

January 18, 2012

Senator Donald Olson
Community and Regional Affairs Committee Chair
State of Alaska
State Capitol Building Rm 508
Juneau, AK 99801

Honorable Senator Olson:

I am writing to convey my support for Senate Bill 130, a bill to establish an Alaska Native Language and Advisory Council. The creation of such a council is desperately needed and is long overdue.

In recognition of the languages of the Alaska Native peoples being treasures, and in support of our own efforts, as indigenous peoples, to maintain and develop our languages, it is my belief that the State of Alaska should make it a policy to act and assist the effort to revitalize, maintain, and development of the languages of Alaska's indigenous people with the creation of an Alaska Native Language and Advisory Council.

In addition to a making a shift from a past colonial government policies which have devastated languages and cultures of Alaska's indigenous peoples, and current policies which have perpetuated their decline, significant resources should also be applied to implement the initial and on-going activities of the Council. Time is of the essence as we continue to have elders and best indigenous language speakers pass on. As our languages are restored and valued for the treasures that they are Alaska will become a richer place for all.

I understand you are compiling a list of people to provide testimony during the first committee hearing with State Affairs which is chaired by Senator Wielechowski. I am willing to testify by phone during the committee hearing which is scheduled for Tuesday, January 24th at 9:30am. I could be available to call in at about 9:15 if I am provided the opportunity.

Thank you for sponsoring this legislation and for your support of the Alaska Native peoples of Alaska.

Shesh t'qe\ani,



Jonathon S. Ross
President and Principle Consultant