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Immigrant files suit to challenge ' English - only ' referendum

An El Savador native has filed a lawsuit seeking to stop a Jan. 22 referendum on whether Nashville should make English the only language for all government services, with a few exceptions for public safety.

The lawsuit was filed in Chancery Court last night on behalf of legal immigrant Rosa Quinteros against Metro and the Davidson County Election Commission. It asks for a restraining order against the pre-election activities by the commission, calls the English - only vote unconstitutional and claims that taxpayers should not be responsible for the estimated \$300,000 cost to hold it.

The "Nashville English First" movement aims to make English the official language of Nashville and is spearheaded by Metro Council member Eric Crafton, who collected 5,000 names in support of holding the referendum.

An opposing group, Nashville For All Of Us, includes many business leaders and Council member Ronnie Steine. The Nashville chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union is also fighting the measure.

If it were to pass, Nashville would be the only major city in the country with such an "English only" law.

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