

## **States setting stage for their own Prop. 187s**

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### **Body**

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A homemaker in Delray Beach, Fla.

An electronics salesman in New York.

A retired insurance executive in Tucson, Ariz.

They have at least one thing in common: determination to pass laws like California's Proposition 187.

They are only in the talking **stage**, but they are talking big: Laws to deny education and other services to illegal immigrants can sweep their **states**.

"I think we can pass it by an even bigger margin than in California," says JoAnn Peart, 44, the homemaker pushing a campaign in Florida. "We are the laughingstock of the world. . . . People want change."

In Arizona, retiree Don Barrington, 59, has formed a Save Our **State**/Arizona committee, with plans to put a 187-like measure on the 1996 ballot.

"Arizona will pass it by 66% and California passed it by 59%," says Barrington. "And it's not a racial issue. My friends have never heard a racist word out of me. I just don't like wetbacks."

That kind of talk worries some Hispanics. "Arizona is fertile ground," says Tucson civil rights lawyer Isabel Garcia, a fifth-generation Mexican-American. "We're frightened and we're getting prepared."

In New York, Ron Laney, 38, the electronics salesman, is calling his committee "Take Back America." He promises a "very sophisticated" campaign to force the **state** Legislature to **set** a referendum.

The supporters are getting advice and instruction from Proposition 187 proponents in California.

In Florida and Arizona they may not need it: Thanks to successful "official English" ballot campaigns in the 1980s, there are already established groups.

"The two issues are so related. Immigration is driving the language conflict," says Bob Park, a retired immigration agent in Prescott, Ariz., and a leader of the movement that produced Arizona's official-English law, which narrowly passed in 1988.

But passing more Proposition **187s** may not be easy.

## States setting stage for their own Prop. 187s

Economic conditions in other states are not the same as in recession-wracked California. The governors of Florida, New York, Texas and Arizona oppose 187-like laws. California Gov. Pete Wilson won re-election advocating the measure.

Wilson showed Thursday he's not abandoning the issue. He pledged to carry on the court battle after a federal judge put Proposition 187 implementation on hold. Another hearing is set Tuesday.

Advocates in other states have another hurdle: Getting an initiative on the ballot isn't easy in New York or Texas, where legislatures control ballots and Democrats control the legislatures.

But 187 supporters don't think any of that matters.

"This will be a people's initiative and whoever's against it will go down in flames," says Enos Schera, 67, a retired electrician and head of an English-only group in Florida's Dade County.

Floridians cite local polls showing high voter support for a 187-like measure. And they even connect support for the measure to the defeat of Republican Jeb Bush by Democratic Gov. Lawton Chiles in last week's election.

"Jeb Bush lost because he was too linked to the Cubans and because he spoke Spanish at one of the (televised) debates," says Peart.

Bush's bilingual performance "was an utter insult to Americans," says Schera.

California's immigration tide

States with the largest illegal-immigrant populations:

California	1.6 million
New York	449,000
Texas	357,000
Florida	322,000
Illinois	176,000
New Jersey	116,000
Other <u>states</u>	518,000
Total	3.5 million

## Notes

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## Graphic

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GRAPHIC, b/w, Nick Galifianakis, USA TODAY, Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service 1993 estimates (Pie chart)

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