



23 January 2012

Honorable Donny Olson, Senator
Alaska State Legislature
Alaska State Capitol, Rm. 508
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Olson:

It brings me gratification to see the introduction of Senate Bill 130 - Alaska Native Language & Advisory Council, "An Act establishing the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council and relating to the preservation, restoration and revitalization of Alaska Native Languages."

I have been working in the field of language preservation and perpetuation for nearly 40 years and have seen first hand the extreme decline of the Iñupiaq language. A handful of our people have devoted their lives to teaching it in the hopes of reversing this loss. Much remains to be done.

I write in support of the bill and urge passage. Having an Advisory Council whose responsibility would be to advocate for Native languages across the state will go a long ways towards creating an atmosphere where we can realize a shift in language priorities in Alaska. It is high time the state recognize the importance of perpetuating the languages of its indigenous peoples.

Quyanaq.

Respectfully yours,

Jana Harcharek, Director
Iñupiaq Education