

Afognak



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January 24, 2012

Senator Donald Olson
State Capitol Building
Room 508
Juneau, AK 99501

RE: Support of SB 130, Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council

Dear Senator Olson:

Afognak Native Corporation offers its strong support for SB 130, "An Act establishing the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council and relating to the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of Alaska Native languages."

Today there are only 45 fluent speakers of the Alutiiq language, the traditional language of the Native people of the Kodiak Archipelago, only 11 of which can speak the Northern Dialect, the traditional language of the *Ag'uanermiut* (people of Afognak). All the speakers are Elders.

Our traditional language, like so many Alaska Native languages, struggles for survival. Thankfully, through the joint efforts of the Alaska Native Corporations and Tribes in the Kodiak Archipelago and the Alutiiq Museum, we are preserving our language.

Afognak Native Corporation has funded a language program operated by the Native Village of Afognak and Native Village of Port Lions to create innovative language learning tools. KTUU Channel 2 News recently aired stories about these language preservation efforts:

- Alutiiq Language Website: <http://www.ktuu.com/features/assignmentak/learning-alutiiq-online-20120112,0,5807593.story>
- Alutiiq Iphone Application: <http://www.ktuu.com/videobeta/80965544-341f-44e4-8e14-5210bac33c9b/News/Afognak-Alutiiq-Connect-iPhone-app-intro>

Although we have made progress in language preservation, there is still much to do to revitalize our Native language. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the State of Alaska, school districts, and other Native organizations to ensure Alaska Native languages remain a vibrant part of Alaska's diversity.

Quyanaasinaq (thank you very much) for the opportunity to comment on this bill. If you would like to discuss our support further, please contact me at slukin@afognak.com / (907) 222-9505.

Sincerely,

Sarah L. Lukin
Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs