



**MASW**  
Since 1901

**Missouri Association for Social Welfare**

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Statement in Opposition to HB 1231

Submitted *in lieu* of appearing at today's hearing of the House Committee on International Trade & Immigration.

Mr. Chairman, member of the committee:

For the record, my name is Bob Quinn; I am a registered lobbyist. I am Executive Director of the Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW) and submit this statement on MASW's behalf.

HB 1231 would require that the test for a Missouri driver's license be administered in English only, with no assistance available for those for whom some other language is their primary and/or native language.

Perhaps a state with a name which is a French attempt to pronounce a Sioux word that probably has to do with canoes (a term used among Europeans first by Columbus, an attempt to render in Spanish the Arawakan {original language in Haiti} word "*canaoua*"), with cities named for non-English speaking places like Paris, Mexico, Westphalia, Ste. Genevieve, Madrid, Milan, and Versailles (to name just a very few), and with the official state motto "*salus populi suprema lex esto*" should stop pretending that we are all still subjects of Her Royal Majesty and must speak her official language to the exclusion of all others.

Command of the English language is not necessary to driving safely on Missouri's roadways. Traffic signs are designed to be easy to understand, and many are based on international standards that transcend the parochialism of local languages. And the law already prohibits issuing a driver's license to people who lack documented proof of lawful presence, so HB 1231 would only impose its requirements on people who are here legally, such as refugees.

MASW opposes HB 1231. Thank you.