

ALEC EXPOSED

"ALEC" has long been a secretive collaboration between Big Business and "conservative" politicians. Behind closed doors, they ghostwrite "model" bills to be introduced in state capitols across the country. This agenda—underwritten by global corporations—includes major tax loopholes for big industries and the super rich, proposals to offshore U.S. jobs and gut minimum wage, and efforts to weaken public health, safety, and environmental protections. Although many of these bills have become law, until now, their origin has been largely unknown. With ALEC EXPOSED, the Center for Media and Democracy hopes more Americans will study the bills to understand the depth and breadth of how big corporations are changing the legal rules and undermining democracy across the nation.

ALEC's Corporate Board—in recent past or present

- AT&T Services, Inc.
- centerpoint360
- UPS
- Bayer Corporation
- GlaxoSmithKline
- Energy Future Holdings
- Johnson & Johnson
- Coca-Cola Company
- PhRMA
- Kraft Foods, Inc.
- Coca-Cola Co.
- Pfizer Inc.
- Reed Elsevier, Inc.
- DIAGEO
- Peabody Energy
- Intuit, Inc.
- Koch Industries, Inc.
- ExxonMobil
- Verizon
- Reynolds American Inc.
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
- Salt River Project
- Altria Client Services, Inc.
- American Bail Coalition
- State Farm Insurance

For more on these corporations, search at www.SourceWatch.org.

DID YOU KNOW? Corporations VOTED to adopt this. Through ALEC, global companies work as "equals" in "unison" with politicians to write laws to govern your life. Big Business has "a VOICE and a VOTE," according to newly exposed documents. **DO YOU?**

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Omnibus Common Language Act

Summary

This Act recognizes a common language and designates a common language as the language of public record and public meetings; repeals conflicting laws; and for other purposes

Model Legislation

Section 1. {Short Title} This Act may be cited as Omnibus Common Language Act

Section 2. {Legislative Declarations} The Legislature hereby finds and declares that:

- (A) By sharing a common language America's immigrants built a new nation and contributed their diverse cultures;
- (B) This State has been enriched by its diversity, and the government should always take steps to promote the dignity of all the heritages that form our society;
- (C) Many languages are represented in this State, and language has the power to unite the people of differing backgrounds and heritages;
- (D) English is the nation's single, shared language - the one language that crosses all ethnic, racial, cultural, nationality and religious lines and allows diverse Americans to share their various backgrounds;
- (E) Full political, economic, and social empowerment depends to a large extent upon proficiency in the common language - and lack of proficiency in the common language condemns people to a permanent second-class status behind a language barrier;
- (F) Knowledge of a common language is essential to the democratic processes of government and the full exercise of constitutional freedoms, informed and knowledgeable empowerment as voters, citizen checks against government abuses, and individual prosperity and independence;
- (G) The use of a common language as the language of public record in no way infringes upon the rights if citizens to exercise the use of a primary language of their choice for private conduct;
- (H) The absence of a recognized common language among diverse people results in segregation along language lines and places at great disadvantage individuals who are of limited proficiency in English;
- (I) It is a purpose of this Act to recognize the government's affirmative responsibility to encourage and ensure greater opportunities for individuals to learn the common language, as recognized by this Act;
- (J) It is a purpose of this Act to establish a uniform policy for a means of access to public documents and communications in the State and thereby ensure fair, consistent, and equal practices throughout this State when it comes to providing services;

Section 3. {Definitions} Official public documents and records are all documents officially compiled, published, or recorded by the State including deeds, publicly probated wills, records of births, deaths and marriages, and all other documents and records defined by [refer to code citations defining "Freedom of Information Act" documents or comparable laws]; and official public meetings are those meetings and proceedings as defined by [refer to code citations defining "open meetings" laws].

Section 4. {Main Provisions}

- (A) The common language is recognized to be English; and the common language is designated as the language of official public documents and records and official public meetings.
- (B) Exemptions. The provisions of this Act shall not apply:
 - (1) to instruction in foreign language courses;
 - (2) to instruction designed to aid students with limited English proficiency in a timely transition and integration into the general education system;

Did you know that global corporation Kraft Foods served as corporate co-chair in 2011?

(3) to the promotion of international commerce, tourism, and sporting events;

(4) when deemed to interfere with needs of the justice system;

(5) when the public safety, health, or emergency services require the use of other languages, provided, however, that any such authorization for the use of languages other than the common language in printing informational materials or publications for general distribution must be approved in an open public meeting [refer to code citations defining "open meetings" laws] by the governing board or authority of the relevant state or municipal entity and the decision must be recorded in publicly available minutes [refer to code citations defining "Freedom of Information Act" documents or comparable laws];

(6) when expert testimony, witnesses or speakers may require a language other than the common language, provided, however, that for purposes of deliberation, decision making, or record keeping, the official version of such testimony or commentary shall be the officially translated English language version.

(C) Pursuant to the exemptions outlined above ((B)(1) through (B)(6)), all costs related to the preparation, translation, printing and recording of documents, records, brochures, pamphlets, flyers, or other information materials in languages other than the common language must be delineated as a separate budget line item in the agency, departmental, or office budget.

(D) No person shall be denied employment with the State or any constituent entities or municipalities based solely upon that person's lack of facility in a foreign language, except where related to bona fide job needs reflected in the exemptions in (B)(1) through (B)(6) above.

(E) This Act shall not be construed in any way to infringe upon the rights of citizens under the State Constitution or the Constitution of the United States in the use of language in private activities. No agency or officer of the State nor any constituent entities or municipalities may place any restrictions or requirements regarding language usage in businesses operating in the private sector other than official documents, forms, submissions, or other communications directed to government agencies and officers, which communications shall be in the common language as recognized in this Act.

(F) Right of action. Any citizen of the State shall have standing to bring an action against the State to enforce this Act. The State Courts shall have jurisdiction to hear and decide any such action brought under this subsection.

Section 5. {Severability Clause}.

Section 6. {Repealer Clause}

Section 7. {Effective Date}

Were your laws repealed?

1995 Sourcebook of American State Legislation

About Us and ALEC EXPOSED. The Center for Media and Democracy reports on corporate spin and government propaganda. We are located in Madison, Wisconsin, and publish www.PRWatch.org, www.SourceWatch.org, and now www.ALECexposed.org. For more information contact: editor@prwatch.org or 608-260-9713.

Center for Media and
Democracy's quick summary

A bill requiring the use of English for all public meetings and documents. More narrowly drafted than the "Licensing and Certification Common Language Act" (also in the 1995 Sourcebook of American State Legislation).