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124TH DISTRICT**



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There are certain values that we all share as Missourians, and when these values are violated, we work to preserve that intricate part of our cultural heritage. For this reason, the House has made protecting values a major part of our Blueprint for Missouri.

This week, the House worked to continue protecting our culture by moving forward with HB 1186, a measure requiring driver's license examinations to be administered only in English.

We are a nation of immigrants, and we celebrate our diverse heritage. The inscription on one of our most patriotic icons, the Statue of Liberty, reads: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

People in other nations want to come to America because we are a beacon of liberty. And I agree that legal immigration should continue to be part of our heritage as a nation. However, all immigrants should be encouraged to assimilate into our culture. HB 1186 will help immigrants assimilate by requiring them to learn English to get a driver's license.

Support for English only laws is growing across the nation, and Missouri was on the cutting edge of this trend. In 2008, Missouri voters made English the official language of all government proceedings with 89% of the vote. Here in the House, we have taken that vote seriously, and now, we are taking the next step

Currently, an individual in Missouri has the option to take the driver's license examination in 11 different languages, and under the law, the Department of Revenue has to provide an interpreter for any of the approved languages. Passing this important piece of legislation will save the state money by eliminating the need for interpreters.

While saving the state money is important, increasing safety on our roadways is just as important. Someone who can't communicate in English with law enforcement officials during a routine traffic stop or an emergency situation on a major roadway can endanger other motorists or cause serious harm to innocent people. HB 1186 ensures that drivers have the capability to communicate with our law enforcement officials during an emergency.

Requiring immigrants to assimilate into our culture is a value that Missourians share. Requiring license examinations to be administered only in English strengthens our values while protecting motorists.

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