

Testimony in support of House Bill No. 26

Invited Testimony: Bernadette Y. Alvanna-Stimpfle, ANLPAC, Vice Chair

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An Act renaming the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council as the Council for "Alaska Native Languages: and relating to the Council for Alaska Languages."

Council for Alaska Native Languages: What does it mean?

Section 1:

1) Preservation

- A. Archives: this means working in archives where Native languages were recorded from years past. There are large and small archival repositories where new generations can be supported to acquire and learn their respective languages.
- B. Media: There are resources online in the internet for learners and researchers to find information to develop learning materials. Indigenous people share what they have learned what works for their communities and learning institutions.
- C. Community Wellness: Indigenous people work towards wellness for adults to learn what was lost from their past treatments of knowing how to speak to home language at schools and churches. This caused Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder for the next generations. To break this trauma, Indigenous have worked hard on cultural wellness in arts and ceremonies to revitalize what was lost.

2) Restoration

- A. Reclaim in restoring our Native languages, we are reclaiming who we are and where we come from. We have come from thousands of years of not only surviving harsh environments but also, thriving in that very environment. Our languages comes from our land, sea, and resources in the air.
- B. Rebirth and Renaissance: This is the time (today, now) for revival of all of our Alaska Native languages. The language council works towards to this, where our languages are normalized in the whole State.

3) Revitalization

- A. Build on Native Identity: When a young person learns in the language, they are forming an Indigenous identity. (Note, not learning the language).
- B. Moving Forward: The ultimate result is for cultural wellness and being able to speak from the Native perspective any study.

Section 2:

- 4) Seven Voting Members** – Alaska needs to hear from a wider community of Alaska Native language experts and the advocates of language warriors. This makes for a stronger network of language work with the same perspective of revitalizing Indigenous languages in Alaska.