Dear Representative Ortiz,

Quyana for recognizing how important our Native languages are in today's world. I am fifty percent Yup'ik yet I was born and raised in the lower Forty-eight. My Yup'ik mother knew how to speak Central Yup'ik; however she committed suicide in February 1996, the year I entered kindergarten. I believe my mother committed suicide due to what the Army did to her and my brother in 1993. My brother is no longer alive. My father still has the records of what happened then. Nonetheless, since she passed away I have not had the chance to learn Yup'ik fully myself. I have spent my whole life trying to learn what I can of the language; especially after I discovered in high school 2009 that a dialect of Siberian Yup'ik went extinct in the mid-late 1990's. I have been having trouble learning Yup'ik but I must say that the internet is far more helpful now than it was when I was growing up.

My husband and I plan to learn Yup'ik before we start trying to have children. We both want our future children to grow up learning Yup'ik, as well as English and Spanish, for our children will be mixed race. With all of my heart quyana for recognizing the importance our Native languages in today's world.

Quyana,

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