Garin-Hart-Yang survey, one hundred and eighty-four voters strongly supported the English-only amendment, thirty-three voters gave the amendment weak support, and one hundred and forty-five voters were completely opposed to the amendment. In the survey’s data sets listed below, percentages of voters who strongly supported, weakly supported, and completely opposed the amendment are derived from these numbers. When the two surveys are compared, their results demonstrate that supporters of English-only legislation in Nashville and individuals with anti-immigration attitudes throughout the United States are linked by their political affiliations. According to the Pew poll, Republicans are slightly more likely than Democrats to believe that immigrants are a burden to the United States and threaten its traditional values. While recording similar results, the Garin-Hart-Yang survey illustrates that Republicans are more likely than Democrats to support English-only legislation in Nashville.

Pew Survey: (Figure 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrants</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are a burden on the U.S.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaten U.S. values</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Garin-Hart-Yang Survey: (Figure 2-1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English-only</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong “Yes”: 184 voters</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak “Yes”: 33 voters</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total “No”: 145 voters</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, each survey indicates that Republicans are at least slightly more likely than Democrats to have negative views of immigrants and to support English-only.

Differences between liberal and conservative Democrats may explain the fact that the Garin-Hart-Yang survey registered a higher number of Democrats completely opposing the English-only amendment than the Pew poll showed being in favor of immigration.

Data indicates that both the Democratic and Republican parties are internally divided, along ideological lines, by immigration and English-only issues.

Pew Survey: (Figure 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrants</th>
<th>Conservative Republicans</th>
<th>Moderate/Liberal Republicans</th>
<th>Conservative Democrats</th>
<th>Moderate/Liberal Democrats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are a burden on U.S.</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaten values</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Garin-Hart-Yang Survey: (Figure 3-1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English-only</th>
<th>Leaning Republican</th>
<th>Strong Republican</th>
<th>Leaning Democrat</th>
<th>Strong Democrat</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong “Yes”: 184 voters</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak “Yes”: 33 voters</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total “No”: 145 voters</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These tables illustrate how both the immigration and English-only issues internally divide the Republican and Democratic parties. In regards to the immigration issue, Pew data illustrates that conservative Republicans and Democrats are more likely to harbor anti-immigration sentiments than their moderate/liberal counterparts. Similarly, the Garin-Hart-Yang survey demonstrates that “strong” Republicans and Democrats are most likely to support English-only legislation. In spite of this assertion, the survey’s polling data also shows that “strong” Democrats are most likely to oppose English-only legislation. This contradiction could exist as factors such as age and level of education could influence “strong” Democrats to support different policies. In the final analysis, it seems that individuals’ ideological leanings, not party affiliations, are most important when considering polled voters’ views on English-only and immigration.

When compared, the two surveys also reveal that supporters of anti-immigration policies can be connected to English-only supporters through their similar levels of education. According to both surveys, individuals with at least a baccalaureate education will be less likely than individuals without a four-year college education to hold anti-immigration attitudes or support English-only policies.

**Pew Survey: (Figure 4)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level Of Education</th>
<th>Immigrants are a burden because they take jobs, Housing and Healthcare</th>
<th>Immigrants strengthen U.S. with hard work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College grad</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School or less</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Garin-Hart-Yang Survey: (Figure 4-1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Strong “Yes” 184 voters</th>
<th>Weak “Yes” 33 voters</th>
<th>Total “No” 145 voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No High School</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School grad</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College/ 2 year vocational degree</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 year college grad</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both tables illustrate that the more education one receives, the more likely he or she is to hold a positive view of immigrants and oppose the English-only movement. In the Pew poll, over 56% of college graduates believe immigrants strengthen the United States while only 36% do not. In addition, individual’s who never attended college comprise the largest group of citizens who believe that immigrants are a burden on society. In the Garin-Hart-Yang survey, 42% of voters who opposed the English-only amendment had completed at least some post graduate work while only 12% of voters in favor of English-only legislation had postgraduate experience. Both surveys demonstrate that one can link individuals who support English-only to persons who harbor anti-immigration sentiments through their level of education.

It seems that American citizens with less than a baccalaureate education often hold anti-immigration attitudes and therefore support English-only policies because immigrants sometimes take jobs less educated Americans desire. In the Pew survey, 79% of college educated Americans judged that immigrants took unwanted jobs while only 59% of Americans with a high school education held the same belief. This data illustrates that less educated Americans may harbor anti-immigration sentiments and support the English-only movement because they are in direct competition with immigrants for jobs.
and social services. For these individuals, supporting English-only legislation is a symbolic way to register their anger towards immigrants.

Data from both the Pew and Garin-Hart-Yang surveys illustrates that individuals who harbor anti-immigration sentiments can be linked to supporters of the English-only movement by their age. According to the Pew survey, the older a United States citizen is, the more likely he or she is to possess anti-immigration attitudes. Similarly, the Garin-Hart-Yang survey demonstrates that older citizens are most likely to support English-only legislation in Nashville.

**Pew Survey: (Figure 5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Immigrants are a burden because they take jobs, housing, and healthcare</th>
<th>Strengthen our country with their hard work and talents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Garin-Hart-Yang Survey: (Figure 5-1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Strong “Yes” 184 voters</th>
<th>Weak “Yes” 33 voters</th>
<th>Total “No” 145 voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Pew survey clearly illustrates that older citizens are more likely to hold anti-immigration outlooks as only 43% of citizens in the 18-29-age range have negative views of immigrants while 59% of citizens over sixty-five have these same views. The Garin-Hart-Yang survey also illustrates that the oldest citizens are most likely to support English-only as 74% of voters who strongly supported English-only legislation in Nashville were above fifty years of age. Both tables, when compared, show that the
oldest citizens are most likely to hold anti-immigration sentiments and support English-only policies.

Finally, the two surveys demonstrate that individuals who harbor anti-immigration sentiments can be linked to supporters of English-only by their race and ethnicity. Both the Pew poll and the Garin-Hart-Yang survey illustrate that black and white voters have similar views on immigration and English-only. The Pew poll shows that Hispanics have a much more positive view of immigrants than blacks or whites. Similarly, the Garin-Hart-Yang survey data shows that Hispanic voters oppose English-only; however, the survey’s data set is too small to constitute an adequate sample.

**Pew Survey: (Figure 6)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Immigrants are a burden because they take jobs, housing, and healthcare</th>
<th>Immigrants strengthen our country with their hard work and talents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Garin-Hart-Yang Survey: (Figure 6-1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Strong “Yes” 184 voters</th>
<th>Weak “Yes” 33 voters</th>
<th>Total “No” 145 voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both data sets illustrate that black and white citizens hold very similar views on immigration and English-only. The Pew poll shows that roughly the same amounts of black and white citizens believe immigrants to be a burden. The Garin-Hart-Yang survey also shows that a small majority of black and white voters support English-only legislation as white and black voters account for 94% of the 184 strong “yes” voters.
while also accounting for 94% of the 145 voters completely opposed to English-only. The Pew poll indicates that Hispanics hold highly favorable views of immigrants while the Garin-Hart-Yang survey does not provide an adequate description of Hispanic views on English-only as its data set is too small.

By comparing the Pew Research Center’s poll, *America’s Immigration Quandary*, to Garin-Hart-Yang’s survey regarding the English-only movement in Nashville, one can link individuals who harbor anti-immigration sentiments to supporters of English-only through their political affiliations, level of education, age, and race. Data from the two surveys illustrates that individuals who have conservative Democratic or Republican political ideologies, less than a baccalaureate degree, are over the age of fifty, and are black or white, but not Hispanic, are most likely to harbor anti-immigration sentiments and support English-only amendments. These fundamental linkages seem to affirm scholars’ assertions that the English-only movement is, to most voters, a political movement fundamentally related to concerns over immigration. The Garin-Hart-Yang survey confirms this basic relationship between immigration and English-only as 63% of the survey’s four hundred and three respondents judged the English-only movement to be mainly about dealing with immigrants.

In the study *The “Official English” Movement and The Symbolic Politics of Language in the United States*, multiple scholars detail the English-only movement through their study of Proposition 63, a California ballot initiative passed by voters that “instructed the state’s legislature to enforce the status of English as the official language of California and to make no law that “diminishes or ignores” the role of English.”¹⁰³ In their analysis, the study’s authors admit “Economic conflict and cultural resentment are
the leading...explanations for the current controversy over language policy in the United States. According to the study, support for English-only legislation can often be blamed on anti-immigrant sentiments resulting from feelings of vulnerability. This sentiment can spring from “ethnic competition for jobs, education or housing; resentment about the cost of public services that primarily benefit linguistic minorities”, and unfavorable personal experiences or sheer prejudice towards immigrants. In short, the study concludes “negative sentiments about cultural minorities are associated consistently with opposition to bilingualism and approval of the hegemony of English.”

In addition to articulating the fundamental relationship between anti-immigration sentiments and support for English-only legislation, the study employs an exit poll, conducted by The Field Institute, which details, among other factors, the political ideology, level of education, age, and ethnicity of California voters who supported Proposition 63. Not surprisingly, the poll shows that these voters are linked to individuals who harbored anti-immigration sentiments in the Pew poll and supported English-only legislation in Nashville by their political ideologies, level of education, age, and ethnicity. Like the Pew and Garin-Hart-Yang surveys, the poll showed support for “official English to be strongly related to party and ideology” as Republicans and conservative Democrats were most likely to support Proposition 63. The poll also demonstrated that voters over sixty years of age were most likely to support the proposition. White and Black voters were almost even in their support of the Proposition (72% and 68%, respectively) while Hispanic voters gave notably less support. Finally, the poll exhibited that “the relatively young and highly educated were less likely to vote for “official English” than the rest of the public.” The study, The “Official English” Movement and
the Symbolic Politics of Language in the United States, supports the assertion that the English-only movement is fundamentally connected to anti-immigration sentiment.

Lee Thomas, the author of Language as Power: A Linguistic Critique of U.S. English, also believes the English-only movement to be fundamentally connected to anti-immigration sentiments. Thomas cites actions surrounding U.S., Inc., a John Tanton founded tax-exempt that funded both U.S. English and FAIR, as evidence of the English-only movement’s close connection to anti-immigration sentiment. In addition to funding U.S. English and FAIR, U.S., Inc. has “made donations to the Center for Immigration Studies, Californians for Population Stabilization, and Americans for Border Control.”

Thomas also cites the heavy involvement of Cordelia Scaife May, a Mellon heiress, in the U.S. English organization as further evidence of the English-only movement’s anti-immigration sentiments. According to Thomas, Mrs. May contributed to a number of organizations that advocate for immigration control while also financing the distribution of the book, The Camp of the Saints, “which describes Third World immigrants destroying Western Civilization (and) was denounced as racist, xenophobic, and paranoid.”

Finally, Thomas believes that the English-only movement is primarily driven by anti-immigration sentiments as supporters of English-only legislation in multiple states have shown little concern for funding programs that support the teaching of English. This lack of concern shows that proponents of the English-only movement are “not serious about promoting opportunities for people living here to learn English.”

In American Identity and Attitudes toward Official-English Policies, Deborah J. Schildkraut analyzes motivations behind voters’ support of English-only legislation. Schildkraut asserts that voters’ education, partisanship, ideology, and level of education
are all key factors in explaining the widespread public support for the English-only movement. In her study, the author finds “ethnocultural support for English as the official language sometimes emerged in blatantly anti-immigrant statements.” Schildkraut maintains that this anti-immigrant sentiment is primarily caused by voters’ “entrenched tendencies to assume that language minorities are not American.” Finally, supporters of English-only who harbor anti-immigration sentiments may support English-only legislation in order to register their anger with immigrants and the government. In her work, *The New Politics of Immigration: "Balanced-Budget Conservatism" and the Symbolism of Proposition 187*, Kitty Calavita examines California voters symbolic support for Proposition 187, a ballot initiative, passed in November 1994, that barred “undocumented immigrants from attending public schools and receiving non-emergency health care.” Calavita suggests that voters’ support for Proposition 187 “represents a new kind of symbolic politics in which alienated voters—those who bother to vote at all—use their ballot symbolically to express anger and send a message.” According to Calavita, immigrants are the ideal scapegoats for frustrated and angry voters, especially during times of economic downturn. Through their support of Proposition 187, voters registered their anger with illegal immigrants and government policies as the proposition “reconfirmed to a predisposed electorate that illegal immigrants over-burden government services and contribute to fiscal crisis.”

Calavita confirms “all political language policies (also) have a symbolic component in the sense that they derive from and evoke a set of political beliefs about responsibility and blame.” Therefore, it seems English-only legislation gains similar support from voters who feel the enactment of such legislation will not necessarily
change public policy but will instead send an unfriendly and unwelcoming message to immigrants. Nashville’s English-only movement confirms that’s voters employ English-only legislation to send unwelcoming messages to immigrants as supporters of Councilman Crafton’s legislation were very aware of the amendment’s unconstitutionality, along with the unfriendly message the amendment would send to immigrants. The connection between supporters of the English-only movement in Nashville and individuals who harbor anti-immigration sentiments is validated by various scholars whose respective studies have found the English-only movement, and its motivations, to be closely linked to anti-immigration sentiments.

While multiple studies and surveys have clearly demonstrated that the English-only movement is inextricably tied to anti-immigration sentiment, some individuals who support English-only legislation do not harbor any anti-immigration sentiments. Some voters support English-only legislation because they simply believe that English should be the only language spoken in the United States. Others support the English-only movement because the English language is a “highly resonant symbol of American nationality.” In the study, “Whites’ Opposition to “Busing”: Self-interest or Symbolic Politics”, David O. Sears, Carl P. Hensler, and Leslie K. Speer offer an analysis of symbolic politics showing people often “acquire early life standing predispositions which influence their adult perceptions and attitudes.” These individuals frequently rely on these predispositions as their “responses to political events in adulthood are determined to a large degree by attitudes derived from socialization earlier in life.” According to the study, symbolic attitudes compel voters to emotional support or oppose a political issue even if they do not have a personal “stake” in the issue. In regards to English-only
legislation, multiple scholars, including the authors of *The “Official English” Movement and Symbolic Politics of Language in the United States*, have employed a similar analysis of symbolic politics to account for voters’ widespread support of the English-only movement. To these voters “the positive attachment to the symbols of nationhood, whether self-conscious or just reflexive-contributed significantly to the pervasive approval” for English-only legislation.”\(^{121}\) Voters, whose support of English-only legislation is founded on symbols of nationhood and Americanism, are driven by symbolic politics.

**Conclusion**

Despite its widespread support, there is no need for the English-only movement anywhere in the United States. If proponents of the English-only movement are only worried about unifying the United States through the use of one common language, it is not necessary for them to mount an organized campaign to do so since there is no real threat to the English language. Lee Thomas estimates 97-98% of the U.S. population speak English. “Ninety percent of children 5-17 years old speak *only* English and 89% of those over 18 speak *only* English...Spanish speakers today represent no greater percentage of the population than did German speakers prior to World War I.”\(^{122}\) In *Lingo Jingo: English-only and the New Nativism*, Geoffrey Nunberg believes the English-only movement to be unnecessary since “More than 97 percent of Americans speak English well, a level of linguistic homogeneity unsurpassed by any other large nation in history.”\(^{123}\) In addition to the overwhelming percentage of Americans that speak English, it seems that immigrants “are in fact learning English at a faster rate than any earlier generations of immigrants did—and by all evidence, with at least as much
enthusiasm.” In fact, today’s immigrants show much less loyalty to their native tongue and culture than past immigrant groups. With this information in mind, leaders of the English-only movement should be working to fund English language classes that will help immigrants understand English more quickly. Instead, proponents of English-only have endeavored to enact restrictive language laws, which, according to both Geoffrey Nunberg and Lee Thomas, are not successful in compelling non-English speakers to learn the English language.

The English-only movement continues to enjoy legislative successes throughout the United States as voters often support English-only legislation because of deep-seated anti-immigrant sentiments. Many voters favor English-only legislation because they resent immigrants since they compete with them for housing, jobs, and educational opportunities. In addition, voters, especially those over the age of fifty, also favor the English-only movement because they fear change and hold outright prejudice towards immigrants. These voters often believe support for English-only legislation will send immigrants an unfriendly message. However, it is important to note that many supporters of English-only favor the movement because of symbolic feelings of patriotism and unity, along with the simple belief that English should be the only language spoken in the United States.

Nashville’s experience with the English-only movement is important for multiple reasons. First, by becoming the only state or municipality to reject English-only legislation via referendum, Nashville’s experience provides an unprecedented model for defeating the English-only movement. By following Nashville’s example, it seems that states and municipalities can defeat the English-only movement, via referendum, by
forming an organized and effective opposition campaign that employs an experienced campaign manager and innovative campaign techniques, educating voters about the potentially negative ramifications of English-only legislation, and ensuring that referendums on English-only legislation do not coincide with major elections. Second, Nashville’s English-only movement further confirms the connection between supporters of English-only legislation and individuals who hold anti-immigrant sentiments as Garin-Hart-Yang’s survey links supporters of English-only in Nashville to individuals who harbor anti-immigration sentiments through their political ideologies, level of education, age, and ethnicity. Statements by Eric Crafton and other leading supporters of Nashville’s English-only movement provide further evidence of this connection.
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