S. HRG. 106–648

NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT AMENDMENTS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

S. 2688

TO AMEND THE NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE SUPPORT OF NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE SURVIVAL SCHOOLS

JULY 20, 2000
WASHINGTON, DC

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NATIVE AMERICA LANGUAGES ACT AMENDMENTS

THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2000

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m. in room 485, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Daniel K. Inouye (vice chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Inouye and Akaka.

STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL K. INOUYE, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII, VICE CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Senator INOUYE. The committee meets this morning to consider a bill to amend the Native American Languages Act to provide for the establishment of Native American language survival schools.

As part of the United States' forced assimilation policies toward Native Americans, a system of off-reservation boarding schools was initiated in the 1880's.

Native American children were forcibly taken from their families, transported hundreds of miles to schools where their hair was cut, notwithstanding the religious importance of hair length in most Native cultures, their clothes replaced with military-style uniforms, and they were forbidden to speak their Native languages or practice their religion.

Although this effort to eradicate Indian culture was not successful, it did separate several generations of Native Americans from their Native languages.

The Native American Languages Act of 1990 officially repudiated the policies of the past, and declared that,

> it is the policy of the United States to preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages.

The Native American Languages Act of 1990 amended the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to establish a grant program under the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Native Americans to support Native American languages projects.

S. 2688 would bring the Nation one step closer to assuring the preservation and revitalization of Native American languages by supporting the development of Native American language survival schools.

[Text of S. 2688 follows:]

II

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2688

To amend the Native American Languages Act to provide for the support of Native American Language Survival Schools, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 7 (legislative day, JUNE 6), 2000

Mr. INOUYE (for himself, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. DODD, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. SCHUMER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs

---

A BILL

To amend the Native American Languages Act to provide for the support of Native American Language Survival Schools, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2000".

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purposes of this Act are to—

(1) encourage and support the development of Native American Language Survival Schools as in-

novative means of addressing the effects of past discrimination against Native American language speakers and to support the revitalization of such languages through education in Native American languages and through instruction in other academic subjects using Native American languages as an instructional medium, consistent with United States' policy as expressed in the Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.);

(2) encourage and support the involvement of families in the educational and cultural survival efforts of Native American Language Survival Schools;

(3) encourage communication, cooperation, and educational exchange among Native American Language Survival Schools and their administrators;

(4) provide support for Native American Language Survival School facilities and endowments;

(5) provide support for Native American Language Nests either as part of Native American Language Survival Schools or as separate programs that will be developed into more comprehensive Native American Language Survival Schools;

(6) support the development of local and national models that can be disseminated to the public

and made available to other schools as exemplary methods of teaching Native American students; and

(7) develop a support center system for Native American Survival Schools at the university level.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

Section 103 of Public Law 101–477 (25 U.S.C. 2902) is amended to read as follows:

"DEFINITIONS

"In this Act:

"(1) INDIAN.—The term 'Indian' has the meaning given that term in section 9161 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7881).

"(2) INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term 'Indian tribal government' has the meaning given that term in section 502 of Public Law 95–134 (42 U.S.C. 4368b).

"(3) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term 'Indian tribe' has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

"(4) INDIAN RESERVATION.—The term 'Indian reservation' has the meaning given the term 'reservation' in section 3 of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (25 U.S.C. 1452).

"(5) NATIVE AMERICAN.—The term 'Native American' means an Indian, Native Hawaiian, or Native American Pacific Islander.

"(6) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE.—The term 'Native American language' means the historical, traditional languages spoken by Native Americans.

"(7) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE COLLEGE.—The term 'Native American Language College' means—

"(A) a tribally-controlled community college or university (as defined in section 2 of the Tribally-Controlled Community College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801));

"(B) Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College; or

"(C) a college applying for a Native American Language Survival School in a Native American language which that college regularly offers as part of its curriculum and which has the support of an Indian tribal government traditionally affiliated with that Native American language.

"(8) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION.—The term 'Native American Language Educational Organization' means an organization that—

"(A) is governed by a board consisting of speakers of 1 or more Native American languages;

"(B) is currently providing instruction through the use of a Native American language for not less than 10 students for at least 700 hours of instruction per year; and

"(C) has provided such instruction for at least 10 students annually through a Native American language for at least 700 hours per year for not less than 3 years prior to applying for a grant under this Act.

"(9) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE NEST.—The term 'Native American Language Nest' means a site-based educational program enrolling families with children aged 6 and under which is conducted through a Native American language for not less than 20 hours per week and not less than 35 weeks per year with the specific goal of strengthening, revitalizing, or re-establishing a Native American language and culture as a living language and culture of daily life.

"(10) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE SURVIVAL SCHOOL.—The term 'Native American Language Survival School' means a Native American language dominant site-based educational program which expands from a Native American Language Nest, either as a separate entity or inclusive of a Native American Language Nest, to enroll families with children eligible for elementary or secondary education and which provides a complete education through a Native American language with the specific goal of strengthening, revitalizing, or reestablishing a Native American language and culture as a living language and culture of daily life.

"(11) NATIVE AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER.—The term 'Native American Pacific Islander' means any descendant of the aboriginal people of any island in the Pacific Ocean that is a territory or possession of the United States.

"(12) NATIVE HAWAIIAN.—The term 'Native Hawaiian' has the meaning given that term in section 9212 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7912).

"(13) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Department of Education.

"(14) TRADITIONAL LEADERS.—The term 'traditional leaders' includes Native Americans who have special expertise in Native American culture and Native American languages.

"(15) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term 'tribal organization' has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).".

SEC. 4. NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE SURVIVAL SCHOOLS.

Title I of Public Law 101–477 (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

"GENERAL AUTHORITY

"SEC. 108. (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to provide funds, through grant or contract, to Native American Language Educational Organizations, Native American Language Colleges, Indian tribal governments, or a consortia of such organizations, colleges, or tribal governments to operate, expand, and increase Native American Language Survival Schools throughout the United States and its territories for Native American children and Native American language-speaking children.

"(b) ELIGIBILITY.—As a condition of receiving funds under subsection (a), a Native American Language Educational Organization, a Native American Language College, an Indian tribal government, or a consortia of such organizations, colleges, or tribal governments—

"(1) shall—

"(A) have at least 3 years experience in operating and administering a Native American Language Survival School, a Native American Language Nest, or other educational programs in which instruction is conducted in a Native American language; and

"(B) include students who are subject to State compulsory education laws; and

"(2) may include students from infancy through grade 12, as well as their families.

"(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

"(1) REQUIRED USES.—A Native American Language Survival School receiving funds under this section shall—

"(A) consist of not less than 700 hours of instruction conducted annually through a Native American language or languages for at least 15 students who do not regularly attend another school;

"(B) provide direct educational services and school support services that may also include—

"(i) support services for children with special needs;

"(ii) transportation;

"(iii) boarding;

"(iv) food service;

"(v) teacher and staff housing;

"(vi) purchase of basic materials;

"(vii) adaptation of teaching materials;

"(viii) translation and development; or

"(ix) other appropriate services;

"(C) provide direct or indirect educational and support services for the families of enrolled students on site, through colleges, or through other means to increase their knowledge and use of the Native American language and culture, and may impose a requirement of family participation as a condition of student enrollment; and

"(D) ensure that students who are not Native American language speakers achieve fluency in a Native American language within 3 years of enrollment.

"(2) PERMISSIBLE USES.—A Native American Language Survival School receiving funds under this section may—

"(A) include Native American Language Nests and other educational programs for students who are not Native American language speakers but who seek to establish fluency through instruction in a Native American language or to re-establish fluency as descendants of Native American language speakers;

"(B) include a program of concurrent and summer college or university education course enrollment for secondary school students enrolled in Native American Language Survival Schools, as appropriate; and

"(C) provide special support for Native American languages for which there are very few or no remaining Native American language speakers.

"(d) CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY LANGUAGE USE DEVELOPMENT.—The Secretary is authorized to provide funds, through grant or contract, to Native American Language Educational Organizations, Native American Language Colleges, Indian tribal governments, or a consortia of such organizations, colleges, or tribal governments, for the purpose of developing—

"(1) comprehensive curricula in Native American language instruction and instruction through Native American languages; and

"(2) community Native American language use in communities served by Native American Language Survival Schools.

"(e) TEACHER, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to provide funds, through grant or contract, to Native American Language Educational Organizations, Native American Language Colleges, Indian tribal governments, or a consortia of such organizations, colleges, or tribal governments for the purpose of providing programs in pre-service and in-service teacher training, staff training, personnel development programs, programs to upgrade teacher and staff skills, and community resource development training, that shall include a program component which has as its objective increased Native American language speaking proficiency for teachers and staff employed in Native American Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nests.

"(2) PROGRAM SCOPE.—Programs funded under this subsection may include—

"(A) visits or exchanges among Native American Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nests of school or nest teachers, staff, students, or families of students;

"(B) participation in conference or special non-degree programs focusing on the use of a Native American language or languages for the education of students, teachers, staff, students, or families of students;

"(C) full or partial scholarships and fellowships to colleges or universities for the professional development of faculty and staff, and to meet requirements for the involvement of the family or the community of Native American Language Survival School students in Native American Language Survival Schools;

"(D) training in the language and culture associated with a Native American Language Survival School either under community or academic experts in programs which may include credit courses;

"(E) structuring of personnel operations to support Native American language and cultural fluency and program effectiveness;

"(F) Native American language planning, documentation, reference material and archives development; and

"(G) recruitment for participation in teacher, staff, student, and community development.

"(3) CONDITIONS OF FELLOWSHIPS OR SCHOLARSHIPS.—A recipient of a fellowship or scholarship awarded under the authority of this subsection who is enrolled in a program leading to a degree or certificate shall—

"(A) be trained in the Native American language of the Native American Language Survival School, if such program is available through that Native American language;

"(B) complete a minimum annual number of hours in Native American language study or training during the period of the fellowship or scholarship; and

"(C) enter into a contract which obligates the recipient to provide his or her professional services, either during the fellowship or scholarship period or upon completion of a degree or certificate, in Native American language instruction in the Native American language associated with the Native American Language Survival School in which the service obligation is to be fulfilled.

"(f) ENDOWMENT AND FACILITIES.—The Secretary is authorized to provide funds, through grant or contract, for endowment funds and the rental, lease, purchase, construction, maintenance, or repair of facilities for Native American Language Survival Schools, to Native American Language Educational Organizations, Native American Language Colleges, and Indian tribal governments, or a consortia of such organizations, colleges, or tribal governments that have demonstrated excellence in the capacity to operate and administer a Native American Language Survival School and to ensure the academic achievement of Native American Language Survival School students.

"NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE NESTS

"SEC. 109. (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to provide funds, through grant or contract, to Native American Language Educational Organizations, Native American Language Colleges, Indian tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations that demonstrate the potential to become Native American Language Educational Organizations, for the purpose of establishing Native American Language Nest programs for students from infancy to age 6 and their families.

"(b) REQUIREMENTS.—A Native American Language Nest program receiving funds under this section shall—

"(1) provide instruction and child care through the use of a Native American language or a combination of the English language and a Native American language for at least 10 children for at least 700 hours per year;

"(2) provide compulsory classes for parents of students enrolled in a Native American Language Nest in a Native American language, including Native American language-speaking parents;

"(3) provide compulsory monthly meetings for parents and other family members of students enrolled in a Native American Language Nest;

"(4) provide a preference in enrollment for students and families who are fluent in a Native American language; and

"(5) receive at least 5 percent of its funding from another source, which may included Federally-funded programs, such as a Head Start program funded under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9801 et seq.).

“DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS REGARDING LINGUISTICS ASSISTANCE

“SEC. 110. (a) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall provide funds, through grant or contract, for the establishment of 2 demonstration programs that will provide assistance to Native American Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nests. Such demonstration programs shall be established at—

“(1) Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikolani College of the University of Hawaii at Hilo, in consortium with the ‘Aha Punana Leo, Inc., and with other entities if deemed appropriate by such College, to—

“(A) conduct a demonstration program in the development of the various components of a Native American Language Survival School program, including the early childhood education features of a Native American Nest component; and

“(B) provide assistance in the establishment, operation, and administration of Native American Language Nests and Native American Language Survival Schools by such means as training, hosting informational visits to demonstration sites, and providing relevant information, outreach courses, conferences, and other means; and

"(2) the Alaska Native Language Center of the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, in consortium with other entities as deemed appropriate by such Center, to conduct a demonstration program, training, outreach, conferences, visitation programs, and other assistance in developing orthographies, resource materials, language documentation, language preservation, material archiving, and community support development.

"(b) USE OF TECHNOLOGY.—The demonstration programs authorized to be established under this section may employ synchronic and asynchronic telecommunications and other appropriate means to maintain coordination and cooperation with one another and with participating Native American Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nests.

"(c) DIRECTION TO THE SECRETARY.—The demonstration programs authorized to be established under this section shall provide direction to the Secretary in developing a site visit evaluation of Native American Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nests.

"(d) ENDOWMENTS AND FACILITIES.—The demonstration programs authorized to be established under this section may establish endowments for the purpose of furthering their activities relative to the study and preservation of Native American languages, and may use funds to provide for the rental, lease, purchase, construction, maintenance, and repair of facilities.

"AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

"SEC. 111. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the activities authorized by this Act for fiscal years 2001 through 2006.".

○

Senator INOUYE. The Navajo Nation has provided us with some very detailed concerns about the bill that I would hope that the witnesses could get together and discuss following this hearing.

After reviewing the testimony last evening, I have to say that I not only learned a lot, but was very moved by many of the statements. One, in particular, was the testimony of Rosita Worl, from which I would like to quote.

> We believe that the collective wisdom of our ancestors and the beauty of our culture holds our promise for the future. We firmly believe that Native students who know and accept who they are, even in the context of living in a society that devalues nativeness or cultural and physical differences, will succeed academically, emotionally, and socially. The transmission of our culture and language is the key to our survival and success.

The committee looks forward to receiving the testimony of all of the witnesses. This morning, our first witness is the Assistant Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Education of the Department of Education, Mike Cohen.

Mr. SECRETARY.

STATEMENT OF MIKE COHEN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a pleasure to be here with you this morning to discuss the importance of preserving Native American languages, and to talk about the administration's views on S. 2688, the Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2000. I would like to make a few brief comments, and submit my entire testimony for the record.

Preserving Native American languages is important, we believe, for many reasons, including the contribution this can make to improving education for Native American students. Overall, the educational performance of Native American students lags significantly behind the performance of their peers, nationwide.

For example, only 48 percent of American Indian fourth graders scored at or above the basic level on the 1994 National Assessment of Education Progress reading assessment, as compared to 60 percent of fourth graders, nationwide.

These low achievement levels, in turn, are matched by high dropout rates for American Indian students, which are twice the national average, approximately.

The achievement gap that exists between Native American and non-Native American students is influenced clearly by a number of factors, including inadequate school resources, high rates of family poverty, and high student absenteeism, in many cases.

In addition, Native American cultures and languages are often under-valued in schools serving Native American students, causing these young people to feel disconnected from their heritage, and uncomfortable and unwelcome at school.

That is why preserving Native American languages is so crucial to better connecting Native American students to their own past, and to helping prepare them for a future in which education and learning will be more important than ever before.

As you may know, Secretary Riley has proposed expanding the number of schools that enable students to be educated in English and in their Native language, otherwise known as dual language schools.

In recent days, as I have learned more about the Washoe language immersion school, about the Punana Leo preschools in Hawaii, and the network of Hawaiian immersion elementary and secondary schools that they have helped support, I have come to see important parallels between these schools and the dual language schools promoted by Secretary Riley.

While not identical in every respect, both the dual language schools that we have been looking at, and the Hawaiian immersion and Washoe immersion schools, have some things in common. They both help students become proficient in two languages, including English. They both do good jobs at teaching core academic subjects to their students. They both help students be prepared for the future, while being strongly rooted in their cultures.

So I see some important parallels between the work of this committee, and some ideas that we have been working on in the Department. I am pleased that we have an opportunity to see how they can fit together.

Preserving Native languages is a very important and very big challenge. Michael Krauss of the Linguistic Society of America estimates that of 175 indigenous languages still spoken in the United States, 90 percent of them are at risk for extinction.

Many of the remaining 10 percent, while not technically at risk now, will soon become in danger of extinction, if we do not turn the situation around if we do not find a way of helping young people become proficient in their own Native languages.

As you indicated, Mr. Chairman, in the past, the Federal Government promoted policies that worked to undermine the survival of Native American languages, going back more than 100 years ago with the boarding schools.

Fortunately, more recently, Congress has taken steps to turn that situation around. The Native American Languages Act, among other things, provides support through the administration for Native Americans in the Department of Health and Human Services, which has provided nearly $14 million in grants to tribal governments and Native Hawaiian groups, since 1994.

These funds have helped develop language immersion programs, curriculum development, development of language dictionaries, CD ROMs, and other resources. It is very important work.

We have been helping in the Education Department, as well. Under our bi-lingual education program, for example, 64 separate grants provide over $6 million in funding annually to schools and school districts serving American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Native American/Pacific Islanders.

Through the Native Hawaiian Education Act, the Department of Education has provided nearly $800,000 in each of the last 2 years for the development of K–12 audiovisual and computer curricula for the Statewide Hawaiian medium education program.

Even our charter schools program has helped support education in Native American language and Native culture. The Tawanni Lake Elementary School, for example, in the Navajo Nation will receive $300,000 a year for the next 2 years to support a new learning environment, grounded in traditional Navajo culture. So we have been working on addressing these issues in a variety of our programs.

But despite these efforts, it is clear that there is much more that needs to be done. That is why we so strongly support the goal and intent of the proposed Native American Language Act Amendments of 2000, as well as the overall approach of providing funding to schools that will intensively educate students in Native American languages.

In the remaining moments of my testimony, I would like to discuss with you some areas in the proposed bill that we think could benefit from additional work and additional attention. We would very much like to work together with the committee to address the several concerns that I am about to raise.

First, I want to deal with a couple of issues pertaining to language learning. Gaining fluency in Native language is the primary and essential objective of the proposed bill. We support that.

But we think it is also important to ensure that students who attend these schools are also fully prepared for the future by leaving school proficient in English and in their academic subjects. We do not think there is a tradeoff between Native language instruction and the development of English language proficiency.

In fact, as I have indicated before, properly done dual language schools can help students leave school proficient not only in academic subjects, but also in two languages. The evidence suggests that a dual immersion approach results in improved Native language proficiency, improved English language competency, and improve cognitive ability.

Children exposed to two languages at an early age are more flexible, creative, and achieve higher cognitive development at an earlier age than children who learn only one language.

In addition, research has consistently shown that immersion students do at least as well and, in some instances even surpass, comparable non-immersion students in measures of both verbal and mathematics skill.

As a result, the Education Department believes it is necessary to find a way for the bill to also support the goal of English language proficiency for students in Native American language survival schools.

We would like to work with you to find an appropriate way to express that in the bill, so that it is consistent with the overall intent of preserving Native American languages.

Second, related to language acquisition, S. 2688 proposes that Native language survival schools that receive Federal funds ensure that students who are not Native American language speakers achieve fluency in a Native American language within 3 years of enrollment.

We have been doing a fair amount of work in the Education Department, looking at how long it takes for students to become proficient in a second language. There is a fair amount of debate around that, around the country, across language areas.

We think it is important to take a very careful look at the experience of existing Native language survival schools, and in other second language programs, to be sure that a 3-year deadline is appropriate, or to consider whether a 3-year goal that we strive to meet might be more appropriate. We look forward to working with you to address that issue.

The second area that we have some concerns about, or have been trying to do something about, as we reviewed S. 2688, has to do with school finance and governance. Under S. 2688, tribes and institutions of higher education can apply for funds, although the eligibility of state education agencies and local education agencies is less clear.

That raises a number of important issues, we think, about the nature of Native language survival schools. Who pays for the operational costs of those schools? Do we expect the State agencies and State governments or tribal governments will pay for that? Who makes the decisions about the teacher qualifications of students in those schools? What core academic subjects should be taught?

We do not know the answer to these questions, but we think they need to be addressed. The resolution of them will have important consequences for the program, and for students who attend the schools.

For example, public schools that are operated by local education agencies or tribes receive other Federal education funds, while private schools only indirectly benefit from Federal education programs.

Public schools operated by local education agencies must meet a range of state requirements, ranging from the establishment of academic standards for all students, to the qualifications of the teachers in the schools.

So the issue of how these schools would be governed, whether we see them as part of the public education system or outside of it, we think this needs to be thought through and clarified in this legislation. What we do not have firm answers to, we would like to be part of the process of addressing those questions.

The third set of issues that I would like to raise, and a final set really, has to do with the importance of research and evaluation in this area. There is still much that we need to learn about how best to teach Native American languages in school.

Therefore, we think it is particularly important to evaluate the programs supported under the proposed act, to identify and document the educational methods that are effective in these schools, and to disseminate the findings from those studies as widely as possible.

We also think it is important to make sure that in addition to research and evaluation, there would be adequate funding and authority provided to make sure that curriculum materials and teacher training materials and other things like that can be developed to support the schools that would be supported through this program. Those are the other issues that we would like to work with this committee on, as well.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to address the committee, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have concerning my testimony.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Prepared Statement of Mr. Cohen appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I have just a few questions, if I may ask. Why do you believe that 3 years is not long enough to achieve fluency in a Native language?

Mr. COHEN. We have been working on these language development issues in the area of bilingual education for a number of years. We have been looking at it particularly as we have worked to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

As we have considered proposing a goal that limited English proficient students become proficient in English within 3 years, an awful lot of the experts in the field have said to us that we should be very careful in that area; that students learn second languages at very different rates.

The speed at which they learn depends partly on the quality of instruction, but also on individual student characteristics, and setting a firm deadline for when students ought to become proficient in a language may be unrealistic and, in some cases, inappropriate.

Earlier in our own internal deliberations, we were actually closer to where this bill is. But the more we have talked with people, the more we thought we should be careful about setting a deadline, rather than setting a goal.

Senator INOUYE. Is it your belief that students can achieve academic success and English fluency through this immersion program?

Mr. COHEN. Yes; certainly through dual immersion programs, in which both languages are taught, we have seen a lot of evidence that where the programs are funded and staffed properly and the curriculum is organized well, students can become fluent in both languages, and in their academic subjects.

Senator INOUYE. Do you think that the survival schools should have the freedom to determine what information about their program is shared with other schools on a national level?

Mr. COHEN. Should they have the freedom to determine what information is shared? I have not thought about it in quite that way. I guess I would hope that survival schools, like other schools, would be willing to share whatever they learn about what works.

I do not think we should ever force schools to share information. I do not know how we would do that. So I guess, in that sense, they would always have the freedom to choose what to share and what not.

But I would hope that any schools that benefit from funding under this program or any other program would recognize their responsibility to help the entire education community learn about what works, and how to implement those practices.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary, for your statement and for your concern. Some of the studies indicate, for example, that in about 60 years, of the remaining 175 distinct languages in the Native American communities, only 20 may remain, if something is not done.

Mr. COHEN. I think that is why it is so important that we find a way to do something, and do something quickly.

Senator INOUYE. I did not realize that civilization can fade away that fast; but the studies indicate that.

Mr. COHEN. Yes.

Senator INOUYE. So we appreciate your assistance, sir.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. We look forward to working with you to refine this bill.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and we look forward to working with you, as well.

Senator INOUYE. Senator Akaka, do you have any questions?

Senator AKAKA. Mr. Chairman, I do not have any questions. I certainly want to encourage you in what we are doing here, and to impress upon you and others how important it is that we continue our languages. It is really the survival of the Hawaiian people and Polynesian people. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a statement following this.

Senator INOUYE. Please do.

And thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF HON. DANIEL K. AKAKA, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII

Senator AKAKA. I am pleased to join you as a cosponsor of this important measure. Mr. Chairman, I also want to applaud you and your efforts to ensure that Native American languages are preserved and revitalized through the development of Native American survival schools and Native American languages' NESTs.

The culture and tradition of indigenous peoples are closely tied to Native language. Some traditions can only be expressed, understood, and appreciated through Native language.

I have been very pleased to see the revitalization of the Native Hawaiian language over the past 12 years. This reawakening has led to increased pride among Native Hawaiians in being Hawaiian. This increase in pride has led to an increase in interest in the history, culture, and traditions of Hawaii. I am happy to see my children take this kind of interest and, hopefully, my grandchildren will also do it.

In my day, as I grew up, we were not encouraged to learn our language, but we did it, anyway. I am sure this experience is similar in other indigenous cultures. Language plays a large role in instilling pride and understanding of culture and tradition. This is vital to our understanding of the unique and diverse history of the many people that make up our great nation.

I am pleased to support this important initiative. I would like to express my thanks to the witnesses for their testimony in support of this important measure. Together, we will ensure that future generations of American indigenous peoples have the opportunity to appreciate their culture, tradition, and history through the preservation of Native American language.

I am sorry to be late here. I am coming from another meeting that I have to return to. But I want to say Mahalo for the lovely lei that I received. I do not know who else is out there, but I want to mention Pila. Mahalo nui loa, Pila Wilson; and Namaka Rawlins, mahalo; and Kalena Silva, mahalo nui loa.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to make this statement.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

Now for the first panel, may I call upon Teresa McCarty of the University of Arizona and co-director of the American Indian Language Development Institute of Tucson, AZ; Michael Krauss, director of the Alaska Native Language Center of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, AK; William Demmert, Jr. of Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA; and Darrell Kipp of the Peigan Institute, Browning, MT, who will be accompanied by Jesse DeRosier and Terran Guardipee.

May I first call upon Teresa McCarty. Welcome to the committee.

STATEMENT OF TERESA McCARTY, PROFESSOR AND CO-DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA TUCSON, AZ

Ms. McCARTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for this opportunity to present testimony on this important piece of legislation.

For the past 20 years, I have had the opportunity to work with indigenous language programs from throughout the United States. My purpose today is to present the research from these programs, and its implications for this piece of legislation.

I also have recommendations for some modifications in the bill which, given time limitations, perhaps we can discuss during the comment period.

My colleague from Alaska, Professor Krauss, will be profiling the status of indigenous languages. The great irony is that even as more children come to school speaking English, they tend to be identified as limited English proficient. These children have the highest school dropout rates in the country. This situation and the very real crisis of language loss motivated the Native American Languages Act, and motivated these amendments.

There must be a better alternative. The alternative that is being proposed is indigenous or heritage language immersion. Heritage or second language immersion has a long history. In my written testimony, I outline the specifics of this approach.

In Canada, for example, French immersion for Native English speaking students has been shown to enhance their cognitive and social development, and promote their French and English acquisition. In fact, French immersion students often out-perform monolingual English students on standardized tests of English. So this is very important data for us to consider. Researchers attribute this to the greater cognitive flexibility that is associated with multi-lingualism.

Indigenous immersion was pioneered, as you well know, in this country by the Hawaiians, with the opening of the Punana Leo Preschool in 1983. Long term studies of the Hawaiian immersion programs, which now extend from preschool to graduate school, show that these students perform as well or better on measures of achievement as Native Hawaiian students in monolingual English programs, even in English language arts.

At Ft. Defiance, Arizona, in the Navajo Nation, Navajo immersion students perform as well in English as comparable students in non-immersion programs. Immersion students, by fifth grade, are way ahead in math and in their English and heritage language development.

I want to point out something important from the Ft. Defiance data. That is that by the fourth grade, non-immersion Navajo students perform *lower* on assessments of Navajo than they did as kindergartners. They, in effect, lose the bilingualism that they possessed on entering school.

Here, we can see the profound importance and the negative impact of the *lack* of immersion schooling and, on the other hand, its positive impact on students' heritage language development, their English, and their math.

Indigenous immersion programs are underway across the country. One of the important features of these programs, and what is emphasized in these amendments, is the involvement of parents and communities. So these programs have the added benefit of strengthening inter-generational ties, promoting family and community values, and providing positive role models for indigenous students. I think that we will get to see that first-hand with some of the children who are here today.

In short, when we examine the research on indigenous immersion programs, we see these students doing exactly what the research predicts; that is, within 5 to 7 years, these children are minimally on a par with comparable students in non-immersion programs.

They are often ahead in mathematics, and they are definitely ahead in heritage language development. Moreover, immersion students know that they have succeeded because of, not despite, who they are.

As promising as these programs are, Mr. Chairman, they are in a race against time. Let me illustrate this with one final study. That is the study recently done by Evangeline Parsons-Yazzie of Northern Arizona University.

She found that Navajo students whose mother tongue is Navajo, who have bilingual parents and whose grandparents are monolingual Navajo speakers, tend to respond to their parents and grandparents' Navajo in English. How did their parents, who are bilingual, respond? I think all of us here can answer that question. They switched to English.

At the tender age of 3 or 4, these children have internalized the forces that privilege English and diminish the status of their mother tongue.

What this study and my own long term research show is that indigenous immersion programs in no way threaten the valuation or the acquisition of English. Indeed, the pressures on parents and grandparents *not* to transmit the indigenous language are nearly overwhelming.

If these languages are to have a fighting change of surviving among the young, parents and grandparents need help. That is why these amendments are so important. They will extend approaches proven to be effective in promoting heritage language development and English.

Let me just conclude by saying that, in my view, these amendments are not about preserving indigenous languages as if they are endangered species. These amendments are about building children's intellectual, linguistic, and social capacities. They are about restoring wholeness and wellness and integrity to communities whose languages has been forcibly removed.

They are about what kind of a Nation we want to be, years from now. They are about people. All we have to do is look around the room to prove that point. Children should not be forced to choose between being indigenous and modern.

These amendments will create opportunities for children to develop their command of the heritage language, right along with English, and all the skills they need to succeed in school and the wider world.

These amendments are about equality of opportunity, and that opportunity is at the heart of democracy and equality in this Nation. That is why these amendments are so needed and so deserving of our support.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Ms. McCarty appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Dr. McCarty.

As you are aware, some of my colleagues are insisting upon English-only education. From your statement, am I to conclude that our national interest would call for study of Native languages, also; that it is in our national interest to do so?

Ms. MCCARTY. Yes; I think that is an excellent recommendation. Would you like for me to comment further on that?

Senator INOUYE. Please.

Ms. MCCARTY. When we look around the country, we do see minority students, including indigenous students, not performing as well as other students on standardized assessments, that I might add, already discriminate against them, by their very nature.

However, most of these students are not in any type of bilingual program; 80 to 90 percent of minority students in this country do not have the benefit of any kind of heritage language development. I think that we can see the cause and effect relationship there.

There have been a number of longitudinal and national studies on this. Recently Virginia Collier and Wayne Thomas did a national study that included 12,000 students across the country. There have been studies in San Francisco Unified School District of bilingual students, and there were 7,000 bilingual students in the most recent study by David Ramirez.

And when we look at the immersion programs that I have just cited, what we see is that students who have the benefit of support in the heritage language, over a period of time, and the research shows that it is about 5 to 7 years, that these students out-perform monolingual English students, comparable students, on measures of English.

They are often ahead in other content areas. In the San Francisco study, it showed the GPA of these students was higher, and their attendance rates are higher. They are more interested in school.

So, yes, I definitely think our national interests are served by these kinds of programs, because we can not afford to waste one child.

Senator INOUYE. So as far as you are concerned, the concerns of the Department of Education may not be well founded, because you believe that Native language studies would enhance academic success and fluency in English?

Ms. McCarty. Yes; I do agree with that. My understanding of the education testimony, however, was that they were suggesting that a longer period of time than 3 years be given, to allow students to establish fluency in the heritage language.

I would agree with that. In fact, one of my recommendations is to extend the time period from 3 to 5 years. Perhaps the idea of this being a goal, rather than some final end point is important.

Also, it is very important that children be continuously enrolled in these programs, over this period of time, if the programs are to have the desired effects. So I would add that language to the amendments.

Senator Inouye. We have been discussing the impact of these studies on physical, mental, and academic well being. Do you believe that this pursuit of preserving a native language is a worthwhile one, in and of itself?

Ms. McCarty. In and of itself, certainly. If these languages are not protected by us, within their own homeland—and again, language issues are people issues; we are talking about speakers and communities—if they are not protected within their homeland, there is no other place that children can turn to, to acquire these languages. It is a very different situation than immigrant students and immigrant languages.

We have a responsibility to these children. We have a responsibility to the future generations of these communities, to ensure that they have the option to learn about who they are, in the language of their people.

Senator Inouye. I thank you very much.

Ms. McCarty. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Inouye. May I now call upon Michael Krauss.

Mr. Krauss.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL KRAUSS, DIRECTOR OF THE ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS, AK

Mr. Krauss. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for this opportunity to appear before you, not only now, but for the first time 10 years ago, to try to assess some of the progress that we have made and that we are now facing today. I will excerpt some things and also deviate, in part, from my written testimony.

To begin with to help evaluate what is at stake here, and to appreciate how diverse our uniquely America languages are—in a Nation that calls diversity its strength—I will present some basic statistics with figures, of which few of us may be aware—I was going to say, but in fact, I have now learned several times this morning already that these figures, I am very pleased to say, are relatively well known.

We cannot tell how many languages there once were in 1492, 1620, or 1776, but there were at least well over 300. The good news, as we try to put it in that perspective, is that we still have, for the moment, about 175.

That is better news than I was able to say 10 years ago, in a sense, when I increased your speculation that there were 60 or 70, to about 155. Now the number is up to 175, but only because California languages, where we have by far the greatest diversity in this country, have added another 20, by finer definition of what is a language.

This has only added, however, to the number of languages now spoken fluently only by grandparental generations and up, two categories I call class C and D, grandparental and just a few remaining elders, now the great majority of North American languages.

I also go a bit into the depth of the diversity. To compare that American situation with the European situation, one could count, by the same standards we count here, about 60 languages [compared to the 175 we still have] which belong mainly to the Indo-European family and are very similar in their patterns and genetic development.

There are also a total of only three different Native language families in Europe. North America has up to 60, one might say. That is a very controversial subject among linguists, but for our purposes here, the point is that there is many times, 10 to 30 times, as much basic long-term diversity among American languages, compared to European.

I also go into the point,' which I do not think needs to be belabored here, that if God created anything equal, it is languages. All human languages are at exactly the same level of intellectual complexity. There is no such thing as a primitive language. There is no such thing as an inferior language.

If a language is spoken by fewer people, and has less economic and military power, it is not because of the quality of its verbs or its vowels, but entirely due to external circumstances, and to our policy of basically survival of the fittest, up until 1990.

I get into that historical point that it was not until 1990 that this country recognized that Native American languages have the same right to develop and to be used by Americans as does English.

Inspired by your interesting conversation with my colleague Dr. McCarty here, I also will quote one of my "greatest diplomatic achievements" in dealing with the English. Only movement people: Asked about that, I tactfully pointed out that Native American languages are "fully as American as English itself." That should convince anybody.

But our recent radical policy shift to a vastly better policy toward American languages can not so suddenly reverse the loss already incurred, or reverse the negative processes that were so systematically set in motion through generations of repression.

In fact, we are finally at this hearing now to recognize what is really needed to reverse the processes. It is certainly far advanced and it is the 11th hour. We are the very precipice.

I would like to qualify a little bit better what I mean by 175 languages still in existence or living. For this purpose, I classify four groups.

Group A are those spoken still by children, since it is obvious that viability in the future of a language is in the ability of its children, and not in books, for example. It is people that we are talking about here. Out of the 175 only 20 or about 11 percent are still spoken by children.

About 30 are spoken by parental generations and up group B. That is about 17 percent. Group C, grandparental generation and up, is the largest category by far, with about 70 languages, or 40 percent. Then about 55, group D, 30 percent, are very nearly extinct, and will be gone in the next 10 years, unless something radical is done.

Even the state of languages of class A still spoken by children does not mean that these languages are not endangered. They are still, all of them, extremely endangered. Take the case of Navajo, which 20 or 30 years ago was spoken by 90 percent of 6 year olds. Now, it is down to about one-half. How to reverse the direction of that in these relatively good days is a very important question to be addressed here.

In the case of Yupik in Alaska, the largest language there, there are about 67 villages, and about 16 of those villages still have children that speak the language. That is class A, but in one-quarter of the communities.

Hawaiian, as I am sure you are aware, is a kind of extreme and in a case by itself—not that it is not comparable. But you have only one community, a very small island, with all the children speaking the language. Everywhere else it has been spoken by grandparents or great grandparental generations only, except now for the children in the programs we are considering.

These are the first examples of bi-directionality of this process toward extinction. It is possible to skip a generation and then turn back, under the right circumstances that we are trying to develop here.

The testimony here goes on to provide, in a document attached, the 1991–92 list of languages by each State. There are 29 States that have Native languages still alive in them.

California, as already mentioned before, has by far the largest number, 50, but none of them are still spoken by children. Oklahoma has the next, far lower 21, only one of which is still spoken by children. Alaska has 20, and only two are still spoken by children. Washington is fourth, with 15 languages, none spoken by any generation below grandparental.

New Mexico and Arizona have the next largest numbers. That is the bastion, those two States, of maintenance of Native American languages, where there are 11 or 12 out of the 20 Native languages that are still spoken by children, New Mexico and Arizona.

Then we have New York State, which people might be surprised to realize that has still five languages going, Iroquoian languages, but only grandparental and very aged generation are still speakers. That information is available in the attachment.

This should also be mentioned somewhere here. There are even groups whose languages are extinct, but whose people are by no means extinct and who wish their languages to be revived.

There are several important and interesting comparisons between the human language situation and the biological. A crucial difference is that extinction does not necessarily mean if a language is adequately documented, that the language can not be revived, as in the best known case of Hebrew, which went close to 2,000 years with no Native speakers.

No living Native American language need be in that shape, because we have or can have far better documentation. In the case of Hebrew, all that got written down was the consonant, wherewith God spoke unto Moses. Now we can even write the vowels, vowel lengths, even tones, and we have or can have dictionaries that were systematically elicited.

That, obviously, is absolutely essential for any extinct language. But in the case also of any living language, it is very important that we have such academic support for these programs, to provide the scientific and documentary basis, for the best possible results.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to testify. I have restricted myself mainly to providing background and statistical information on the present state of Native American languages, showing that we are very close to losing this most uniquely American aspect of our heritage. I stress once again that if we wish to restore the vitality of that heritage, instead of losing it, we must undertake and support the programs for which these amendments to the Native American Languages Act are designed to provide.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Krauss appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Dr. Krauss.

I recall a similar gathering like this, about 10 years ago, at which time a few scholars suggested that there were about 50 different Native American languages and the rest were dialects.

Now you are saying that at the time of Columbus, there were about 300, and today, about 175. Are they separate, distinct languages?

Mr. KRAUSS. They are indeed, by the same standards that we call French and Spanish and Italian, or Russian and Polish, or German and Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese, different languages. By that same standard of counting, the United States still has 175 distinct languages, yes.

Senator INOUYE. Now Dr. McCarty spoke of academic fluency. How long will it take, according to your studies, to achieve conversational and functional fluency?

Mr. KRAUSS. If we are talking about the kind of programs that were proposed here, and not 1 hour a week with someone who has no training?

Senator INOUYE. Yes.

Mr. KRAUSS. That I'm afraid is the typical situation now, or 1 hour a day even, especially with languages that are so different from English.

Danes, maybe with 1 hour a day, in their excellent educational system, get to be pretty fluent in English by 12th grade, also because they are immersed in English television programs, for example.

This is not comparable, however, because the Native American languages differ from English far more than does Danish, number one. Number two, it is much harder to be surrounded by them, Provided you have an immersion program, I would estimate that the average child would become fluent enough to carry on activities appropriate to age in the language, after 3 to 4 years.

Senator INOUYE. Can you give us an estimate of the level of funding the Alaska Native Center would need, in order to serve the Native American language survival schools on a national level?

Mr. KRAUSS. We have about $500,000 of hard money to do perhaps a decent job in the race against time of documenting Alaska Native languages, before they disappear. But $500,000 is not enough for us to provide the necessary support services to the educational programs around the state, by a long shot.

It would require, for us to serve simply as a model for visitors or for us to travel, probably another $100,000 or so.

Senator INOUYE. Your specialty at the Center is language documentation of tribal processes.

Mr. KRAUSS. Yes.

Senator INOUYE. To do that for all the Native languages, how much would it cost?

Mr. KRAUSS. How much would it cost, you said?

Senator INOUYE. Just for documentation and archival processes.

Mr. KRAUSS. That is over the long run, you mean? That is not per year, because it depends on how much activity is going on.

Senator INOUYE. Well, just per year, how much would it cost?

Mr. KRAUSS. I would say, $1 million per year. In a critical race against time, that would go a long way to making the difference between adequate documentation and allowing some languages to disappear without adequate records.

Senator INOUYE. I asked this question because eventually my colleagues on the Appropriations Committees will ask how much will this cost. I should tell you that $500,000 is something that we lose when we sneeze.

Mr. KRAUSS. Yes.

Senator INOUYE. So do not be too shy. [Laughter.]

Mr. KRAUSS. Thank you for that advice.

[Information of the revise cost estimates follow:]

The Alaska Native Language Center, to expand its services to serve nationally as a demonstration project, would require $250,000 per year, plus once $950,000 to upgrade and finish cataloguing its archive.

A national project to document remaining United States indigenous languages with comprehensive dictionaries would cost $5 million per year for 10 years [estimating conservatively that such documentation is both needed and possible for 100 of the remaining 175 languages, cost for each averaging $500,000–$100,000 per year for 5 years; a 10-year timeframe, with careful prioritization, is all we have, given the age of the speakers]. Comprehensive grammars and textual documentation would cost again as much.—This expense must not come out of the budget for community language survival school on language nest programs, but must be in addition to it. To administer such a documentation program, the Nation Science Foundation has the best framework I know of, also with a history of high priority of such work.

Senator INOUYE. If I may, I would like to call a short recess. I have to get to vote right now.

[Recess.]

Senator INOUYE. May I now call upon William Demmert, Jr.

Dr. DEMMERT.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM DEMMERT, JR., WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, BELLINGHAM, WA

Mr. DEMMERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is indeed a privilege for me to be here, and to speak in support of S. 2688.

I did have an opportunity earlier to work with members of your staff on the amendment to the Bilingual Education Act, that provided support for Native Americans and on the Native American Languages Act. I certainly welcome this opportunity. I have some written testimony, but I will summarize it.

Senator INOUYE. May I assure all the witnesses that your statements will be printed in the record in full.

Mr. DEMMERT. Thank you.

I am going to talk just a bit about some of my personal experiences. You heard some discussion on the research. You heard some presentation on the status of Native languages. I will present this from the perspective of a teacher and an administrator and, of course, as a university professor.

I started teaching school in 1960 in a small district in Forks, Washington, where the high school served the reservation of La Push. They had not graduated a Native student for years.

The superintendent in this school hired me and one other Native teacher to come in and see if we could help turn that around. With just that special attention, within a couple of years, we did finally start graduating students from the reservation.

The fact of having a couple of Native teachers in the school, providing those students an opportunity to interact socially in the high school, and to have an opportunity to participate in extra curricular activities, started to change attitudes and the culture of the school a bit.

That was my exposure to some of the things that needed to be done in schools, in order to encourage Native students to do much better, and to stay in school longer.

In 1988, I had an opportunity to serve as the chief administrator of a small school in Alaska. Within a very short period of time, after the introduction of the Tlingit language, after the introduction of a cultural curriculum, and bringing in members of the community into the school, both to teach the language and to present models to the students of community members that were interested in education and that pursued an education, we were able to turn those things around, as well.

I would guess that of those students in that school that I was the superintendent for, virtually all except maybe one or two students finished grade school and moved on into high school, and did something with their lives afterwards.

Those two experiences and my experience as the First Deputy Commissioner of Education in the U.S. Office of Education, a position that Dave Boleo now holds, in my position as the Director of Education for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and as Commissioner of Education for the State of Alaska, I have recognized that there is a principle that is important to follow, if we are going to be successful in providing schools that serve Native communities, in providing schools that are going to be successful in keeping kids in longer, and in motivating them to higher levels of academic performance.

This principle, in order for schools to become significantly more successful in educating higher percentages of Native students, the schools must create a challenging curriculum in, and this is the important part to me, the context of the language, the culture, and educational priorities of the community serviced, using local and traditional knowledge as a base from which to start the formal educational process.

In all of my experiences that I mentioned earlier, this is a principal that seems to stand out, and is certainly supported by the legislation that you have introduced.

As a member of the National Commission on Teaching in America's Future, a second principle has emerged that tells me that teachers are critical to improving schools and schooling.

My experiences in Klawock, Alaska and the international activity that I am involved in also tell me that the inclusion of Native teachers influence change in the culture of the school, for a variety of reasons, including expectations, perspectives of the curriculum taught, modeling and levels of understanding, communication and cultural subtleties.

I recognize that the influence that the teacher has on students, when that teacher understands the language, the culture, cognitive development, and is able to communicate effectively with parents and students alike, is significant.

A third principle that is certainly emerging in the contemporary world of education is the research on cognitive development, how the brain works, and the influences of kinesthetic activity, and high quality personal experiences that a youngster has as a child. They all reinforce the importance of early childhood education programs.

What does all of this have to do with S. 2688? I think it is important for us to recognize that Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and regular public schools, serving Native students, find it very difficult, if not impossible, for political or other reasons, to build comprehensive education programs in schools that work with Native communities, not only within the U.S., but internationally.

I think S. 2688 will provide select communities and schools opportunities to create school partnerships and environments that take current research and knowledge into account, and that build schools that are created in the context of the language, the culture, and the educational priorities of communities served.

I urge passage of this new and innovative legislation. I wish to thank you for this brief opportunity to testify.

[Prepared Statement of Mr. Demmert appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Dr. Demmert.

From your statement, am I to conclude that you are in favor of providing grant funds for public schools that serve Native children?

Mr. DEMMERT. I think that it is important to provide funds for public schools that serve Native students. I think in my testimony, I point out that it is very difficult for them to change the curriculum and the culture of the schools, for the kinds of things that your legislation supports.

It is certainly important to provide funding for models that can be developed, that public and Bureau schools can follow.

Senator INOUYE. This is a question that relates to policy, I presume. We have a problem, at the present time, in providing grants to schools that serve immigrant children, bilingual programs.

Mr. DEMMERT. Yes.

Senator INOUYE. The question always arises, how many children do you need to qualify?

Mr. DEMMERT. Yes.

Senator INOUYE. Let us say your school has two in the fourth grade, two in the eighth grade, and one in the ninth grade. Should that school get a grant?

Mr. DEMMERT. Are you talking about funding from this particular program?

Senator INOUYE. Yes.

Mr. DEMMERT. My understanding is the intent of this legislation is to focus on Native American languages.

Senator INOUYE. I am talking about Native American children.

Mr. DEMMERT. Oh, you are talking about Native American children?

Senator INOUYE. Yes.

Mr. DEMMERT. As an administrator of small schools, and as an administrator of school systems like the State of Alaska, like the Bureau of Indian Affairs system, I think it is possible to fund programs in schools that have low numbers of Indian kids, especially if we make use of technology. The computer can certainly develop individualized programs for students.

I had an opportunity to visit the international school in Paris, when I was a Commissioner of Education in the State of Alaska. They brought students from 20 different countries into the school, and provided an opportunity, using technology, to help them learn French, because French was used as the language of instruction in the school.

But they were also provided an opportunity to continue learning their Native language, from whichever country they came from. There were small numbers of students, in some cases, using a particular language.

My understanding of that situation is, with the use of technology and the use of parent partnerships, and the use of teachers who knew different languages, they were very successful in helping these students adjust to using French as a language of instruction, within a 2 or 3 year period.

So I guess my short answer to your question is, I would certainly see it as worthwhile. My long answer to your question is what I gave earlier.

Senator INOUYE. You have had broad experience in this area, and you have been able to observe students from other countries. How do our Native language programs compare with those of other countries?

Mr. DEMMERT. Except for, what, two or three in the U.S., I think we are way behind. I found that I was at a distinct disadvantage in all of my interactions with the different countries that I work with.

I work with all the circumpolar countries, the countries that touch the Arctic Circle, on education programs and policy that affect the Native peoples in those countries.

Let me take Greenland, for example. The Greenlanders are people who moved from Alaska, across the northern part of Canada, on into Greenland. They now have full control of their school system.

They learn Greenlandic, as the language of instruction. They learn Danish, as a second language. They learn English, as a third language, and they move on into some other language, for their fourth language. I think we are behind that, especially when we focus only on English in the school system.

The Samis of Northern Norway have an opportunity to go to school in Norwegian or Sami. They have elected, to a large degree, to start going to school in the Sami language. They have their own teacher training college that trains teachers in the Sami language.

They find that these students not only learn the Sami language, but do very well in Norwegian, because they use the first language as a base to learn the second and other languages.

Again, those individual that I work with know three, four, and five languages. I came to those meetings as a mono-lingual; a distinct disadvantage.

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Dr. Demmert.

May I now call on Mr. Kipp.

STATEMENT OF DARRELL KIPP, PEIGAN INSTITUTE, BROWNING, MT, ACCOMPANIED BY JESSE DEROSIER AND TERRAN GUARDIPEE

Mr. KIPP. Good morning, Senator Inouye. It is a distinct pleasure, as a Native American veteran and a Native American speaker of my language, to extend my deepest respect for you, for this day. In 1983, I did not know if something like this would ever come to pass in my lifetime.

Before I begin my remarks, I would like to preface them with introducing two young gentlemen that have traveled with me from the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana. I would like them to introduce themselves to you and the panel.

Mr. DEROSIER. [Speaking in Native language.]

Hello, my name is Jesse DeRosier. I have attended the Nizi Puh Wah Sin School for 2 years, and I like it.

Senator INOUYE. That is very good.

Mr. GUARDIPEE. [Speaking in Native language.]

My name is Terran Guardipee. My parents are Carleen Guardipee and Terrance Guardipee. I attended the Nizi Puh Wah Sin School for 1 year.

Senator INOUYE. That is very good, also.

[Applause.]

Mr. KIPP. In 1983, a colleague of mine, Dorothy Still Smoking, and I returned to the Blackfeet Reservation, for the first time since we were youths. Among the other things that we became interested in was our tribal language.

During the period of 1983 to 1987, we began to study it extensively. We always say, we came in the side door. We did not sit down and essentially decide this; but, in fact, through a series of circumstances, it found us in the position to study our language.

First of all, since that time in 1987, the Peigan Institute, began as a private non-profit. We began as a private non-profit in 1987 and in that period, simply because no other institute would take upon this task.

The public schools had perfunctory programs. The other programs on the reservation seemed simply not interested or reluctant to enter into it. I believe a lot of that reluctance came from the early reservation days, in which the language was strongly forbidden to be used.

Since that time, since 1987, we have made extensive studies of immersion schools. Beginning in 1994, following the lead of the Punana Leo Schools of Hawaii, we developed and adopted their system, and developed the Nizi Puh Wah Sin Schools of the Blackfeet Reserve, which are called Real Speak.

That project began in 1994. To date, it is completed for 50 children at a cost of $2.6 million. This was raised entirely through private funding sources.

The reason we did that was simply this. The situation is extremely critical for many tribes today. I find myself, today, listening, and I find myself a bit worried about the type of discussions.

I realize that they are very important and they have to be done, but the best immersion schools that I know of are private, nonprofits, started by dedicated and courageous local people, who are faced with such a timeframe that they can not wait much longer.

In our own particular program, we started with four basic rules, which we adhere to and consider them a philosophical basis of our survival and our success. The number one rule that we began with is, we do not ask permission to save our language or to use our language, or to teach our language.

Often, the form of permission comes in the form of regulation, which many small groups are unable to move past. The simple case of overrule may prevent them from participating successfully in a language revitalization program, say, for example, in a public school. We do not debate those people or have a competition with them. It is simply a fact of life.

The number rule is, we always say, we do not debate the issue. We have settled on the conclusion that teaching our children our language is good. It is beneficial. It is an intellectual and holistic benefit that they perceive and derive benefits from. This is what we want from this. We want healthy children with choices.

People ask us, what exactly are you about; what is it you want through the revitalization of your Native language? As has been attested to here earlier, we say parity for these children.

For these two boys sitting here, we wish them to have parity that is extended to the rest of the population of America. If a certain percentage go to college, we want them to have the same percentage and the same odds and the same chances as the rest.

I will tell this, from my personal experience beginning in 1983, that immersion schools, language survival schools, as it is referred to in this bill, work extremely well when juxtapositioned against the ongoing statistics and analysis of educational achievement on reservations.

We do not have to repeat these. We know, for example, on the Blackfeet Reservation, conservatively speaking, 50 percent of our students have dropped out of public schools, for many, many years in a row.

Immersion schools, language schools, and survival schools are part of the solution. They are not part of the problem. We tend to wish to speak about the solutions, and not to reiterate the problems, over and over. They are well established facts, and only an unreasonable person would be able to disbelieve them.

Regarding nonprofits, I know that it is sometimes worrisome on an Indian reservation, where the tribal government is extremely protective of their relationship with the Federal Government, and rightly so.

There have been many attempts to usurp that relationship between the tribal government and the Federal Government, but this is not a case in point today.

Immersion schools that are run by nonprofits are really the flex muscle of Indian tribal governments, overburdened by much, much larger problems. The idea, even today, that we know the Internal Revenue Service has extended rulings that include Native American governments eligible, similar to 501[c]s.

I believe that nonprofit chartered organizations by tribes are equally up to the task, if not more so up to the task, to provide successful immersion programs on Indian reservations to Indian children, and in particular, on those reservations where the language is in extreme jeopardy, and the bureaucracy is simply too large to deal with something in such a desperate situation.

Private efforts, to date, seem to work the best. There are illustrations such as the Punana Leo Schools, and even in our own case, the Nizi Puh Wah Sin Schools.

Institutional efforts have been handicapped with overrule interference; the notion that we might accept, say, bilingual education in lieu of true immersion training, which teaches two tribal languages.

There is little funding available. I know that in our effort to seek private funding, it was a case of simply being in such a desperate situation. We had to go to private funders, and in many cases, simply went to individuals for assistance. We believe that in language programs, friendship and credibility have served us well.

The private effort is truly where the dedicated and the courageous reside. I know that it is important. I would hope that in the passage of this bill and its success in implementation, that the small groups on the Indian reservations not be excluded, simply by an over-definition of the problem.

Thank you.

[Prepared Statement of Mr. Kipp appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Mr. Kipp.

You have just posed a question for which I think my colleagues would like to have some clarification. It is your belief, if I understood your testimony correctly, that the purpose of this bill would be better served if the grants are provided to an organization which does not come under the direction and control of the reservation government.

Because if it did so, it would be subject to the priority policies of that reservation, and oftentimes, this type of program would not be considered essential. Is that correct?

Mr. KIPP. I would not state, under any terms, to exclude any organization or any level of government from participating in language revitalization programs.

My fear is, in fact, the opposite; that well meaning and well intentioned people that are simply, say, too small and do not fit into any of the categories available through larger government, I would just hope they would not be excluded. But I certainly would not say, exclude any level of participation in this bill.

Senator INOUYE. But you do not want the tribal bureaucracy telling you what to do?

Mr. KIPP. Not necessarily, but I am saying that I think tribal bureaucracies, right now in this particular case, may be behind the field, right now.

They have been reluctant, at least in my observation. For example, many tribal governments have been reluctant to go the route of proclaiming their own tribal language, say, as an official language of equal status to English, on their reservations.

I believe that maybe their reluctance comes from what I consider the notion that is a part of Native American language revival; that it takes a certain amount of courage to get involved in this field, because it runs counter to the philosophy of a mono-lingual society.

I know that there is a certain element of intimidation that says it is better to stay with the flow in taking up something, taking it upon your cause, to promote a Native American language, of all things.

It may not, in fact, be conducive in the minds of many. Yet, I think Native American governments have slowly come to the realization of the importance of language, along with other segments of their communities.

Senator INOUYE. Throughout my service on this committee, Mr. Kipp, I have listened to the testimony of thousands of witnesses. Quite often, the words such as "self esteem" and "self pride" are used, and testimony would indicate that one of the grave weaknesses of Indian youth is the lack of self pride or self esteem.

I have not heard those words expressed by anyone here. Does this program enhance self esteem and self pride?

Mr. KIPP. Well, in our own particular case, we are very careful not to use culture, for example, because we believe the word "culture" is a very large word, and carries multiple meanings, well beyond anything we could produce. We use the word "language" exclusively, because in our own work, we believe culture emanates from language.

In terms of self-esteem, our notion was clear in the very beginning that we felt that language could serve as the teacher to these children, and that the simply fact that they were able to master their language, and use it throughout the community in a number of affairs, made them healthier.

The notion that we would probably extend to this committee is that we wish to produce healthy children. This comes about by not producing any bias in them; not having the intangible that was passed on to, say, my generation, not to use the language, because there was something wrong with it, or that there was something inherently wrong with being able to speak your language freely in this country.

I believe these children will not possess that bias and, consequently, if you wish, their self esteem or their self identify is much more in tact and, hopefully, much healthier than previous generations.

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Mr. Kipp.

Mr. KIPP. Thank you, Senator.

Senator INOUYE. Our next panel is made up of the Director of the Division of Dine' Education of the Navajo Nation, Genevieve Jackson; Matthew Dick of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation of Nespelem, WA; and Rosita Worl of the University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau, AK.

Before proceeding any further, the record will show that at the time the hearing was convened, all the statements of witnesses were made part of the record.

Ms. JACKSON.

STATEMENT OF GENEVIEVE JACKSON, DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF DINE EDUCATION, NAVAJO NATION, WINDOW ROCK, AZ

Ms. JACKSON. Thank you, Honorable Senator.

[Greeting in Native language.]

Ms. JACKSON. I bring greetings from the Great Navajo Nation and from President Kelsie Begay. I am very honored to be here. I am of the Tacheechi Clan and born for the Maideeshzhni.

I am here today to speak on behalf of S. 2688. No Native American language is safe today. Navajo was once thought to be a safe language. Today, less than one-half of our students enter school as speakers. Relatively few continue to develop their Native American language abilities through school.

We are very concerned, because it our language that makes us who we are. We are attempting to preserve our children's accelerating shift from Navajo to English, but all that we are doing now is not enough.

It is difficult to conduct really serious Navajo language programs in conventionally funded schools. The increasing emphasis on English mediated State standards is making this even more difficult. We admire what some of you here today have done in alternative schools. We support this legislation.

We have submitted written testimony about a number of small questions which, if addressed, will make this a smaller, stronger bill. We have four general concerns.

No. 1, is the definition of Native American. Alaskan Native appears to have been inadvertently omitted from the definition of Native American, at paragraph five. I hope that this will be corrected before the markup.

No. 2, is the role of tribal governments. A second, more complex problem is the role of tribal governments within the continental United States. The relationship between tribal governments and the United States Government is a government- to-government relationship.

Various ways have been found over the years to allow for tribal community initiatives and tribal government approval. Ways have to be funded here, also.

The most problematic of the kinds of organizations that can apply for projects are the nonprofit organizations that demonstrate the potential to become Native American language educational organizations. We think we understand the intent, but these groups need to be better defined. Since they will have no track records, they should obtain the approval of the tribe or the appropriate Native American group.

No. 3, the 3 prior years plus the 1 current year requirement tends to limit funding to previously privately funded programs. One alternative might be facilitating transitions from ANA funded programs. But ANA funded programs are 3 year programs. The 3 plus 1 year requirement would exclude them.

Unless there are other compelling reasons for the 3 plus 1 year requirement, we would suggest changing it a 2 prior years plus one current year requirement, to allow for such transitions.

No. 4, we note the location of the two demonstration centers: One in Hawaii and the other in Alaska. These are deserving centers, but we are concerned about the lack of any center in the Continental United States.

S. 2688 proposed three kinds of language programs: Language NEST, language survival schools, and demonstration or resource centers. We see a need for a fourth kind of program, an intense survival school-like program for college level students.

We have an increasing number of young adults who are strongly motivated to become Navajo language teachers, but are not strong speakers. We see a real need for a stop-opt program, which would enable such students to become near Native speakers.

We recognize the author's concern to see that college level activities are controlled by NEST and survival schools. But we are talking about situations where such college-based programs would not be in competition with NEST or survival school staff development. We invite your attention to this proposal.

In closing, I would simply like to say that we admire the courage and the commitment of the people in the language NEST and in the language survival schools.

Timid Native language programs have relatively little chance of success. We hope to see these amendments move toward reality, and through them, the increasing realization of all of our dreams for the vital and vibrant continuation of our languages, long after all of us are gone.

Senator we have some submitted a 17-page statement with specifics on this bill. This is just my oral testimony.

Thank you.

[Prepared Statement of Ms. Jackson appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Ms. Jackson.

You and the Navajo Nation have provided the committee with very serious detailed questions about various provisions of this bill.

Accordingly, I would like to call upon all of the witnesses to meet with the committee staff, after the hearing, either today or sometime in the near future, to address the suggestions and concerns expressed by the Navajo Nation.

I believe that this type of consultation among thoughtful groups will improve the bill. On behalf of the committee, I ask for your guidance and your collaboration in addressing these questions. I think they are very serious. However, I can assure you as to your first concern, Alaskan Natives are involved. They are part of the definition of Indian. And I see my esteemed Alaskan friend sitting there.

One of the first phrases I learned, upon becoming the chairman of this committee, was dine nesh leh. I hope it pleases you.

Ms. JACKSON. Yes, it does. I can understand it, so I know you are speaking it very well.

Senator INOUYE. What is the status of the Ft. Defiance School, at the present time?

Ms. JACKSON. We have a public school there in Ft. Defiance, an elementary school. It is a public school, and I know they are doing some new things in the area of language development. They are looking at cultural materials, and also at the language, teaching the language itself.

Then within our Head Start Programs, within Navajo Nation, we have what we call the immersion programs. Relatively few of our Head Start Programs are participating now, simply because we do not have the staff development in Navajo language activities to teach these young Head Start children.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much.

Now may I call upon Mr. Dick.

STATEMENT OF MATTHEW DICK, CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION, NESPELEM, WA

Mr. DICK. Mr. Chairman, it is an honor to be here to provide this testimony. My name is Matthew Dick. I am a member of the Colville Business Council of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. I am here to testify in strong support of S. 2688.

I extend to you the greetings of the rest of our business council, which number in 14, and specifically the chairperson, Colleen Cawston, who sends her regrets for not being able to be here today.

The Colville Tribes are a confederation of 12 bands, who were joined together on the Colville Reservation. The bands of the Colville Reservation include the San Poil, Nespelem, Wenatchi, Methow, Okanagan, Colville, Chelan, Palouse, Moses-Columbia, Lakes, Entiat, and the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce.

We have a membership of over 8,000, which makes us the second largest tribe in the Northwest. Our homeland consists of 1.4 million acres, located in North Central Washington. Over 50 percent of our people live on or near our reservation. The Colville Tribes place a high priority on efforts to preserve the three languages of the 12 bands of people who came together over 125 years ago.

As this committee is well aware, for too long, it was the policy of the United States to actively prohibit the use of Native languages by Indian people. The horrific stories that Indian people tell of the brutality that they suffered at the hands of agents of the United States when they simply spoke their Native languages are universal among Indian people.

Whether it is Cherokee of North Carolina, Dakota of the Plains, or from my reservation, the stories are all the same. While the United States was successful in destroying many of the over 500 languages that the Native people of this country spoke, many Native languages remain available to us.

However, we must, as a Nation, place a high priority on teaching and preserving these languages. Our languages are a vital resource for our people and the Nation. It is vital that we enable our children to become fluent in the Native languages. Otherwise, the loss of our elders, who are our most fluent Native speakers, will spell the loss of our cultures.

Our fluent speakers are like the great stands of Sequoias. They are the living link to a culture that goes back long before the birth of Christ.

If we do not take steps now to embrace and preserve our fluent speakers, our languages could very well be gone in the next decade. Then one thread that is part of the tapestry of American history and culture will be gone.

Since 1994, the Colville Tribes have undertaken a language preservation program. In doing so, the tribes have recognized the three distinct language families of the 12 bands of the Colville Tribes.

For all three languages, we have developed both linguistic applications and curricula to teach our people. Our language program was recently recognized by Washington State academia as a qualified formal language course for post-secondary education.

In preserving and developing our language program, we are developing a curriculum that also includes our oral history, instructions in art, food gathering, and tribal history. Most recently, we developed immersion educational opportunities in all three language families.

However, perhaps what we are most proud of is that our elders are now giving language instruction, not only in the Paschal Sherman Indian School, operated by the tribe under a 638 contact, but in all of the public schools on the reservation.

Given our existing efforts, we strongly support S. 2688 and the proposed amendments that it would make to the Native American Languages Act.

The opportunity for children to go to school and be taught in a Native language is the most effective way to ensure that they will become fluent speakers and able to pass the information to their children. Importantly, this bill takes a holistic approach to teaching Native languages, involving not only children, but parents as well.

In particular, we strongly support the Native language NEST concept, which encourages the teaching of Native language at infancy. Again, the best way to learn a language is to be surrounded by it. So it is not a chore to learn, but it is natural and taken for granted. We also support the portion of the bill that provides funding for curricula development and teacher training programs.

In order for tribes and other organization to teach these languages, we must have the necessary tools. This includes books, teaching guides, and perhaps most importantly in this age of technology, interactive programs that can be used on computers to provide broad access to students and their parents in their homes. This bill would provide the funding to build these tools.

We would suggest that the bill consider tribes such as the Colville Tribes, where there is more than one language spoken among the people.

As I have said, at Colville, we have three distinct languages spoken among our people. Two of them are from Salish speaking language families, and one is from the Sahapain language family.

While the people who speak the two Salish languages can sometimes understand one another, it is similar to a French speaking person speaking to a Spanish speaking person.

In order for my tribe to be successful in preserving our Native languages, we must operate three language survival schools. This could be done by allowing tribes that intend to operate more than one language program, because they have more than one language spoken among that tribe, to be eligible for more than one grant.

In addition, we must share with the committee our strong concern that the bill provides funding for only two demonstration programs at universities in Alaska and Hawaii. The demonstration programs are intended to provide assistance to Native language survival schools and Native American language NEST programs.

Given the expense of traveling to these two states, we are concerned that these universities will not be able to provide us with the assistance that may be required for our programs to be successful. We would urge the committee to amend the bill to provide for at least one more demonstration program on the mainland.

Again, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the time provided for me to give this testimony.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Dick appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Mr. Dick.

Let me first assure you that the members of the committee, to some degree, are aware of the history involved in the establishment of tribes and reservations in the United States.

For example, in your area, several tribes were forcibly moved onto one reservation. It was the same thing with the Yakimas. There are numerous cases, all over California and Oregon. Therefore, this bill does not have any provision that would limit any tribe to just one grant.

As far I am concerned the legislative intent is that you can apply for two or three or four grants, if there is a need for such.

Your suggestion on having another location for a demonstration program is a good one. We were faced with that problem, and we were hoping that someone would bring this up. I am glad that you did.

Where would you suggest this be placed, because we are dealing with the whole 48 States, now? We picked Alaska and Hawaii because they were almost foreign, away from the continent. [Laughter.]

Mr. DICK. Well, if it was left up to the Colville Tribes, we would have it on the Colville Reservation. [Laughter.]

Senator INOUYE. Where would be a central location?

Mr. DICK. I would think some place around Denver or some place like that would be good place to have it, or Phoenix.

We have a program going now in Eastern Washington University, that is teaching the Salish speaking Native language. It has been doing that for the past, I think, 6 years. It had to quit 2 years, because it did not have the funding. It just started up again, this year. That is in Spokane, WA.

Senator INOUYE. I will instruct the staff to be checking to see what universities in our nation have strong Native language programs. We will confer with all of you in determining the third location.

Before I conclude your questioning, may I express the sadness and the condolences and the sympathy of this committee on the death of Chief Bernie White Bear. I have plans, if the Congress would permit me, to be in attendance at a memorial service honoring him, tomorrow morning in Seattle. He was a great leader.

Mr. DICK. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your invitation to sit with your staff afterwards on portions of this bill, we are going to have to decline, because we are going to fly right back for that, and I thank you for that.

Senator INOUYE. We can do it some time later.

Now may I call upon someone I have not seen for some time, Rosita Worl. Let us meet again at the next museum meeting. is there one scheduled?

Ms. WORL. I am not too sure.

Senator INOUYE. Welcome, ma'am.

STATEMENT OF ROSITA WORL, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU, AK

Ms. WORL. Thank you very much, Senator. It is an honor to be here, and I thank you for the opportunity to be here, to testify on this very important bill.

For the record, my name is Rosita Worl. If I may, according to our own protocols, I have to introduce myself as to who I am in our culture.

[Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. WORL. My name is Yeidiklats'ok. I am an Eagle from the Chilkat area, from the Thunderbird Clan, in the House Lowered from the Sun. Today, I am also here representing the Sealaska Heritage Foundation, and also the Alaska Federation of Natives.

Mr. Chairman, Native language and Native immersion programs have been something very important to Alaska Native people. In my written testimony, I have provided an outline to you that details the progress on which the AFN held hearings throughout Alaska, conducted some studies, and then developed a set of recommendations to Congress.

In those recommendations, Mr. Chairman, we included a recommendation for the establishment and support of Native revitalization and Native immersion programs.

Mr. Chairman, I want to apologize, first of all, that I did not have the opportunity to study the bill and to comment directly on the provisions of the bill that I have just now seen. However, I am somewhat pleased that I think some of the points that I see in the bill actually are some of the recommendations that I have in my testimony.

I also wanted to thank my Navajo sister for remembering her northern sister, the Tlingits, and the Alaska Native people. [Greeting in Native language.]

Senator I am from a State that does not cherish Alaska Native people. Alaska Native people constitute 16 percent of the population in Alaska. We are five major groups. Unfortunately, our State of Alaska has not seen fit to cherish its Native people.

Last year, we adopted an English only constitutional amendment. We have a State that is fighting our hunting and fishing rights, and we have a State that has not seen fit to support its languages and its culture through its schools.

So we are very much in favor of amending the Native American Language Acts to provide for the authority, for the establishment of Native American language survival schools.

My support, today, comes from this process that the AFN conducted, through the last 4 years, as well as my own work in Southeastern Alaska, both at the university and as the president of the Sealaska Heritage Foundation.

Mr. Chairman, I know I did not note it in my testimony, but the Sealaska Heritage Foundation is an affiliate of the Sealaska Corporation, which is a corporation organized to implement our Aboringal land claim settlement.

I think it would be really important, Mr. Chairman, that I outline the basic propositions contained in the AFN report, in regards to the administration of the education systems. I think those points respond to some of the issues that I have heard discussed here today, and raised in questions by yourself.

I would urge that the committee consider these recommendations in further developing the specific provisions of the proposed amendment.

Foremost, Mr. Chairman, is Native control of their own educational systems and programs, coupled with adequate funding. When I say control of our educational system, Mr. Chairman, I am also speaking control of the financial support that goes to fund those schools.

In our work, we found that this was absolutely key to successful programs, to have Native control of the funding sources.

In that regard, AFN supports direct grants to Alaska Native entities, acting alone or in partnerships with other schools or university systems, rather than channeling the money, for example, through the Department of Education. I think that this is a process that we are trying to develop in Alaska.

This recommendation is premised on the presumption of maximizing the funds, and ensuring its direct dedication to Native education.

A common perception in the Native community, and perhaps in reality, is the practice of allocating funds to non-Native controlled educational system, and then having those funds diverted to support programs that primarily serve the interests of non–Natives, rather than the intended purpose for Native people and Native programs.

The two other recommendations, Mr. Chairman, which AFN proposes, and I am sure that you have heard many times before, are to advocate for the employment of Native teachers and administrators, and non–Native people who are knowledgeable and respectful of Native people and their culture.

Finally, Native people remain adamant that the educational system must implement an integrated approach that provides the skills needed to live in the broader society, and incorporates the cultural values and languages of the indigenous societies.

Now if I may, Mr. Chairman, I would like to shift my discussion to Southeast Alaska, where the state of affairs of that the indigenous languages are dying.

Sealaska represents approximately 30,000 Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshians, with the predominant population being Tlingit. We are dispersed through 15 communities in Southeastern Alaska, and have large population concentrations in Anchorage, Seattle, and the San Francisco Bay area, with whom we maintain regular communication and interaction, including that of our language revitalization effort.

Our history is similar with that of other Native Americans and Hawaiian brothers and sisters, in that our language was repressed, and children, such as myself, were removed from their homes and punished for speaking their Native languages. Today, our children no longer speak their Native languages, and the younger speakers are in the age range of 50 to 60.

Because we seek the basis of our survival in the ways of our ancestors, the Foundation adopted language revitalization as its foremost priority, and formulated two clear objectives, which we think are inter-related: Native language acquisition and revitalization, and the academic success and enrichment of our Native students.

I will not cite the litany of academic failures or the failure of our schools to address our cultural values and our languages. I just will not go into all of that. I think that is fairly well documented; that is, that our schools are not serving Native populations.

I note for the committee that 3 years ago, the Board of Trustees of our Sealaska Heritage Foundation learned of the Hawaiian language revitalization effort. We visited several of the Hawaiian programs, and returned home, hopeful that we might be able to replicate their success.

I do want to thank the Hawaiians for always being gracious and open to us in welcoming us and taking us through, and taking the time to teach us about their programs.

We dedicated, at the Foundation, our limited resources to language revitalization. Our cry became, “Let us just do it.” Let us begin to work on our language revitalization.

We are now beginning our third year of work in direct language revitalization. We have two preschool programs. We are now funding seven language summer camps. We are beginning our language institute, which we have changed the name to Tlingit and Haida, talking about our language and our culture, as integrated.

So we have a 2-week session where we bring in speakers and non-speakers, but primarily speakers, to teach them language literacy, and also teaching methods. This year, we have added the Haida language to that.

We also decided to target our younger people, through our dance groups, in addition to our preschool programs and our summer language camps.

We have 2,000 people who dance in 46 dance groups. They sing in their own Native language. So we decided that this was a vehicle that we were going to use to try to teach our languages. So right now, we are in the process of transcribing and translating. Then we will disseminate all of that written test to our people in those dance groups.

We have developed partnerships with the university of Alaska Southeast. We also have a partnership with two of the school districts to operate immersion programs or partial immersion programs. One of them is a demonstration project.

We are teaching teachers about bilingual and bi-cultural education. This, Mr. Chairman, I think is really key, where we were able to get the school districts to work with us, because we brought the funds to that school district, we signed have partnerships, and we are developing a program that fits their needs, as well as our objectives. We are hopeful of the success that we going to have in those projects.

Right now, we are also beginning our curriculum development. We are just now bring staff on, our own staff, to begin curriculum development. So our thrust is that we are just going to begin to work on it. If our languages are going to be saved, then it is we who must do that. That is our proposition.

After assessing our progress, and after our second visit to the Hawaiian programs, we came to the conclusion that we must establish schools that are dedicated to the teaching of our Native languages, along with our efforts to promote inter-generational language acquisition within our homes and communities.

Thus, we were elated, when we learned that this committee was holding this hearing on a proposed amendment to establish the schools. We wholeheartedly support this amendment.

With that strong endorsement, I just want to emphasize the four propositions that AFN contained in its report, and that I have reiterated to you in this testimony.

I can not stress enough the need for adequate funding. There is no doubt that to operate a language survival school in Southeast Alaska will be costly.

We have fewer than 50 certified Native teachers in our Southeast Alaskan schools, none of whom speak Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian. We will have to develop a team teaching approach, with the addition of our Tlingit speaking teachers, who we are now training in our language institute. Many of them, they speak their languages, but most of them do not have college degrees.

For our circumstances, we would propose provisions that allow for the gradual increase in the percentage of time for Native language instruction. Of course, the amendment must provide funds and time for the planning phase to begin operations of these schools.

The language survival schools must have the financial support and means to succeed. Otherwise, we will be forever told that Native language schools do not result in academic achievement.

I would also urge the committee to allow for the development of a regional approach, coinciding with the indigenous language base, rather than limiting the funds to a single school site.

We are developing a regional strategic approach to our language revitalization efforts. But we are confronted with the necessity of meshing and integrating available funding sources to meet our needs and provide services to our multiple communities.

One-half of our communities are predominantly Native, while the other one-half are mixed communities in which our Native populations are a minority. We would initially be content with a demonstration school in our region, but we would implore the committee to consider ways in which schools or other programs in other communities might benefit from this effort.

I would finally propose that the Native American language schools be extended to preschool children. I see, Mr. Chairman, after reading the amendment, that this is, in fact, the case.

We think that this is absolutely crucial, because in our work, this is where we are finding our success, in the preschools, or in at least one of our communities, where now it is going into its second year, and the children are learning the language.

So, Mr. Chairman, I conclude with those remarks. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

[Prepared Statement of Ms. Worl appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Dr. Worl. It is always a pleasure to be in your company.

You are correct in that the bill supports schools that have at least 3 years of experience. I can see your point in that funding should be made available to schools in the planning phase. I think this is one of the matters that you should discuss with the staff. I am certain that accommodations can be made.

You were stating that you did not want the Department of Education to administer the funds. Under this bill, the U.S. Department of Education administers the funds by providing direct grants. It does not refer to the Alaska Department of Education. Which one were you referring to?

Ms. WORL. I was referring to the Federal.

Senator INOUYE. So the money will go directly from DOE, here in Washington, to you. It will not go through the Alaska Department of Education.

Ms. WORL. That is what we would propose, Mr. Chairman.

We have a model in Alaska, you know, with the Denalli Commission, where money is going directly into that, and then directly into the communities.

Senator INOUYE. What is the current stage of language fluency of the children in your program?

Ms. WORL. In one of our communities, we have children who are just beginning to speak the language there. It is a Head Start Program, but actually the community has allowed even younger children, who are just coming.

They just let them. It is a small community, and they allow the children to come. They are just infants. Of course, the parents are also required to come, as well. They are having success.

We have just raised enough money to give them an additional teacher. We only had one teacher in there. She said she was just really exhausted. But that community is so committed to preserving their language, that this one woman made the valiant effort of being with those children for the better part of a school day, and they are beginning to speak.

Senator INOUYE. Well, I want to thank this panel for the suggestions you have made. All of them have great merit. I can assure you that we will be discussing them.

As you know, a measure of this sort is not the final product. It is something that requires further refinement, and you people have done a lot of thinking. So I can assure you that changes will be made.

Thank you very much.

Ms. WORL. Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. Our final panel is made up of the chairman of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada, Brian Wallace, accompanied by Steven James and Thelma Tripp; Kalena Silva of the University of Hawaii at Hilo of Hawaii; Namaka Rawlins, the executive director of the 'Aha Punana Leo; and William Wilson of the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

I will call upon Brian Wallace.

STATEMENT OF BRIAN WALLACE, CHAIRMAN, WASHOE TRIBE, GARDNERVILLE, NV, ACCOMPANIED BY STEVEN JAMES AND THELMA TRIPP

Mr. WALLACE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

On behalf of the members of the Washoe Tribe, we just wanted to recognize and thank you for your ernest and faithful representation of our interests. On behalf of the veterans, we want to thank you, as well.

There is probably not one person in this room that has not been touched by the dignity of your public service and honest efforts. We appreciate that very much.

Of course, my name is Brian Wallace. I am chairman of the Washoe Tribe in Nevada and California. We are here to fortify the material that everybody worked on, to provide this committee in written testimony. We thank you for your courtesies of including that as part of the record.

Then, certainly, we are here to support the body of the initiative in S. 2688, and actually, the amendments that have been suggested by the panels preceding us.

Speaking directly to that, we would also, again, like to highlight the need for specific appropriations to be authorized and made to support this movement and the efforts of the hard working people here.

We would also suggest that in a discussion of demonstrations or pilots that it would be more of an inclusive criteria, rather than an exclusive one. Then, certainly, on the subject of planning and research, it should be recognized and maintained as a priority, as well.

I am reminded by these young men that are sitting behind me that I am more here as a son, and a father, and a brother; not as much as a chairman, today, although that is an important responsibility, and I have had that privilege for 20 years, to be an elected official of the Washoe Tribe.

But I am here speaking English, because it is necessary to do that, to survive for today. But our children speak Washoe so they can survive forever. That is the best way that we can attempt to summarize how important this is to us.

We are from the Lake Tahoe area, and we are very proud to be from there. It has sustained us when the Gold Rush Comstock were more recent occurrences in our homeland.

The tribal people had made inquiries to President Cleveland and the Cleveland administration at that time about their concerns about the biological catastrophe that they were witnessing, because they cut all the trees down in Lake Tahoe. In removing all of the trees, they also removed all of the people at the same time.

The response by the Cleveland administration to that inquiry was to predict the imminent extinction of the Washoe people. So we, probably more than anybody else in this room, are very happy to be here with you, today. We are so happy that we survived and made it across those dark waters.

The tracks in the snow that we follow are very, very old. For us, history is more about place than it is time. Certainly, we are here on behalf of all those people that cannot be here; all those people that gave up the battles, to win the war of survival. Many of us, as you have recognized, have prepared our whole lives for this day.

We have been asked to discuss how important this is from a tribal governmental perspective, about what this immersion movement means to the biological well being of the Washoe people and the lands that we rely on.

Our language is critical, as a medium to translate the standards and values of what it is to live a good life, and to be a good Washoe person, with hard work and humility and humor, certainly.

But with the efforts of the tribe to repatriate its homelands and through Senator Reid, who is sponsoring an initiative to restore homelands to the Washoe Tribe, back in the Tahoe Basin, which is something that we have been working for 152 years, it would be very hard, if we were able to achieve this irresistible dream, you know, these unfinished dreams of many people that are not here with us, and once we arrive, we do not have the ability to have a dialog and communicate with the environment, which we have struggled so hard to find.

Our language is essential for transmitting the truths, the essential biological truths of how to survive and understand our environment and our world.

I would also assert that Native languages are critical to America, in general, because tribal people are some of the last witnesses of the biological well being that we have been searching for and trying to discover, across America, in all our many ways. It is the baseline information that needs to be passed on, remembered and applied, that will benefit all of us.

We had the pleasure of having this discussion with actually Chairman Regula, who came out to visit the tribe, and talked with the children from our school.

We clearly understand that Washoe proto-agronomy and ethobotany is a cause for everybody. Students and the elders on the Board of Directors work very hard, side by side, with tribal biologists on wetlands restoration and those types of things that are very, very close to us.

Children seem to be on the perimeter of this movement for us. But one of the things that we have to weather is the criticisms that, you know, are these real schools, where people get real educations, so they can get a real job, in the real world? There is plenty of evidence that there very serious efforts.

We were recently visited by a party of Laguna Pueblos, who came and left our children with a story that is very relevant, about the enduring nature of our existence. It was a story that the children are the stars, and in the end, they will always finish the adults' work.

Having been, in a former life it seems like, a student of physics, it is as well as an applied theory of enduring universe, as any other. You know, we are all biological material, looking for a place to exist in this eternal universe, and we are all searching for answers in the underlying organization of the physical world, for that matter.

On the way out here, I was reminded when I was reading my monthly copy of the intelligence newsletter, and I noticed in there that the JMIC, or the Joint Military Intelligence College, and actually, its counterpart in France, the European Academy, are working very hard to introduce graduate level staff to immersion models. They are actually using language immersion and cultural immersion as part of the intelligence effort, to protect our national interests, outside this country.

So at that dimension or level of the Government, the immersion models are well accepted and embraced as very effective learning mediums. We are only here to assert that that works and applies very well to children, as well, in the GAO strategic discussion of the world.

For these children, our nation, it is about the promise of our youth, and every American would believe that. But we are working very, very hard to be able to pass on and preserve the understanding of a way of life in the open, and an understanding of the source of all of us being born in our world. We do our best to remember these things and translate them in the best way we can, here before these types of gatherings.

You know, in the din of walking around this town, and taxis running across your feet, and people's eyes have turned to blanks, our instructions of who we are and where we come from are even more meaningful. We live in a world of being and becoming. Our children love life as much as anybody else's.

It is very painful to see people looking for their own salvation, one at a time, by themselves. Sometimes the children are like coals thrown from the fire. They can only last for so long. So they need these experiences and these opportunities.

Life reaches out for life. We hope that through this hearing and through your efforts, we sense that friends are approaching. Maybe we are standing on the shores of a new world, maybe our children have a role in the daily life of the republic; and maybe these children are beginning to feel the warmth of a world that is finally beginning to turn in their favor.

We have a dream that we move beyond our factualisms some day, that that will end, and that we proceed to a new level of communicating with the world. We are so very happy to be part of a race of people that never melted away.

It is through these children that we find the immortality that we have been searching for, all of our lives. It is through these children that maybe we can find this undiscovered country that we have been looking for, for a long time, and actually an undiscovered country that many Americans are searching for. Because we really believe that there could be no more magnificent of a nation than one that corrects its wrongs.

So we are here on behalf of the people that we represent, to join your efforts to help lift this great nation to a higher and better place, and take a responsible role in raising a generation of children to match these monuments. We will do our best to make sure that this is a country worth dying for.

In Washoe, there is no word for finishing the job. So we are here to do what is called upon us to do. We thank you so very much for your insight, and thank you so much for caring so much. Thank you.

[Prepared Statement of Mr. Wallace appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Chairman Wallace.

In your testimony, you suggested that an amendment be made to establish a national clearinghouse of information. From what you know of the demonstration projects in Alaska and Hawaii, would these centers be able to provide that service?

Mr. WALLACE. Yes, sir; and it would be very critical, particularly for the start-up efforts and the movement, to have tracks in the snow for them to follow. A national clearinghouse of information would be critical to start-up efforts to support these movements.

We would also assert that, you know, on the inclusiveness of these demonstration efforts, that would be fortified by a clearinghouse, it is critical and it has to be recognized that they are controlled by the speakers, themselves, and not become an eddy in a research enterprise, or an educational enterprise, that does not have a direct impact to the community.

The coalitions that have been formed around this immersion movement are very strong, but are very vulnerable, as well. So the clearinghouse and the research efforts would be very helpful for these community-based experiences. I hope that addressed your inquiry.

Senator INOUYE. What do you think should be the level of involvement of tribal governments in the language survival schools?

Mr. WALLACE. I think it should be recognized for people to choose in their communities.

Certainly, representing the tribal government of Washoe, we have worked very hard to restrain ourselves from becoming part of an overbearing process that we have to live with, and have done our best to protect the community of learners that we have been able to establish there at Washoe.

The tribal government has been able to facilitate funding for the school as a pass through entity. Certainly, jurisdictional primacy is very helpful in allowing these community of learners to flourish and grow.

We actually protect and have statutes that have created a 501[c][3] version on the reservation, that has been recognized by IRS as a publicly supported organization.

So whichever effort is led by the speakers themselves is the one that needs to survive. Whether it goes through the tribal government, or if it is outside tribal government, the opportunity for options must be preserved.

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much.

Now may I call on Dr. Silva.

STATEMENT OF KALENA SILVA, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO, HILO, HI

Mr. SILVA. [Greeting in Native tongue.]

Mr. SILVA. Aloha, Senator Inouye and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. It is indeed a pleasure for us from Hawaii to be here today.

I am Kalena Silva, director of Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language of the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

I have come to testify in complete support of S. 2688, while focusing specifically on the role of Ke'elikolani College's consortium with the 'Aha Punana Leo, a community-based Native Hawaiian language organization.

I began my testimony with a declaration by Chief Lohi'au. Lohi'au was a paramour of Hawaii's volcano goddess, Pele, whom the goddess meets in her dreams.

Hundreds of miles separate Pele's and Lohi'au's home islands, so Pele sent her sister, Hi'iaka, to bring Lohi'au to her. In this ancient epic, Hi'iaka falls in love with Lohi'au, inciting Pele to kill him in a jealous rage.

Many in Hawaii know that Lohi'au was killed by Pele, a foreigner, who came to Hawaii over distance seas. However, few know that the epic ends with a brother of Pele's capturing Lohi'au's wandering spirit, and coaxing it gently back into his body, until he is once again fully alive, as if awakened from a deep sleep.

Like Lohi'au, the Hawaiian language is awakening from near death. Still weak from the disastrous effects of past encounters with those from overseas, recently, our language has increasingly benefited from the desire and commitment of those same people from overseas to support our efforts to revive it.

In 1982, the University of Hawaii at Hilo developed a BA program in the Hawaiian language. At around the same time, a group of Hawaiian language teachers and speakers formed the 'Aha Punana Leo organization to reestablish Hawaiian as a language of the family and of schools.

Since the early stages of this educational movement, our university and the 'Aha Punana Leo have worked together very closely to bring services to communities statewide. There are now 2,000 children enrolled in Hawaiian medium schools in Hawaii, and the first senior class graduated in May 1999.

Established in 1998, Ke'elikolani College has two divisions: The academic programs division, which includes the bachelor's degree, master's degree, and teaching certificate. It is the most developed college program in a Native American language anywhere in the United States.

The research and outreach division of the college focuses on language revitalization. It includes curriculum development for preschool through college, a lexicon committee that develops new words for the schools, an in-service teacher training program for teachers already in the schools, a newsletter, a newspaper for the schools, a Worldwide Web Server, an intranet telecommunications system connecting all Hawaiian language schools and offices in the state, and an outreach program to Native America and the rest of the world.

Unlike our State funded college the 'Aha Punana Leo is not impeded by the numerous hurdles of Government bureaucracy, nor by university policies that are not oriented to language revitalization.

The 'Aha Punana Leo runs two curriculum centers, one focusing on print material like books, posters, flash cards, maps, and the like; and the other on non-print materials like videos, audio tapes, and CDs for television, computer, and radio formats.

In coordination with Ke'elikolani College, the 'Aha Punana Leo maintains a materials distribution office, from which materials are sent to schools throughout the State. Its college scholarship program allows those wishing to develop fluency in Hawaiian to do so while pursing a wide range of majors in college. Its administrative office provides direct support for its current total of 11 schools.

The 'Aha Punana Leo preschools provide the language foundation enabling children to continue learning through the medium of Hawaiian in the public school system. The public school program is provided direction by three model laboratory schools that the 'Aha Punana Leo and Ke'elikolani College operate.

Each school contains preschool through 12th grade. The laboratory schools focus on hands-on learning, using Hawaii's natural environment, which provides the basis for Native Hawaiian traditional life.

The consortium between Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani and the 'Aha Punana Leo has already been assisting other Native American peoples establish schools, curriculum, teacher development, and technological support along our model.

We have assisted the Blackfeet Schools, Tlingit School, Dine College of the Navajo Reservation, and also the Washoe School, with representatives here with us today.

The Hawaiian tradition of aloha requires that we extend assistance to others. The bill will provide us the resources to increase such assistance to others, while further strengthening our model, which is currently only 17 years old.

Like Lohi'au, we Native Hawaiians are experiencing a rekindling of life through the revitalization of our nearly exterminated language. We want to join with other Native peoples in similar circumstances, throughout the United States, so that we may all move forward together.

Although Lohi'au was killed by Pele, her own brother, Kanemiloha'i, brought him back to life. There have been many "Pele" bills in the history of Native American languages. S. 2688 is her brother's, Kanemiloha'i's, bill. Through it, our languages, like Lohi'au, can find new life.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[Closing in Native language.]

[Prepared statement of Mr. Silva appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Dr. Silva.

I have been told that someone is going to show us the video.

Ms. RAWLINS. I am, Mr. Chairman.

Senator INOUYE. Oh, you are? So may I now call on Namaka Rawlins.

STATEMENT OF NAMAKA RAWLINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 'AHA PUNANA LEO, INC., HILO, HI

Ms. RAWLINS. [Greeting in Native language.]

My name is Namaka Rawlins. I am the Director of the nonprofit Native Hawaiian language educational organization, the 'Aha Punana Leo.

Like Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College, the 'Aha Punana Leo strongly supports this bill. Senator Inouye, I thank you for introducing this bill to amend the Native American Languages Act.

Senator Inouye, your opening remarks introducing this bill speaks to the heart of the bill, and brings honor to the work that we are doing in keeping our indigenous language and culture alive. For as you pointed out, the ability to maintain and preserve the culture and traditions of a people is directly tied to the perpetuation of Native languages.

The amendments further the commitment of the Federal Government to reverse the language loss by supporting an educational approach to ensure academic success for Native American students, based on indigenous language use in education.

I want, at this point, to go to the video, and then continue. So it is ready. They told me it can only be for four minutes, so we did cut it down to four minutes.

[Whereupon, the video was played.]

Ms. RAWLINS. We are already working as the major language resource for language survival NESTs and the language survival schools.

We believe that we can continue to provide leadership, while continuing our practice of coordinating work with others, as we did in the language education strands of the 1999 World Indigenous People's Conference on Education, held in our small city of Hilo. Some 5,000 indigenous people from all over the world came to Hilo for that conference, with the single largest number of participants attending indigenous language education workshops.

I would like to emphasize a few points. First, as you saw in the video, our preschools and laboratory schools are having great success in revitalizing Hawaiian and reaching high academic standards.

They are also the most divergent from the standard public education in Hawaii, and the sites that make most full use of the Hawaiian language.

I totally support the concept stated in the bill that one of the functions of the schools supported in this bill is to serve as local and national models for the education of Native American children.

This bill should not simply provide supplemental funds for standard public schools that want to include Native American language enrichment courses, or even streams of one or two classes for the Native American languages, but instead create totally new schools and systems that can demonstrate what our Native people can do, using our own language and culture as the basis for our contemporary education.

Also, I want to emphasize that creating these schools is very, very hard work, physically, mentally, and emotionally. I think that also came out in the video.

In developing these schools, we are forced to look to our ancestors, our elders, and within ourselves. It does not happen overnight. It requires us to lay the new foundation, battle opposition, sometimes with our own people, and get it going.

I support communities beginning first, and then obtaining Federal funding, once they have started. This is how we began. This will demonstrate the commitment to make change.

Also, this type of education needs to be recognized as distinct from standard programs, such as title VII, bilingual education. This is an innovative approach to increase fluency and academic success, based on language and culture of Native Americans.

I believe that it is important to give some personal testimony regarding the Hawaiian language. Our Hawaiian language has only one tiny group of about 200 people on a remote private island, who still use the language every day. Elsewhere, we only have a few elders left.

My father, who is 80, and mother, who is 76, are not able to speak Hawaiian fluently. I learned the language through Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College's aggressive course work, as have my two sons, both of whom were too old to participate in the Hawaiian NEST movement. My sons learned because of the effect of the Punana Leo language movement on the general Hawaiian community.

Our Punana Leo business is conducted in Hawaiian, and even our computers are in Hawaiian. Except for the few native speakers working with us, no one in our offices or schools grew up speaking Hawaiian. Most of our workers are parents of children in our language NESTs and language survival schools.

Like myself, they learned Hawaiian in college, and are proficient enough that they can use Hawaiian in school, in offices, and in home life. There are even some families where parents learn Hawaiian, and whose children are raised speaking Hawaiian. Dr. Wilson, beside me, and his wife were the first family to do this in Hawaii.

I also want to emphasize that we are pursing the revitalization of our language and culture because we value them as something of unequaled importance.

We did not begin our programs with the goal of using our language to make our children academically or cognitively gifted. We started these schools because we truly value our Hawaiian language and culture, and wish the same for our children. We know we are succeeding when our graduates return to the "nest" to help the younger ones learn.

I personally believe that many of our Native Hawaiian students who do poorly in school, who refuse to speak standard English, and use Pidgin English with a few Hawaiian words mixed in it, are doing so because, I believe, they are consciously or unconsciously rejecting mainstream education, because they see mainstream education as taking away what little they have left of their language and culture.

Historically, schools prohibited our language, and they continue to subordinate our language and culture in subtle and not so subtle ways. This not only creates strong resentment; it also, ironically, calculates a fear that learning too much of our language and culture may make us less intelligent.

Our Punana Leo schools meet these negative feelings head on by providing our children their language and culture through education. We are showing that knowing our language and culture is not an academic barrier.

Instead, full use of our language in school can give Native children higher achievement than the standards schools. We are also showing that we can teach a higher standard of English, gaining positive attitudes toward English. We teach English to enhance our Hawaiian base. We do not give upon our own language, as we are not immigrants.

At this point, mahalo nui loa; thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to testify.

[Prepared Statement of Ms. Rawlins appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Ms. Rawlins.

First, may I ask Dr. Silva, do you believe that your program has something to offer to the language survival schools on the mainland?

Mr. SILVA. Yes; we do, Senator. Actually, as a matter of fact, for a period of several years now, we have had quite a few visitors come from the mainland United States. These are visitors interested in seeing our model, and perhaps using it to start up schools in their own communities.

Native peoples around the country have experienced, as you have heard in testimony today, many of the same sorts of restrictive kinds of activity that have been very detrimental to our languages and cultures.

So although we are of a different cultural base—Polynesian, as opposed to Native American Indian—we share similar histories that allow us to relate very quickly to the kinds of problems that we have seen.

So as I stated earlier, we have had visitors from the Native American peoples. We have welcomed Rosita and some of her friends, in fact, just last year. We have had visitors from the Blackfeet people and the Navajo Nation. We have had visitors from all over.

So we believe that this relationship that we have already started with some American peoples would only flourish with the support of this bill, if enacted.

Senator INOUYE. Ms. Rawlins, you have said much about the success of 'Aha Punana Leo. How do your students perform in English?

Ms. RAWLINS. Well, we just graduated our second class this year, so we have had two graduations. We start English in the fifth grade, as a subject area, for 1 hour. Up until that point, all subjects, from the preschool, up to fourth grade, everything is taught through Hawaiian, all the academic areas.

We have already had test results showing that the children are as proficient in English as their counterparts are, for Native Hawaiians, yes, and they are doing well.

Senator INOUYE. So studies in English are not being placed in jeopardy?

Ms. RAWLINS. No; and they are doing very well. In fact, our model schools have, as part of the curriculum, that by the time the students are in their senior year, they are concurrently enrolled at the University, at Ke'elikolani College, where courses that they may choose in the morning hours are up to them.

The students have taken regular course work, from the English side, history and I think some political science courses which, of course, are taught through English. So that is also happening, right now, too.

Senator INOUYE. How long does it take a child in your program to become fluent in Hawaiian?

Ms. RAWLINS. In our Punana Leo preschools, and these are the children in the preschools up through age 5, they are fluent within 4 to 6 months, in our program.

Senator INOUYE. In 4 to 6 months, they become fluent?

Ms. RAWLINS. In 4 to 6 months, they are functionally fluent.

Senator INOUYE. Congratulations.

Ms. RAWLINS. Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. May I now call upon the final witness, Dr. Wilson.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM WILSON, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO, HILO, HI

Mr. WILSON. Aloha, Senator Inouye.

I would like to mention before I begin that after my testimony, I would like to call upon the Washoe elders to close for us with a benediction and a few thoughts.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to you, for all your work in this area. I know you have been working in Indian affairs for a long time. But my own particular attention has been from 1990, when you worked on the Native American Languages Act, and all your hard work on behalf of this important area.

In listening to other people greet you, and the strong military connection, I know that many American Indians have even military ties within them. It reminded me of one of your questions about national interests and Native American languages.

I know that many people are aware of the Navajo Code Talkers. In the other American Indian tribes—but, I think the general public does not know that many of these other languages were also used in the national interests during World War II as a secret code.

I understand there is a movie or movies that are being made now about this, and I hope that more people will get to understand the important contribution that these languages have made to the national defense.

I have been listening to the testimony, throughout the day, and have been very touched by it. I really am happy to see all the positive things that have been said.

I would like to focus on a few thoughts. One is that my dream for this type of legislation, at this point, is that there will be bits of, what are they called, points of light, throughout Native America, where these schools can begin; and that their light will shine upon the public school systems and the other BIA programs.

They will begin as these little grassroots people that are allowed to break down the regular barriers and prove what can be done, without all the baggage that has been accumulated, over the many years in the regular public schools and the regular BIA schools.

However, also, as I mentioned, the points of light, they will work to help in the public school system, the BIA system, all the different schools that are serving Native America, to improve their education, as well.

I think that has been our case in Hawaii, with the 'Aha Punana Leo, the public school has actually initiated an immersion program, based on the model of the Punana Leo. Then the model schools that we now have, with the college and the Punana Leo, together, are serving to bring that model to an even higher level, to help the immersion schools.

One of the problems that happens is that people forget to look into themselves and into their own culture and their own elders. One of the reasons that I am happy the word "immersion" was not used was because one of the things that we have seen in Hawaii is sometimes people see that word "immersion," and they will immediately go to Canada or some place else to find out, how do we do this? That immersion is not for Native children in a Native situation.

It is the same thing with our assistance to other groups. Although we can tell them what we have done and problems that we have had, I think our greatest assistance is to show them how they can find it within themselves. They can bring it out of themselves, rather than us dictating, this is the model to follow.

I hope that in developing this concept of national demonstrations that we always remember that the essence of this type of school comes from within the people themselves.

I also would like to comment on something that I heard Namaka say. It also relates to an earlier testimony by the Department of Education. That relates to English and Hawaiian.

I think that there is no community in Native America that does not want their children to be highly proficient in English. That is certainly the case in Hawaii. If you are not able to provide proficiency in English in your school, people will not come to it.

However, I think that because of the history of education in the United States, there is an over-emphasis on English. I heard something about dual language programs. It reminded me of something that I had seen in research elsewhere, that the strongest programs are those that give the most emphasis to the Native language.

Because these languages are not heard elsewhere, and English is everywhere. It reminded me, and maybe I am talking too much, but Dr. Krauss mentioned how the Danes are so good in English, with only 1 hour a day. Well, we have a lot more English around us, here in the United States on any reservation, any place, compared to Denmark.

So it should be remembered that high focus on the Native language should be the priority in this program. I guarantee you that they will do well in English. We have not had anybody not do well in English.

I touched on the idea of partnerships, or others touched on the idea of partnerships. Brian Wallace mentioned partnership between the tribe and a nonprofit.

Here, we have a partnership, in our case, between a college and a nonprofit. It has also been extended to the public schools. So I believe that the idea of partnerships is very important.

So for those who might think, is it possible to have a public school doing immersion, and also fit under this act, I think that is possible. I suggest that it would be possible, but that the funding be controlled by the Native group, as said by Dr. Worl. I think that is the crucial point, because the Native concept will bring out the language and that idea.

But, again, I think the points of light letting the people develop on their own is the most important thing.

I would also like to make a comment about the Alaska Native Language Center and our college, working together. In my experience, I am a linguist, myself, I have been very impressed with the Alaska Native Language Center, in terms of documenting and collecting data.

I think once you get involved in a school like this, you realize that you are working hard teaching, and then someone who has a great wealth of knowledge passes away. You did not record them. You did not write down the information that they had.

This center in Alaska has not only the ability, but they have a proven record of doing excellent work. Although we have documentation in Hawaii, I am a bit jealous of some of the things that they have.

It reminds me, Senator, that the Bishop Museum did recordings of Hawaiian language of many of our old Kupuna people that you might have seen when you were very young. They were recorded, and some of those tapes have deteriorated, because we, in Hawaii, did not know things that they know in Alaska, of how to preserve things.

I would like us always to remember that as we, in Hawaii, are focusing on teaching and using the language. But there are people outside who can help us to preserve those things, so that we can go back to them and use them in our schools, later.

I guess that is my final thought. I want to thank you again for this wonderful hearing.

[Prepared Statement of Mr. Wilson appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Dr. Wilson.

Are you satisfied with the manner in which the language is being taught in the selected public schools? I believe there are three. There is one in the urban area, and one in the heavily Native Hawaiian area. Are you satisfied with the progress being made?

Mr. WILSON. The word "satisfaction" to people in this movement is a very high word. We are always trying to do better. But I would say that those three schools are the highest standard that we have in Hawaii, right now. Part of the high standard is realizing that they want to go even further. So I am very proud of those schools.

I was talking to Dr. Demmert earlier about the international schools. He said the Hawaiian schools were even better than some of the international schools, although there are some that are better than us. But I would put those schools up against any schools throughout the world, for indigenous people.

[**Note:** The 'Aha Punana Leo has been recognized on an international level as a leader in indigenous people's education by being chosen as the sole indigenous education project included in Expo 2000 the millenium world's fair in Hanover, Germany.]

Senator INOUYE. I was privileged to visit the Punano Leo School, and spend some time there. I must say that you are doing a good job there. We thank you very much.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, mahalo, and Senator, thank you for going to the schools, and showing the people that you care.

Senator INOUYE. Now may I call upon Chairman Wallace to introduce the two elders.

Mr. WALLACE. Thank you, again, Mr. Chairman.

It is a one of my most profound and distinct pleasures to be here with people that we consider our national treasures. They are people whom we regard highly.

So on behalf of the members and the panel here, I would like to introduce Steven James, who is the chairman of the board; and Thelma Tripp, who is also a board member. They have traveled not only a long ways in distance, but a long way across time to be with you here.

STATEMENT OF STEVEN JAMES, PRESIDENT, WASHIW 'ITLU GAWGAYAY; ACCOMPANIED BY THELMA TRIPP, BOARD MEMBER

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] Mr. Chairman, you are doing very well to listen to us.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] Along time ago, when the Washoes went to school, they sent them very far away from home.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] They were all sent to Carlyle in Pennsylvania, and it was very far away from our place.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] There was one of the children that was sent away and got very sick, back there.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] The child got very sick back there, and no one was notified of it. Then he was sent back home again.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] The mother and the father were told that he was coming home, and they were all excited that they were sending him back home again.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] He came home in a box. The parents were told, "Well, here is your son."

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] Because of this incident, then they were asked to ask the Washoes what they wanted and how they could better this situation.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] At this time, there were lead people in the Washoe Tribe that came here to Washington, DC to see about getting us a school that would be closer to our homeland.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] That was why the school in Stewart, NV came about.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] The school was there, but then they had to do as all the non-Indian people that were running it did.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] After they went to the school at Stewart, and then they were sent away to different schools and became professional people.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] Steven attended the school there. After he got done with that school, then he became a master electrician, and he just retired here recently.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] After going to school there, the Washoe children population have gone into all different types of different fields of professional work.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] When he was still there, they would not let the students speak their language.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] After he got out of the school there, he was sent into the service and to Korea.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] After he was there 1 month, he did not know anybody, and he was just very sad. He felt like he was about to lose his mind, and he was just very, very lonesome for his home.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] He got a phone call, and he was really surprised and did not know who it was or anything, but they told him that he had this phone call.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] Then he went there and he said, "Well, who is it?"

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] This person answered him in Washoe and said, "This is your friend, and what are you doing?"

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] When he heard the language that this friend of his spoke in their language, it just really uplifted him. It was just really a joyous thing for him. He felt really great that he heard his language.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] The Washoe language is a very strong language, and it can right all wrongs.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] His mother saw his father go off to World War I, and then the brothers and the family go off the World War II.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] And his mother told him that her brother did not come home, and he is still buried somewhere in the Philippine Islands.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] And then his mother had to see him and his brother going off to Korea, also.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] And his mother saw him and his brother come home, and then saw the nephews have to go off to Korea and also Vietnam.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] All that the non-Indian United States has asked of us, we have done it all.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] And it is not just us, it is all of us, everybody knows this.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] We do not feel we are asking a lot. We just want help with our language and our schools, so that the Washoe Tribe can continue on.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] You sitting up there and higher ups, we can all make it right, and everything can be made right.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] If all of us, you sitting up there and every all around, if we all work together, everything can work. It can and it will.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] Everybody that came here on behalf of this bill and such, everybody go back home, and with everybody's help, it will get better and it will work.

Mr. JAMES. [Speaking in Native language.]

Ms. TRIPP. [Translating] That is all he is going to say. Excuse us for getting emotional. But it is a real super honor to be here, and it is just great. Thank you so much.

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Mr. James and Ms. Tripp. I can assure you that this committee is prepared to work diligently with all of you to bring about the successful passage of this measure.

I would like to announce before we call this meeting to adjournment that the record will remain open until August 10. If you have any addendums to make or any corrections, please feel free to do so.

With that, I express the gratitude of the committee for your patience and your mano'a, as we would say in Hawaii. Thank you very much. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:40 p.m., the committee was adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the Chair.]

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Mr. Chairman, I believe this hearing addresses a very important issue with deep significance to the Native American community and to American culture. I have long believed that preservation of Native languages is vital to protecting Native culture and maintaining pride in Native heritage.

I am pleased to see that Dr. Michael Krauss, the Director of the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks will be testifying today. For many years, he has been deeply involved in promoting and maintaining the life of Alaska's 20 Native languages. I look forward to hearing his testimony today.

Mr. Chairman, 9 years ago, it came to my attention that only 2 of the 20 original Native languages in Alaska were being spoken by children. At the time, it was predicted that 18 Native Alaska languages would be extinct by 2055. That is why I introduced the Alaska Native Languages Preservation Act. That legislation was designed to provide grants to Alaska Native groups and media for language preservation projects, including research, preservation and instruction. That bill ultimately was expanded to cover the preservation of all 155 Native languages nationwide and was singed into law in 1992.

So I feel a certain paternity for the issue that is before the Committee today. I look forward to listening to the testimony that will be offered by the witnesses.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DARRELL P. KIPP, DIRECTOR, PIEGAN INSTITUTE

In 1987, when I first began researching my tribal language: The Blackfoot Language, outside of the linguistic and academic world, little awareness existed concerning tribal language as a means of education for Indian children. As a teacher of Indian children, I was too often informed a lack of positive self-image was one of the greatest shortcomings to learning for Indian children. The Indian Education Act addressed this issue in many ways, but did not go far enough to include a full-scale inclusion of language as a teaching format.

One of the goals of the Piegan Institute was to find out what the impact of inclusion of native language content would have on the learning achievement of Indian children. Several years of investigation revealed it was a positive impact. Subsequent academic studies of a school program operated by the institute gave solid scientific support to the impact of tribal language in the learning environment of Indian children [Psychological Effects of Tribal Language Immersion on Blackfeet Children/BJKipp MA thesis-University of Montana 2000].

Other long term studies in French immersion programming offer similar positive insights. The fear many educators have that utilizing a tribal language as a teaching format may cause learning delay or misdirection is unfounded. Unfortunately, it is a well established notion, and will take some time to correct across the board.

Since 1987, I have worked with at least 16 tribes in establishing formats for tribal language revitalization. It is clear many tribes have serious endeavors in place to protect and revitalize their languages. Ironically, the obstacle is this is a new endeavor for most of them, and they are not up to task based on the most recent formats.

A university based training program is paramount at this juncture. The small scale inter-tribal network is inadequate for the task at present. A university based center would provide more solid support to the fledgling format. Second, most of the successful tribal survival school programs were started independently by community membership. Often due to the reluctance of institutions to fully commit to the format, it was necessary for independent organizations to fill the void. It is important this sector be part of the legislation, since it is the mainstay of the format.

Tribal government education agencies, and public schools, have not been in the forefront of this format, and have resources available if they wish to become involved in a suitable scale. Public schools traditionally have relied on bilingual education Federal funding for their role in language work. This is different from the intent of the survival school format, and should not be construed to meet the criteria of the survival school format.

The crucial issue of tribal language survival hinges on the fact it works extremely well with Native American children especially when introduced at an early age and carried through the elementary and secondary grades. It is capable of offsetting the horrific low achievement and drop-out statistics associated with reservation schooling.

The plain fact is tribal language survival schools are premier learning environments for Native American children. Many may remain dubious of this claim, but it remains true. Independent efforts on reservations, such as the Nizi Puh Wah Sin [REAL SPEAK] Schools of the Piegan Institute clearly illustrate community-based schools can contribute greatly to successful learning of Native children. The Nizi Puh Wah Sin Schools have been deemed exemplary educational programming for Blackfeet children in the 5 years of operation. Other similar efforts have shown exemplary results also.

I remain hopeful more attention, and support, will ultimately find it's way to these types of survival schools. They merit the attention, and are worthy of support.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MATTHEW DICK, COUNCILMAN, CONFEDERATED TRIBE OF THE COLVILLE RESERVATION

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Matthew Dick. I am a member of the Colville Business Council of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. I am honored to present testimony on behalf of my tribes in strong support of S. 2688. I extend to you the greetings of our Chairperson Colleen Cawston, who sends her regrets for not being here with us today.

The Colville Tribes are a confederation of 12 Bands, who were joined together on the Colville Reservation. The Bands of the Colville Reservation include the San Poil, Nespelem, Wenatchi, Methow, Okanagan, Colville, Chelan, Palouse, Moses-Columbia, Lakes, Entiat, and the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce. We have a membership of over 8,000, which makes us the second largest tribe in the Northwest. Our homeland consists of 1.4 million acres located in North Central Washington. Over 50 percent of our people live on or near our reservation.

The Colville Tribes place a high priority on efforts to preserve the three languages of the 12 Bands of people who came together over 125 years ago. As this committee is well aware, for too long it was the policy of the United States to actively prohibit the use of Native languages by Indian people. The horrific stories that Indian people tell of the brutality that they suffered at the hands of agents of the United States when they simply spoke their native languages are universal among Indian people. Whether it is Cherokee of North Carolina, Dakota of the Plains, or from my reservation, the stories are the same. While the United States was successful in destroying many of the over 500 languages that the Native people of this country spoke, many Native languages remain available to us.

However, we must as a Nation place a high priority on teaching and preserving these languages. Our languages are a vital resource for our people and the Nation. It is vital that we enable our children to become fluent in the Native languages. Otherwise, the loss of our elders who are our most fluent Native speakers, will spell the loss of our cultures. Our fluent speakers are like the great stands of Sequoias. They are the living link to a culture that goes back long before the birth of Christ. If we do not take steps now to embrace and preserve our fluent speakers, our languages could very well be gone in the next decade. And one thread that is part of the tapestry of American history and culture will be gone.

Since 1994, the Colville Tribes have undertaken a language preservation program. In doing so, the tribes have recognized the three distinct language families of the 12 bands of the Colville Tribes. For all three languages we have developed both linguistic applications and curricula to teach our people. Our language program was recently recognized by Washington State academia as a qualified formal language course for post secondary education. In preserving and developing our language program, we are developing a curriculum that also includes our oral history, instruction in art, food gathering and tribal history. Most recently we developed immersion educational opportunities in all three language families. However, perhaps what we are most proud of is that our elders are now giving language instruction not only in the Paschal Sherman Indian School, operated by the tribe under a 638 contract, but in all of the public schools on the reservation.

Given our existing efforts, we strongly support S. 2688 and the proposed amendments that it would make to the Native American Languages Act. The opportunity for children to go to school and be taught in a Native language is the most effective way to ensure that they will become fluent speakers and able to pass the information to their children. Importantly, this bill takes a holistic approach to teaching Native languages, involving not only children, but parents as well. In particular, we strongly support the Native Language Nest concept, which encourages the teaching of Native languages at infancy. Again, the best way to learn a language is to be surrounded by it, so that it is not a chore to learn, but it is natural and taken for granted.

We also support the portion of the bill that provides funding for curricula development and teacher training programs. In order for tribes and other organizations to teach these languages we must have the necessary tools. This includes books, teaching guides, and perhaps most importantly in this age technology, interactive programs that can be used on computers to provide broad access to students and their parents in their homes. This bill would provide the funding to build these tools.

We would suggest that the bill consider tribes such as the Colville Tribes, where there is more than one language spoken among the people. As I have said at Colville we have three distinct languages spoken among our people. Two are from Salish speaking language families and one is from the Sahapain language family. While the people who speak the two Salish languages can sometimes understand one another, it is similar to a French-speaking person speaking to a Spanish-speaking person. In order for my tribe to be successful in preserving our native languages, we must operate three language survival schools. This could be done by allowing tribes that intend to operate more than one language program, because they have more than one language spoken among that tribe, to be eligible for more than one grant.

In addition, we must share with the committee our strong concern that the bill provides funding for only two demonstration programs at universities in Alaska and Hawaii. The demonstration programs are intended to provide assistance to Native Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nest Programs. Given the expense of traveling to these two states, we are concerned that these universities will not be able to provide us with the assistance that may be required for our programs to be successful. We would urge the committee to amend the bill to provide for at least one more demonstration program on the mainland.

Again, I want to thank the committee for its time and effort in seeking to preserve the Native languages of this country.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROSITA WORL, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU, AK

I am deeply gratified that the Committee on Indian Affairs has called for a hearing on S. 2688 to receive testimony on the establishment of Native American Language Survival Schools. It conveys to me that members of this committee, and I would hope Congress as well, are attuned to the needs and desires of their Native American and Native Hawaiian constituents. We are indeed committed to ensuring the perpetuation of our indigenous languages for they embody the essence of who we are as a people and they offer the means to regain our social health and allow us to attain multi-cultural harmony. This Hearing is also significant in that it gives affirmation to the value of cultural and linguistic diversity at a time in our history when once again assimilative forces loom within our nation that seek to eradicate cultural and linguistic diversity and to homogenize the American population into that of the dominant society.

For the record, my name is Rosita Worl. I am bound by our own Tlingit cultural protocols to share with you who I am in our society. My name is Yeidiklats'ok, I am a Chilkat Eagle and a member of the Thunderbird Clan from the House Lowered From the Sun in Klukwan. I serve as president of the Sealaska Heritage Foundation and as a professor of anthropology at the University of Alaska Southeast. I also appear here today representing the Alaska Federation of Natives. I am a member of the Board of Directors that is comprised of representatives from 13 regional Native corporations, 12 regional non-profit and tribal organizations, and 12 village corporations and tribes. These directors collectively represent 100,000 Alaska Natives. During AFN's annual meetings, approximately 90 percent of the eligible membership are represented and act on resolutions before them. One of the consistent themes contained in the resolutions adopted over the years by the affiliated Elders and Youth Conferences, and the AFN convention itself, relates to directives supporting the survival and perpetuation of Native languages.

My testimony in favor of amending the Native American Languages Act to provide for the authority for the establishment of Native American Language Survival Schools arises from a multi-year study process initiated and conducted by AFN in which I also participated as a member of the Planning Committee. It is likewise based on my own work in Southeast Alaska at Sealaska and the University.

In response to AFN's publication of the "Report on the Status of Alaska Natives: Call for Action," which outlined the dismal state of affairs among Alaska Natives and Native communities, Congress created the Alaska Native Commission. It was directed to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the social, cultural, and economic conditions of Alaska Natives. In addition to the Commission's research, extensive hearings were held throughout all regions of Alaska, and a three volume report on the conditions of Alaska Natives was published in 1994. Almost immediately, AFN embarked on a process to develop recommendations and solutions to the problems identified by the Commission report. This effort culminated with the submission of a report to Congress in December 1999, which outlined the actions necessary to implement the recommendations of the Alaska Native Commission.

The Alaska Native Commission and the subsequent AFN reports to Congress contain recommendations to improve the quality of education of young Alaska Natives and to reverse the deterioration of the socioeconomic conditions and the poor educational performances of most Alaska Native children. One of the most specific recommendations—that I cite today in endorsing the amendment to establish Native American Language Survival Schools—calls for the support of Native language revitalization and language immersions efforts.

I think it is also germane that I outline the basic propositions contained in the AFN report in regards to the administration of educational systems. I urge the committee to consider them in developing the specific provisions of the proposed amendment. Foremost is Native control of their own educational systems and programs, coupled with adequate funding. AFN supports direct grants to Alaska Native entities, acting alone or in partnerships with other school or university systems, rather than channeling funds through the Department of Education. This recommendation is premised on the presumption of maximizing the funds and ensuring its direct dedication to Native education. A common perception in the Native community, and perhaps in reality, is the practice of allocating funds to non-Native controlled educational systems and then diverting the funds to support programs that primarily serve the interest of non-Natives rather than the intended Native people or programs.

The other two AFN recommendations, which I am certain members of this committee have heard many times, advocate for the employment of Native teachers and administrators and non-Native people who are knowledgeable and respectful of Native people and their cultures. Finally Native people remain adamant that educational systems must implement an integrated approach that provides the skills needed to live in the broader and larger society and incorporates the cultural values and languages of their societies.

Now if I may, I would like to shift my discussion to Southeast Alaska where the state of affairs are that the indigenous languages are dying. Sealaska represents approximately 30,000 Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian with the predominant population being Tlingit. We are dispersed throughout 15 communities in Southeast Alaska and have large population concentrations in Anchorage, Seattle and the San Francisco Bay areas with whom we maintain regular communication and interaction including that of our language revitalization efforts. Our history is similar with that of our Native American and Hawaiian brothers and sisters in that our language was repressed and children were removed from their homes and punished for speaking their Native languages. Today our children no longer speak their Native languages, and the youngest speakers are in the age range of their midfifties to sixties years of age.

Because we see the basis of our survival in the ways of our ancestors, the Foundation adopted language revitalization as its foremost priority and formulated two clear objectives which we presume to be interrelated: Native language acquisition and revitalization and the academic success and enrichment of our Native students. I will not cite the litany of academic failures that characterize the general educational performance of Native students nor the failure of school systems, which ignore our cultural heritage and language, to provide adequate education to our young that, in part, led us to our position and on our journey.

I note for the committee that 3 years ago the Board of Trustees of the Sealaska Heritage Foundation learned of the Hawaiian language revitalization effort. We visited several Hawaiian programs and returned home hopeful that we might be able to replicate their success.

We dedicated our limited resources to language revitalization. Now in beginning our third year, we are sponsoring or supporting: Pre-school language programs in two communities, summer language camps in seven communities, a summer language institute for 75 master speakers and apprentices, and a less than adequate development of language curriculum. Because we have more than 2,000 registered dancers in 46 dance groups, and view family and community based activities as essential to language acquisition, we began transcribing and translating clan songs that we intend to copyright to the clans, publish and disseminate. We developed a partnership with the University of Alaska Southeast and began language classes, and later, the summer institute. We secured Federal funds [though none under the Native American Language Act] to begin bilingual-bicultural teacher training, a kindergarten through second grade language demonstration project, and curriculum project in partnership with two of our school districts and the University of Alaska Southeast.

Last year, one of our 15 communities petitioned its school district to establish a charter school that would focus on Native language and culture. We were not successful in that effort, and we were left with the distinct impression that the school district did not support charter schools.

After assessing our progress and visiting the Hawaiian programs again, we came to the conclusion that we must establish schools that are dedicated to the teaching of our Native language along with our efforts to promote intergenerational language acquisition within our homes and communities. We were elated when we learned that this Committee was holding this hearing on a proposed amendment to establish Native American Language Survival Schools. Sealaska wholeheartedly supports this amendment.

With that strong endorsement, I will reiterate the basic propositions adopted by the Alaska Federation of Natives that we view as necessary to advance educational success: Native control of the academic institutions that serve our communities and control of the allocation of funds; support for the training and retention of Native teachers and other individuals who have received special cross-cultural instruction; adequate funding to support all basic elements necessary to support Native language acquisition and revitalization including the administration and operation of the schools, teacher training, curriculum development and mechanisms and financial support for parental and community involvement.

I cannot stress enough the need for adequate funding. There is no doubt that to operate Language Survival Schools in Southeast Alaska will be costly. We have fewer than 50 certified Native teachers in our Southeast Alaskan schools, none of whom speak Tlingit, Haida or Tsimshian. A team-teaching approach will need to be developed and supported with the addition of Tlingit-speaking teachers, many of whom are learned in our traditional ways, but who lack college degrees. For our circumstances, we would propose provisions that allow for the gradual increase in the percentage of time for Native language instruction. Of course, the amendment must provide funds and time for the planning phase to begin operation of these schools. The Language Survival Schools must have the financial support and means to succeed, otherwise we will forever be told that the Native Language Schools do not result in academic achievement.

I would also urge the committee to allow for the development of a regional approach coinciding with the indigenous language base rather than limiting the funds to a single school site. We have developed a regional strategic approach to our language revitalization efforts, but we are confronted with the necessity of meshing and integrating available funding sources to meet our needs and provide services to our multiple communities. One-half of our communities are predominantly Native, while the other one-half are mixed communities in which our Native populations are a minority. We would be initially content to have a demonstration school in our region, but we would implore the committee to consider ways in which schools or programs in other communities might benefit from this effort.

I would further propose that the Native American Language Survival Schools be extended to include pre-school age children. I also recommend that provision be adopted that allow for the partnership or participation of Head Start participants. The Native American Language Survival Schools must not be based on financial need or available only for the impoverished. If they are to succeed and to be accepted in our society, Native language must not be associated solely with the economically impoverished.

We believe that the collective wisdom of our ancestors and the beauty of culture holds our promise for the future. We firmly believe that Native students who know and accept who they are, even in the context of living in a society that devalues Nativeness or cultural and physical differences, will succeed academically, emotionally and socially. The transmission of our culture and language is the key to our survival and success.

Gunalcheesh

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NAMAKA RAWLINS, DIRECTOR, AHA PUNANA LEO, INC.

Aloha e Ka Lunahoomalu o keia halawai hoolohe pila a hoakeiki hanau o ka aina o Hawaii, e Ke Kenekoa Inouye, Aloha no hoi e Ke Kenekoa Akaka, lei ai no na kupuna kahiko o kaua, a me na lala a pau o keia komike hanohano nona ke kuleana o ka malama i ka pono o na kini lahui oiwi mai ka la hiki i ke kai pae opua o ka Akelanika a hiki i na kai lana malie o ka Pakipika, aloha oukou a nui loa.

[Aloha Moderator of this hearing and fellow child born of the lands of Hawaii, Senator Inouye, Aloha, also, to Senator Akaka, a precious lei for the ancient ancestors that we share, and to all members of this distinguished committee whose responsibility is to serve the many indigenous peoples from the rising of the sun over the cloud banked horizon seas of the Atlantic to the softly floating seas of the Pacific, my heartfelt greeting to all of you.]

My name is Namaka Rawlins. I am the director of the non-profit Native Hawaiian language educational organization, the Aha Punana Leo, Inc.

I thank Dr. Silva for providing information on both of our organizations and our consortium. Like Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College, the Aha Punana Leo strongly supports this bill and commits to carrying out the responsibilities given to us in the bill. Senator Inouye, I thank you for introducing this bill to amend the Native American Languages Act. Thank you Senator Akaka and other cosponsors. Senator Inouye, your opening remarks introducing this bill speaks to the heart of the bill and brings honor to the work that we do in keeping our indigenous language and culture alive, for as you pointed out, *the ability to maintain and preserve the culture and traditions of a people is directly tied to the perpetuation of native languages.* The amendments further the commitment of the Federal Government to reverse language loss by supporting an educational approach to ensure academic success for Native American students based on indigenous language use in education. We see the responsibilities given to the Alaska Native Language Center as complementing what we do in our consortium. Our chants and oral literature must be recorded, the vocabulary and grammar collected and made accessible to allow us to interpret these chants. We must make sure that our tapes and existing recordings do not deteriorate but that they are preserved using the latest technology. The Alaska Native Language Center has expertise in these areas and many more relating to the collection and preservation of our languages for many generations yet to come.

Our consortium expertise is in applying resources to bring our language to life today. We start with schools as the central gathering place, and then extend the language into the home, community and work place. We are already working as the major national resource for Language Survival Nests and Language Survival Schools. We believe that we can continue to provide leadership while continuing our practice of coordinating work with others as we did in the language education strands of the 1999 World Indigenous People's Conference on Education held in our small city of Hilo. Some 5,000 indigenous people from all over the world came to Hilo for that conference with the single largest number of participants attending indigenous language education workshops.

I would like to emphasize a few points. First, our preschools and laboratory schools are having great success in revitalizing Hawaiian and reaching high academic standards. They are also the most divergent from standard public education in Hawaii and the sites that make most full use of the Hawaiian language. I totally support the concept stated in the bill that one of the functions of the schools supported in this bill is to serve as local and national models for the education of Native American children. This bill should not simply provide supplemental funds for standard public schools that want to include Native American language enrichment courses, but instead create totally new schools and systems that can demonstrate what our Native people can do using our own language and culture as the basis for our contemporary education. In doing this, we can share the resources, systems, and policies that we create with the standard public schools to effectuate positive change. I am very pleased that this bill provides us with the full resources to develop schools that can be models in their own tribal areas.

Second, I want to emphasize that creating these schools is very, very hard work, physically, mentally, and emotionally. In developing these schools we are forced to look to our ancestors, our elders, and within ourselves. It does not happen over night. It requires us to lay the new foundation, battle opposition, sometimes with our own people, and get it going. I support communities beginning first and then obtaining Federal funding once they have started. This is how we began. This will demonstrate the commitment to make change.

Third, this type of education needs to be recognized as distinct from standard programs such as title VII, bilingual education. This is an innovative approach to increase fluency and academic success based on language and culture of Native Americans.

I believe that it is important to give some personal testimony regarding the Hawaiian language. Our Hawaiian language has only one tiny community of about 200 people on a remote private island that still use the language every day. Elsewhere, we only have a few elders left. My father, who is 80, and mother, who is 76, are not able to speak Hawaiian fluently. I learned the language through Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College's aggressive course work as have my two sons, both of whom were too old to participate in the Hawaiian Language Nest movement. My sons learned because of the effect of the Punana Leo language movement on the general Hawaiian community. Our Punana Leo business is conducted in Hawaiian and even our computers are in Hawaiian. Except for the few native speakers working with us, no one in our offices or schools grew up speaking Hawaiian. Most of our workers are parents of children in our language nests and language survival schools. Like myself, they learned Hawaiian in college and are proficient enough that they can use Hawaiian in school and offices and in home life. There are even some families where parents learned Hawaiian and whose children are raised speaking Hawaiian. Dr. Wilson, beside me, and his wife, was the first family to do this in Hawaii.

I also want to emphasize that we are pursuing the revitalization of our language and culture because we value them as something of unequaled importance. We did not begin our programs with the goal of using our language to make our children academically or cognitively gifted. We started these schools because we truly value our Hawaiian language and culture and wish the same for our children. We know we are succeeding when our graduates that return to the "nest" to help the younger ones learn.

I personally believe that many of our Native Hawaiian students who do poorly in school, who refuse to speak standard English and use Pidgin English with a few Hawaiian words mixed in with it, are doing so because they have the same values that I do. I believe that they are consciously or unconsciously rejecting mainstream education because they see mainstream education as taking away what little they have left of their language and culture. They have every reason to be resistant to the schools because, historically, the schools prohibited our language and they continue to subordinate our language and culture in subtle and not so subtle ways today. This not only creates strong resentment, it also, ironically, calculates a fear that learning too much of our language and culture may make us "less intelligent".

Our Punana Leo schools meet these negative feelings head on by providing our children their language and culture through education. We are showing that knowing our language and culture is not an academic barrier. Instead, full use of our language in school can give native children higher achievement than the standard schools. We are also showing that we can teach a higher standard of English, gaining positive attitudes toward English. Unlike the Bilingual approach in teaching English for immigrant learners, we teach English to enhance our Hawaiian base. We do not give up on our own language, as we are not immigrants.

The other members here today asked that I show short video clips of our schools and the work with our children. You will see first our Punana Leo Hawaiian Language Survival Nests and then some footage from elementary and our laboratory school, Nawahiokalaniopuu. The first graduating class, in 1999, had five young pioneers, including Dr. Wilson's son Hulilau.

Mahalo nui loa, thank you very much Senators for giving me the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM H. WILSON, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO, HILO, HI

Aloha nui kakou a pau [heartfelt greetings to all] hearing chairman Senator Inouye and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. I am Dr. William H. Wilson, chair of the academic division of Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College. Among my duties as chair is the outreach to Native American groups following our Hawaiian language survival nest and school models. It is therefore, indeed an honor to be invited to address you on this important issue and to have this opportunity to thank personally those who sponsored this bill.

I want to especially thank both Hawaii Senators whose offices felt that the 'Aha Punana Leo and Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College effort in language revitalization was having an important national impact and that there was a need to support this type of education on a national level. I am very pleased to see that this bill includes ideas that were collected from all over the United States from groups that have been in contact with our Outreach Program as well as input from others. I am also pleased to hear the expert input from Dr. William Demmert, who I believe to be the most experienced Native American in the area of indigenous education, both on a national and international level. Furthermore, Dr. Demmert is one of the most important advocates for Native American education initiatives anywhere. Finally, I want to acknowledge the important work that is occurring at the Alaska Native Language Center of the University of Alaska, which is the most developed center in the United States working to collect and preserve Native American languages. Their willingness to provide direction and support to language survival schools who will need to also collect and preserve their languages is very important. I think that part of the reason that there are more Native American language survival schools developing in Alaska than in any part of the Nation except Hawaii, is because of the excellent dictionaries, lexicons, grammars and other resource materials that are being developed at the Center for Alaska languages.

I think that Hawaii and Alaska can work as a good team to assist the entire country, and that through our partnership we can also include and coordinate other important resource centers throughout the country as well. Technology makes it possible for us to reach the entire world in seconds. For those who will visit our centers, and we expect many such visitors, our very distance and distinctive geography are assets. While flying to Hawaii and Alaska now can be accomplished in a few hours, visitors must still change their orientation to understand how truly distinctive Native American Language Survival Nests and Schools are. These schools are very different from the type of bilingual programs and Native American languages as enrichment/elective courses that are most common in the United States. Ka Haka'Ula O Ke'elikolani College operates a laboratory school program with the 'Aha Punana Leo demonstrating Hawaiian language survival school methodology. I have submitted some of the academic benefits that we have seen in this type of schooling for the record. Such academic benefits are, of course, in addition to their central purpose of providing choice to those who wish to develop and maintain a Native American language for their families. Such academic benefits have, however, typically exceeded those provided by standard English public schools for Native Hawaiian and other Native American children.

I have also suggested a few minor wording changes collected from various people that I have talked to since the bill was introduced. I will provide these to your committee staff. All of these wording changes are minor rather than substantive. They are all in keeping with what I understand to be the purpose and intent of this bill, that is to fund truly innovative programs that are taught totally or nearly totally through Native American languages in accordance with the unique status of Native American languages under United States law.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify strongly in favor of this bill.

Academic benefits seen at the Hawaiian language survival school program of Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani College

Dr. William H. Wilson

Below is presented SAT data from first cohort (class of 1999) of students educated through the initial laboratory school program of Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani College. This is a Hawaiian language survival school program beginning as a stream at Keaukaha Elementary on the Keaukaha Hawaiian Homelands (reserved land for those 50% Native Hawaiian ancestry) and matriculating on to Nāwahīokalaniʻōpuʻu (Hawaiian language survival school) which is affiliated with Hilo High School, a public high school receiving students from Keaukaha Elementary as well as from several other elementary schools. The students from the language survival school program tested were all Native Hawaiians while Keaukaha Elementary as a whole has an enrollment of about 90% Native Hawaiians and Hilo High School about 50% Native Hawaiians.

SIXTH GRADE KEAUKAHA SCHOOL

	Math			**Reading**		
	below average	within average	above average	below average	within average	above average
English program:	35%	57%	8%	48%	43%	9%
Hawaiian program:	0%	78%	22%	33%	44%	22%
State Average:	19%	55%	26%	24%	57%	18%

10TH GRADE HILO HIGH SCHOOL (Nāwahīokalaniʻōpuʻu)

	Math			**Reading**		
	below average	within average	above average	below average	within average	above average
English program:	24%	60%	16%	22%	59%	19%
Hawaiian program:	0%	60%	40%	0%	80%	20%
National Average:	23%	54%	23%	23%	54%	23%

The Hawaiian language survival school program students whose SAT scores are given above completed most of a college preparatory program through Hawaiian by the end of their junior year. Their only course work in English was an English language arts course, although they also used English reference materials in writing reports and other activities for their Hawaiian medium classes. During their senior year, these students enrolled part-time at the University of Hawaii at Hilo in English medium college 100 level and above courses including mathematics, horticulture, agriculture, political science, and Japanese as well as Hawaiian. They completed this course work with GPAs ranging from 2.9 to 3.5. They also took the University of Hawaii at Hilo English composition qualifying examination, an examination that many Native Hawaiian students from English medium schools find difficult. All passed. The entire class graduated and went on to college.

While the initial class of Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u set the pace for the students behind them, there have been many academic success stories within the entire student body. Some examples from other classes include winning two of the state's 100 prestigious Bank of Hawaii Second Century Scholarships offering up to $10,000 per year for four years of college, winning first place in a statewide computerized stock market game, and being chosen as vice president of the state-wide Native Hawaiian Youth Legislature. Students have also won island wide student talent contests and been on island and state championship teams in competitive sports. Students continue to be included in concurrent enrollment in the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. Some have enrolled as early as juniors. Although there have been some transfers from the laboratory school, there have been no drop outs. One of the transfers who moved to Utah was elected president of his high school.

The success that has been seen in our laboratory school program repeats success that has been seen elsewhere in the world. Language survival schools in Great Britain have a reputation for academic excellence above that of the English medium schools in Celtic areas such as Wales. Maori language survival schools have had excellent results in New Zealand. The tribal efforts elsewhere in the United States that are following the model that we are using here at Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College have also reported academic success accompanying the revitalization of their languages in the school. Such success is especially encouraging in the context of the generally poor academic achievement and high drop out rate of Native American students nation-wide.

Testimony of Michael Cohen
Assistant Secretary of Education for Elementary and Secondary Education
Hearing before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Thursday, July 20th
S. 2688 – the Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2000

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify before you today. I am pleased to be here to discuss the importance of preserving Native American Languages and the Administration's views on S. 2688, the Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2000.

Preserving Native American languages is important for many reasons, including the contribution this can make to improving education for Native American students. Overall, the educational performance of Native American students lags significantly behind the performance of their peers nationwide. Only 48 percent of American Indian fourth graders scored "at or above the basic level" on the 1994 NAEP reading assessment, as compared to 60 percent of all fourth graders nationwide. Low achievement levels, in turn, are matched by high dropout rates. The annual high school dropout rate for American Indian teenagers (5.9 percent) in 1996-7 was nearly twice the national average (3.2 percent).

The achievement gap that exists between Native American and non-Native American students is influenced by a number of factors, including inadequate school resources, high rates of family poverty, and high student absenteeism. In addition, Native American cultures and languages are often undervalued in schools serving Native American students, causing these young people to feel disconnected from their heritage. We know from research and experience that individuals who are strongly rooted in their past – who know where they come from – are often best equipped to face the future.

That is why preserving Native American languages is so crucial – to better connect Native American students to their own past, and to help better prepare them for a future in which education and learning are more important than ever.

As you know, U.S. Education Secretary Richard W. Riley has proposed expanding the number of schools that enable students to be educated in English and their native language, otherwise known as dual language schools. In a speech this past March, Secretary Riley called for increasing the number of dual language schools from 260 today to 1,000 by the year 2005.

The Clinton Administration has been a strong supporter of improving educational opportunities for all Americans, and Native American students in particular. In fiscal year 2001, President Clinton requested $1.2 billion dollars in additional funding for new and existing programs across the Federal government designed to serve Native-Americans.

I am extremely pleased that the Senate – through its current appropriations bill – has proposed funding levels for three Administration program priorities that are identical to amounts requested in the President's 2001 budget: Indian Education Grants to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) ($92.8 million), the American Indian Teacher Corps ($10 million), and a new American Indian Administrator Corps ($5 million). The Administration is encouraged that the House has matched your commitment level for grants to LEAs and the Teacher Corps, and hope that they will provide funding for the new Administrator Corps program.

President Clinton has also proposed $1.3 billion for a new School Renovation Loan and Grant program, which includes $50 million targeted directly to Impact Aid school districts that have at least 50 percent of their children residing on Indian lands. Unfortunately, both the House and Senate bills reported out of the Appropriations Committee this May provide no funding for this initiative. The Senate bill potentially does allocate some funding that could be used for school modernization and repairs, which is a step in the right direction. However, the Senate bill would consolidate under a block grant two of our most important national priorities - school construction and class size reduction - with no assurances that the funds would be used for either purpose.

In addition, the Administration has proposed $460 million for the Bilingual Education programs funded under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Many Title VII grantees provide educational services to schools serving Native American students. The Senate and House levels for Title VII fall $17 million and $54 million below the President's request, respectively. We look forward to working with members of this Committee and others in Congress to secure funding for these and other crucial programs for Native American students.

The Challenge: Preserving Native Languages

American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Native American Pacific Islanders are faced with the growing challenge of preventing the loss of their native languages. Michael Krauss of the Linguistic Society of America estimates that of the 175 indigenous languages still spoken in the United States, ninety percent are at-risk of extinction. For example, of the 20 native languages still spoken in Alaska, only Central Yupik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik are being passed on to the next generation.

Many of those languages not currently seen by linguists to be in immediate danger of extinction are projected to reach this status in the future. Even among the Navajo tribe, the single largest American Indian community in the United States, the number of tribal members who speak Navajo is decreasing annually. According to U.S. Census data, the number of Navajos living on their reservation - age five or older - who speak only English nearly doubled between 1980 (7.2 percent) and 1990 (15.0 percent).

In the past, the Federal government promoted policies that worked to undermine the survival of Native American languages. Starting in the 1880s, many Native Americans were educated in schools where they were punished for speaking their native language. Albert Kneale - a teacher at a Native American boarding school in the early 1900s -

explained that in the schools, "children were taught to despise every custom of their forefathers, including religion, language, songs, dress, ideas, (and) methods of living." In a recent interview, one elderly Native American women - Celene Not Help Him - recalled the punishment she received for speaking in her native language as a schoolgirl in the 1930s: "We talk Indian in the classroom, they'll...bend a ruler and hit you in the mouth." Unfortunately, we are still living with the consequences of these policies.

However, more recently, Congress has established a government grant policy aimed at preventing further Native American language extinction. The Native American Languages Act of 1990 declared it "the official policy of the United States government to preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native languages."

The Native American Languages Act was amended in 1992 to establish a grant program under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support native language projects. The Administration for Native Americans (ANA) - part of HHS - has funded grants to tribal governments and Native Hawaiian groups since 1994. ANA funds projects in language immersion, curriculum development, and development of language dictionaries and CD-ROMS. Since 1994, ANA has funded 166 awards for a total of $12.1 million.

The Department of Education has also provided funding to strengthen students' native language skills under our Bilingual Education Program. The statutory language in Title VII of ESEA currently supports funding for bilingual education programs that "may also develop the native language skills of limited English proficient students, or ancestral languages of American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and the residents of the outlying areas."

Currently, 64 separate Title VII grants provide over $6 million in funding annually to schools and school districts serving American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Native American Pacific Islanders.

Through a Title VII grant, the Department of Education has provided funding for a professional development, distance-learning project based at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff involving seven Navajo Nation school districts. Through this Title VII Teacher and Personnel grant, university faculty, masters fellows, and mentor K-12 teachers are collaborating over a five-year period to increase the ability of Navajo teachers to provide high-quality education to Native American students.

In addition, the Department of Education has provided nearly $800,000 in FY1999 and FY2000 through the Native Hawaiian Education Act (ESEA, Title IX, Part B) for the development of K-12 audio-visual and computer curricula for the statewide Hawaiian Medium education program. The videos developed through this grant cover topics such as grammar, and cultural traditions, while one of the CDs is a compilation of Native Hawaiian songs. The grant was awarded to Aha Punana Leo, Inc. in Hawaii, one of the organizations testifying before this committee today.

The Education Department's Public Charter Schools program, which helps finance the design and start-up of more than 1000 charter schools nationwide, has also helped promote education in Native American language and culture. Located on the Navajo Nation, the Tolani Lake Elementary School will receive $300,000 in funding over a two-year period beginning in FY2000 to support a learning environment grounded in traditional Navajo culture. Classes in Navajo language and culture will be will be offered at each grade level. Community leaders will serve as tutors, mentors, and counselors for the students in this predominantly Navajo school.

Specific Comments on S. 2688

Despite these important efforts, there is still more to be done. That is why we support the goal and intent of the proposed Native American Language Act Amendments Act of 2000, as well as the overall approach of providing funding to schools that will intensively educate students in Native American languages. However, there are some areas of S. 2688 that are problematic and could, we believe, be strengthened. We look forward to working with this committee in attempt to address these issues. Let me briefly discuss some of the chief concerns.

Instruction in Native languages and English, and High Standards. The Native American Language Act Amendments Act would provide funding to Native American Survival Schools to promote student acquisition of their native language. It would require that schools provide at least 20 hours per week of instruction and not less than 35 weeks per year in Native languages and that the students not be enrolled in any other school.

Even though gaining fluency in a native language is the primary and essential objective of this proposed bill, we also need to ensure that students who attend these schools are also fully prepared for the future by becoming both fluent in English and academically proficient.

Just as we must honor the past by acting aggressively to preserve Native languages, we must provide Native American students with the English skills necessary to fully participate in the great American and global society. We do not believe there is a necessary trade-off between Native language instruction and the development of English language proficiency. In fact, properly done, dual-language schools can help students leave school proficient not only in academic subjects, but also conversant in two languages.

Evidence suggests the dual immersion approach results in improved native language fluency, English language competency, and cognitive ability. Children exposed to two languages at an early age are more flexible, creative, and achieve higher cognitive development at an early age than children who learn only one language. Active use of native languages in the classroom allows students to retain ties to their culture and their past, while literacy skills in a first or native language can increase second language acquisition. In addition, studies have consistently shown that immersion students do at least as well, and in some instances even surpass, comparable non-immersion students on measures of verbal and mathematics skills. As a result, the Department believes it is necessary that the bill also support the goal of English language proficiency.

All students, including Native American students, should be held to high academic standards. Under the Improving America Schools Act of 1994, all BIA schools had to adopt new content standards. Bureau schools were given the choice to adopt the voluntary national standards, adopt State standards, or develop their own standards (so long as they were as rigorous as the State or national standards). Most BIA schools have chosen to adopt the standards of the state where the school is located. Students attending schools funded under this legislation must have the same opportunities as their state student counterparts to achieve academically.

I would like to raise an additional point regarding the way in which language proficiency is addressed in the proposed legislation. According to section 8 (c)(1)(D) of S. 2688, a Native Language Survival School receiving Federal funds shall "ensure that students who are not Native American language speakers achieve fluency in a Native American language within 3 years of enrollment." The requirement is significantly more rigorous than the provision in existing ESEA Title I law that deals with English language learning for students who speak English as a second language. We must take into account the reality that individual students learn at different rates based on various factors, such as the level of fluency upon entering schools, literacy in their native language, and their motivation to learn languages.

School Finance and Governance. Under S. 2688, tribes and institutions of higher education (IHEs) can apply for funds, while the eligibility of State Educational Agencies (SEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) is unclear. This raises some questions concerning school finance and governance. Who pays for operational costs? Who makes decisions about teacher qualifications? What core academic subjects should be taught? The Department of Education would like to work with Members of this Committee to clarify the types of schools that would be eligible to receive funding under the proposed legislation. It is not clear whether native Language Survival Schools are to be public schools governed and operated by either a LEA or a tribe, or whether they could be public schools or independent private schools. The resolution of this issue will have important consequences for this program, and for the students who attend the schools. For example, public schools operated by LEAs or tribes receive other Federal education funds, while private schools only indirectly benefit from Federal programs. Public schools, operated by LEAs, must meet a range of State requirements ranging from the establishment of academic standards for all students to the qualifications of the teachers in the schools.

Research and Evaluation. S. 2688 would be strengthened by the addition of a research and evaluation component. There is still much we need to learn about how best to teach Native American languages in school. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the programs supported under the proposed Act, to identify and document effective educational methods practiced at Native American Language Survival Schools, and disseminate these as widely as possible, to other schools and to Tribal Colleges and other institutions of higher education preparing the next generation of Native American teachers. Further, funds should be made available to support research on issues that are important to meet the objectives of this proposal, such as research on Native Language retention. Funds should also be made available for the development of tapes, orthographies, dictionaries, and materials development in native languages.

Conclusion

The Administration is committed to ensuring that Native American students receive a high-quality education in not only English, but also their native language and culture. Thank you for the opportunity to address this committee. I am willing to answer any questions you many have concerning my testimony.

TESTIMONY OF TERESA L. MCCARTY PROFESSOR AND DEPARTMENT HEAD LANGUAGE READING AND CULTURE THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA; CODIRECTOR AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE BEFORE THE SENATE INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ON S. 2688; NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2000

Ten years have passed since Congress approved the Native American Languages Act. As codirector of the American Indian Language Development Institute, I have had the opportunity to work with many of the teachers, parents, and students in programs authorized by this Act. I also have conducted research on the impacts of these and other indigenous language education programs over more than 20 years. My purpose in this statement is to convey what we know from research, and the implications of research for the proposed Native American Languages Act Amendments of 2000. Specifically, I will address two questions: What do we know about the efficacy of indigenous language revitalization/maintenance programs in promoting students' language development, their literacy in one or more languages, and their academic success? Second, what do we know about the efficacy of these programs in promoting indigenous language revitalization? I will conclude with several recommendations. Dr. Michael Krauss of the Alaska Native Language Center reports that 175 indigenous languages are still spoken in the United States, but by fewer and fewer children all the time. The great irony is that even as 'indigenous children come to school knowing more English, they are likely to speak a form of English modified by the structures, sounds, and me patterns of the heritage/indigenous language, and to be identified as "limited English proficient." These students are forced to walk between cultural worlds: They are under intense pressure to abandon their indigenous identity and culture, yet they are stigmatized as "deficient" by the English-language schools they attend. Educational statistics speak painfully of the costs of this situation: Indigenous students are heavily over represented in special education programs, and they experience the highest school failure and dropout rates in the nation. Thus, despite the transition to English, indigenous students are not, on the whole, doing better in school. This situation, and the threat of 'tam' language loss, have motivated creative new approaches to indigenous education which emphasize immersion in the heritage/Native American language. Heritage language immersion is the approach proposed in S.2688. Heritage or second-language immersion involves sustained instruction in the heritage language over a period of several years. Typically, all instruction during the first years of school is provided in the heritage language, with an English language arts component introduced in the second or third grade. Based on the theory that abilities developed in one language transfer readily to another (and there is considerable empirical support for this),[1] heritage language immersion uses the second/heritage language to develop students' critical thinking abilities,

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[1] For information on the interdependence of languages in second language learning, see J. Cummins & M. Swain (1986), Bilingualism in Education: Aspects of Theory, Research and Practice (London & New York: Longman); F. Genessee, Ed. (1994), Educating Second Language Children: The Whole Child, the Whole Curriculum, the Whole Community (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press); and F. Grosjean (1982), Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).

English fluency and literacy, and proficiency in the heritage language. This type of immersion incorporates the local culture into the curriculum in academically challenging ways. It requires the active co-participation of children's families, something we know enhances learning for students regardless of race, ethnicity, or social class. There is strong cross-cultural evidence supporting the effectiveness of second-language immersion schooling. Second language immersion has been implemented in Canada, for example, since 1966. There, native- English speaking children are immersed in French upon entering school Longitudinal studies have shown that using French as the sole medium of instruction facilitates children's acquisition of French without causing any detrimental effects to their English development or their general cognitive and social development. In fact, on achievement measures--including standardized assessments of English these bilingual students outperform those in monolingual English classrooms. Researchers attribute bilingual students' superior performance to the greater cognitive flexibility associated with knowing more than one language.[2] Indigenous immersion schooling in the United States was pioneered by the Hawaiians with the introduction of the 'Aha Punano Leo (Nest of Voices) preschool in 1983. Today, the opportunity for an education in and through Hawaiian extends from preschool to graduate school, and approximately 1,800 children have learned to speak Hawaiian through immersion schooling. In a long-range study of Hawaiian immersion, student achievement equaled or surpassed that of Native Hawaiian children enrolled in English-only school-even in English language arts.[3]One of the best documented immersion programs on the mainland is at Fort Defiance, Arizona. When the program began in 1987, less than a tenth of the five-year olds at the school were considered "reasonably competent" Navajo speakers.[4] At the same time, many of the English monolinguals were identified as "limited English proficient." With strong administrative and parental support, Fort Defiance launched a voluntary Navajo immersion program that included initial literacy in Navajo, then English, and math in both languages. The program placed a heavy emphasis on language and critical thinking. By the fourth grade, Navajo immersion students were performing as well on tests of English as Navajo students in non-immersion (monolingual English) classes. Immersion students did better on assessments of English writing, and were substantially ahead on standardized tests of mathematics. On standardized tests of English reading they were slightly behind, but catching up. In short, program co-founder Dr. Wayne Holm reports, these students were well on their way to accomplishing what had been claimed: that they would acquire Navajo "without cost"--that is, by fifth grade they would be doing as well as Navajo students in non-immersion, English-only classes.[5]Not only did the Navajo immersion students perform well in English, when tested on Navajo language measures they outperformed their Navajo peers who had been placed in non-immersion classes. Navajo students in non-immersion classes actually performed lower on tests of Navajo than they had in kindergarten. Here we clearly see the powerful negative effect of the absence of immersion schooling, and conversely, its positive effect on maintenance of the heritage language as a second language as well as on students' acquisition of English and math. Immersion programs also have been documented for the Mohawk, Mississippi Band of Choctaw, Northern Arapaho, Blackfeet, Yup'ik, various California tribes, and Cochiti Pueblo.[6] Like the Hawaiian and Fort Defiance Navajo programs, these indigenous language programs involve total immersion in the indigenous language and the active involvement of parents. At Cochiti Pueblo,

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[2] For more on French immersion in Canada; see W.E. Lambert & G.R. Tucker (1972), Bilingual Education of Children: The St. Lambert Experiment (Rowley, MA: Newbury House); and G.R. Tucker (1980), "Implications for U.S. Bilingual Education: Evidence from Canadian Research," Focus, 2, pp. 1-4. For additional data on bilingualism and cognitive functioning, see J. Cummings & M. Swain (1986), Bilingualism In Education: Aspects of Theory, Research and Practice (London & New York: Longman).

[3] For more on Hawaiian immersion, see the chapters by S. Keahi (2000) and K. Silva (2000) in Indigenous Educational Models for Contemporary Practice, M.K.P. Ah Neo-Benham and J.E. Cooper, Eds. (Mahwah, NS: Lawrence Erlbaum). See also W.H. Wilson (1998a), "I Ka Olelo Hawai'i Ke Ola, "Life Is Found in the Hawaiian Language'," International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 132, pp. 123-137; and Wilson (1998b), "The Sociopolitical Context of Establishing Hawaiian-medium Education," Language, Culture and Curriculum, 11, pp. 325-338.

[4] Data on the Fort Defiance immersion program is from A. Holm & W. Holm (1995), "Navajo Language Education: Retrospect and Prospects," Bilingual Research Journal, 19, pp. 141-157. For studies of other successful Navajo language maintenance programs, see G.S. Dick & T.L. McCat (1996), "Reclaiming Navajo: Language Renewal in an American Indian Community School," in Indigenous Literacies in the Americas: Language Planning from the Bottom Up, N.H. Hornbergs, Ed. (Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1996, pp. 69-94); A. Holm & W. Holm (1990), "Rock Point, a Navajo Way to Go to School: A Valediction," Annals, AASSP, 508, pp. 170-184; T.L. McCarty (1993), "language, Literacy, and the Image of the Child in American Indian Classrooms," Language Arts, 70, pp. 182-192; and D. McLaughlin (1995), "Strategies for Enabling Bilingual Program Development in American Indian Schools,' Bilingual

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Research Journal, 16, pp. 6067.

[5] Holm & Holm (1995), p. 150.

[6] For more on these programs, see G. Cantoni, Ed. (1996), Stabilizing Indigenous Languages (Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University Center for Excellence in Education); EA. Hartley & P. Johnson (1995), "Toward a Community-based Transition to a Yup'ik First Language (Immersion) Program with ESL Component," Bilingual Research Journal, 19, pp. 571-585; T.L. McCarty & LS. Watahomigie (1998), "Indigenous Community- based Language Education in the USA," Language, Culture and Curriculum, 11, 309-324; T.L. McCarty & O. Zepeda, Eds. (1998), Indigenous Language Use and Change in the Americas, Theme Issue, International Journal of the & Sociology of Language, 132; T.L. McCarty, L.J.Watahomigie, & A.Y. Yamamato (Eds.), Reversing Language Shift in Indigenous America: Collaborations and Views from the Field, Theme Issue, Practicing Anthropology, 21; and J. Reylmer, Ed. (1997), Teaching Indigenous Languages (Flagstaff S. Northern Arizona Center for Excellence in Education).

[7] C. Suns, "Community-Based Models for Indigenous Language Revitalization." Keynote Address, 21st Annual American Indian Language Development Institute, June 23, 2000. See also R. Benjamin: R. Pecos, & M.E. Romero (1996), "Language Revitalization Efforts in the Pueblo de Cochiti: Becoming 'Literal' in an Oral Society," in Indigenous Literacies in the Americas: Language Planning from the Bottom Up, N.H. Hornbergs, Ed. (Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyer, pp. 115-136).

for example, parents are learning Cochiti side-by-side with their children.[7] In California, many young adults who are working as language apprentices with elderly master-teachers have gained conversational proficiency and even fluency in the heritage language. Acceding to Dr. Leanne Hinton, a linguist at the University of California Berkeley who has worked with the master apprentice teams for many years, this type of immersion strengthens relations between young and old, reinforces family and inter-family ties, supports family and community values, and provides positive role models for children.[8]Let me now return to the questions with which I began. To what extent have heritage language immersion programs succeeded in: (1) promoting indigenous students' English and academic achievement, and (2) revitalizing threatened indigenous languages? When we consider language programs for which there is good public documentation, such as those discussed here, we see students doing exactly what the research predicts. After approximately five to six years, they are, at the minimum, on a par with comparable students in monolingual English classrooms, and they are ahead in math and heritage language development. According to Darrell Kipp, cofounder of the Blackfeet immersion schools in Montana, a two-year study of Blackfeet immersion students showed that they scored above the national average on English language tests. "We want, and we have developed high-level language acquisition skills in our children," Kipp states.[9] Moreover, there is evidence of social and affective benefits in immersion schooling: These students know they have succeeded because of, not despite who they are.As promising as they are, indigenous language immersion programs are in a race against tune. To quote Northern Cheyenne educator Dr. Richard Littlebear, indigenous languages "are in the penultimate moment of their existence in this world."[10] Let me illustrate this with a recent study by Navajo educator Dr. Evangeline Parsons- Yazzie.[11] She found that even in homes where children spoke Navajo as a first language and had monolingual Navajo grandparents, children tended to respond to their parents' and grandparents' Navajo in English. How did their parents, who were bilingual, respond? They switched to English. As early as preschool, children already had into' the societal forces that privilege English and diminish the status of their mother tongue. Parsons-Yazzie cites English media and the daily association of Navajo speakers with lower-paying jobs as key factors in fostering these language attitudes. What this study and my own long-team research show is that indigenous language immersion programs in no way threaten the valuation or acquisition of English. Indeed, the pressures on parents and grandparents not to transmit the heritage language are nearly overwhelming. If the heritage language is to have a fighting chance of surviving among the young, parents and grandparents need assistance and support. That is why these proposed amendments are so important. They will extend those practices proven to be effective in promoting both acquisition of the heritage language and English. While indigenous students contrast with immigrant students in that indigenous students have no other homeland to turn to in acquiring the heritage language, the proposed amendments are not about saving indigenous languages as if they were endangered species. These amendments are about building the intellectual and social-linguistic abilities of indigenous children in ways that strengthen them, their families and communities. These amendments are about restoring wholeness and wellness and integrity to communities whose languages have been forcibly removed. These amendments are about people, and what kind of nation we want to be twenty, fifty, one hundred years from now. The language choices children and their families make need not be either-or ones; "indigenous" and "modern" need not be oppositional terms. The Native American Languages Act Amendments of 2000 will create new educational opportunities for children to develop their command of the indigenous language while acquiring English and the abilities they need to succeed in the wider world. The provision of such opportunities is one of the foundations of democracy and equality, and that is why these amendments are so needed and deserving of our support.Recommendations for Modifications to S.2688 (suggested modifications are underlined): 1. Sec. 3, Definitions: Modify Section 103 (5) as follows: The term "Native American" means an Indian, Native Hawaiian, Alaska Native, or Native American Pacific Islander. 2. Sec. 4, Native American Language Survival Schools: Consistent with second language acquisition research which shows that five to seven years of cumulative second-language instruction are required to develop cognitive-academic proficiency in a second language, and in order to ensure that Native American Language Survival Schools serve a full range of eligible students, including those with some background in the Native American language who are not fluent speakers, modify Sec. 108, (c), "Use of Funds," (1) (D), "Required Uses," as follows: ensure that students who are not fluent Native American language speakers achieve fluency in a Native American language within five years of continuous enrollment, as measured by locally appropriate language assessments. Section (c), "Use of Funds," (2) (A), "Permissible Uses": include Native American Language Nests and other educational programs for students who are not fluent Native American language speakers but who seek to establish fluency through instruction in a Native American language or to re-establish fluency, with funding priority to descendants of Native American language speakers; 3. Sec. 110. (a), Demonstration Programs: To encourage additional demonstration sites and ensure their responsiveness and effectiveness in terms of the goals of the 1990/92 Native American Languages Act and proposed 2000 amendments, add Section (e) to include: (1) criteria for becoming a demonstration site; and (2) criteria for evaluation of and continuing status as a demonstration site.

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[7] C. Suns, "Community-Based Models for Indigenous Language Revitalization." Keynote Address, 21st Annual American Indian Language Development Institute, June 23, 2000. See also R. Benjamin: R. Pecos, & M.E. Romero (1996), "Language Revitalization Efforts in the Pueblo de Cochiti: Becoming 'Literal' in an Oral Society," in Indigenous Literacies in the Americas: Language Planning from the Bottom Up, N.H. Hornbergs, Ed. (Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyer, pp. 115-136).

[8] L. Hinton (1994), Flutes of Fire (Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books); see also Hinton (1998), "Language Loss and Revitalization in California: Overview," International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 132, pp. 83-93.

[9] D.R. Kipp (2000), Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned for Native Language Activists Developing Their Own Tribal Language Programs (Browning, MT: Piegan Institute Cut-Bank Language Immersion School, p. 7).

[10] R.E. Littlebear, "Preface," in Stabilizing Indigenous Languages, G. Canton, Ed. (Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University Center far Excellence in Education, p. xiii).

[11] E. Parsons-Yazzie (1995), A Study of Reasons for Navajo Language Attrition as Perceived by Navajo Speaking Parents. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northern Arizona University, Center for Excellence in Education.

Indigenous Community-based Language Education in the USA

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Nearly two million American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians reside in the USA, representing over 500 tribes and 175 distinct languages. The uniqueness of tribal communities notwithstanding, all indigenous peoples in the USA share a history as the targets of federal policies aimed at eradicating their languages and lifeways. The legacy of those policies has been Native language loss and sociocultural dislocation, even as indigenous students have experienced considerable failure in English-only schools. Here, we argue that indigenous language education must be historically situated and as such, viewed as both an affirmation of self-determination and an act of resistance to linguistic oppression. Drawing on published accounts and first-hand testimony, we present several cases that illustrate the role of indigenous language education programmes in strengthening indigenous languages and promoting indigenous language and education rights. We conclude with an analysis of the continuing problems these community-based initiatives face, their promise and limitations as agents of language renewal, and their role as catalysts for linguistic self-determination and educational reform.

> If a child learns only the non-Indian way of life, you have lost your child.

This statement by an elder from the Navajo community of Rough Rock, Arizona, speaks volumes on the legacy of English-only schooling that has characterised nearly two centuries of federally controlled American Indian education. But the words also breathe hope, attesting to the importance of indigenous control over indigenous schooling. In this paper, we draw on our combined experiences in American Indian education to analyse indigenous community-based language education in the USA. Lucille Watahomigie is Hualapai, and the founder of the internationally recognised Hualapai Bilingual Academic Excellence Program in Peach Springs, Arizona. Teresa McCarty is a non-Indian anthropologist and educator who has worked for 18 years with the bilingual programmes at Rough Rock, Peach Springs, and elsewhere in the United States. Here, we focus on the evolution and current status of these programmes, especially as they have influenced language maintenance and the promotion of indigenous language and education rights. We begin with some demographics and historical antecedents.

The Sociocultural Context of American Indian Education

There are today nearly two million American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians in the USA, representing over 500 federally recognised tribes

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and 175 distinct languages.[1] Nearly a quarter of the indigenous population are school-age children who attend federal schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), tribal or community-controlled schools funded through grants and contracts with the federal government, public schools, private schools, and mission or parochial schools. This diversity of schools and cultural-linguistic backgrounds is compounded by inter- and intra-group differences in Native language fluencies and literacy histories.

The uniqueness of individual tribal and community situations notwithstanding, all indigenous peoples in the USA share a history as the targets of federal policies aimed at eradicating their languages and lifeways. The statement of Commissioner of Indian Affairs J. D. Atkins in 1887 sums up the role of schools in implementing those policies:

> Schools should be established, which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialects should be blotted out and the English language substituted ... The object of greatest solicitude should be to break down the prejudices of tribe among the Indians; to blot out the boundary lines which divide them into distinct nations, and fuse them into one homogenous mass. *Uniformity in language will do this — nothing else will.* (Atkins, cited in Crawford, 1992: 48; emphases added)

Schooling for indigenous students began under Christian missionaries, some of whom, supported by federal funds, established bilingual programmes, as in the case of Choctaws in nineteenth century American Board schools (Noley, 1979). The intent of these schools, however, was not to support indigenous languages and cultures, but rather to use the local language as a vehicle for religious conversion (Spring, 1996; cf. Durie, this volume). In 1819 the *Civilization Act* formalised the federal responsibility for American Indian education. The source of that responsibility is the government-to-government relationship between tribes and the US Congress which constitutes the cornerstone of tribal sovereignty and the legal and moral basis for federal education services.

Those services and the sovereign rights tribes enjoy have come at huge cost. Under government programmes lasting well into the twentieth century, Indian education became synonymous with forced assimilation. The primary means for this was the removal of children to distant boarding schools, many located at the military forts which had served as staging areas for government campaigns against the tribes only a few years before. Stories abound of young children being kidnapped from their homes and taken by government-deputised Indian agents on horseback to the boarding schools (see, e.g. Sekaquaptewa, 1969). There, children faced an English-only curriculum, militaristic discipline, inadequate food, overcrowded conditions, and a manual labour system which required them to work half-days in the kitchens and boiler rooms, allowing the government to operate the schools on a budget of 11 cents per pupil per day (Meriam *et al.*, 1928).

One of the strongest memories of people who attended boarding schools involves the lengths to which their teachers, administrators, and dormitory attendants went to ensure children did not 'revert' to the mother tongue. A Hualapai elder recalls being 'thrown into the government boarding school',

> where I found that they were trying to knock out the Hualapai part of me.

> A number of us have been through that. We found when we spoke in our language, they used belts and hoses to really knock it out of us. But it stayed with us ... (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997: 101)

In the last 30 years, these policies and practices have been replaced by ones intended to encourage indigenous control over education and the meaningful incorporation of indigenous languages and cultural knowledge into school curricula. In 1968, Congress passed the *Bilingual Education Act*, and in 1972 and 1975, Congress approved, respectively, the *Indian Education Act* and the *Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act*. The Bilingual and Indian Education Acts provide for bilingual education programmes and teacher preparation in indigenous languages; the Self-Determination Act enables tribes and indigenous communities to contract with the federal government to operate their own schools. Together, these three pieces of legislation established the legal and financial framework for the emergence of new, community-based language education programmes.

Such programmes must overcome the residue of the past which, as one teacher recently told us, convinced many people that 'our language is second best'. For elderly individuals such as the Hualapai man quoted above, the Native language and culture did indeed 'stay with us'. For others, especially younger adults, the boarding school experience and racist messages received from the dominant society induced shame and ambivalence about their language and their very identities. A Hualapai youth explains:

> I was not taught my language. My mom says my dad didn't want us to learn, because when he was going through school he saw what difficulty his peers were having because they had learned Hualapai first, and the schools were all taught in the English language. And so we were not taught, my brothers and I. (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997: 101)

As this young man testifies, one consequence of past schooling practices has been Native language loss, even as indigenous students have experienced considerable failure in English-only schools. A recent Indian Nations at Risk Task Force attributes these educational outcomes to linguistically and culturally irrelevant curricula, low educator expectations, loss of tribal elders' wisdom, and a 'lack of opportunity for parents and communities to develop a real sense of participation' (US Department of Education, 1991: 7–8).

Contemporary language and education issues in American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities must be understood within this social-historical context. Indigenous community-based language education is more than an academic enterprise; it is both an act of self-determination and of resistance — a contestation of oppression and language restrictionism. To be sure, tremendous differences exist between tribal communities in terms of their educational histories, interests and needs. We do not and cannot speak for them all. What all groups share, however, is a unique status as the first North Americans and hence, a singular struggle to preserve their linguistic, cultural, and education rights.

In the sections that follow, we illustrate some dimensions of that struggle through an examination of several cases. We begin with two influential bilingual/bicultural programmes on the Navajo Nation, the largest Indian reservation in the USA with a population of over 250,000. We then consider the Hualapai Bilingual Program, an example from a tribe of 1700. These cases are followed by a discussion of a Yup'ik teacher-leader group in southwestern Alaska, the master-apprentice language renewal efforts among Native Californians, and language immersion programmes in Hawai'i. Together, these cases illustrate a range of settings, from large tribes such as Navajo with up to 160,000 Native language speakers, to smaller language groups such as Hualapai, to yet smaller groups such as those in California with no remaining child speakers. We also cover a diversity of school institutional arrangements, including BIA, contract, and public schools, as well as grassroots movements which have arisen outside of schools.

Throughout our discussion we make use of published accounts as well as the oral testimony of indigenous people. Much of the Rough Rock data, for example, derive from McCarty's long-term ethnographic work there and recent oral history interviews conducted in honour of the school's 30th anniversary. Similarly, the discussion of Peach Springs includes Watahomigie's recent community interviews on language attitudes and change. These and other first-person accounts enable us to see more clearly the deeply personal attachment of speakers to their languages, the nestedness of language in cultural identity, and, given the rapid language shift under way in indigenous communities, the enormity of the task at hand.

'What Had Been Unimaginable Became Doable'

In the summer of 1966, five respected leaders from the reservation-interior community of Rough Rock signed a contract with the federal government that inaugurated the Rough Rock Demonstration School.[2] This single act not only transformed the community of Rough Rock, but helped transform formal education for indigenous communities throughout the United States. For Rough Rock was the first school in the USA to have a locally elected, all-Indian governing board, and the first to teach in and through the Native language and culture. Robert Roessel, Jr, the school's first director explains its historic mission:

> The philosophy ... permeating Rough Rock Demonstration School is that Navaho people have the right and the ability to direct and provide leadership in the education of their children ... [T]his is the challenge and the opportunity awaiting this school at this community. (Roessel, 1966: 1–2, see also, Fettes, this volume)

Rough Rock gave new meaning to the Navajo word for school, *ólta'*, which, under the boarding school regime, meant 'a learning place associated with the white man's world' (Dick & McCarty, 1997: 73). Reflecting the Navajos' name for themselves, Diné, Rough Rock is known as *Diné Bi'ólta'* The People's School. From the outset, two overriding principles have guided the school: first, that the community has the right and the responsibility to control its own schooling, and second, that Navajo language and culture should be at the heart of all school programmes (Dick & McCarty, 1997).

In its early years, the demonstration school launched the first publishing centre gual/bicultural education, it has nonetheless created obstacles to the bilingual programme's success (McCarty, 1989, 1993; cf. Fettes, this volume).

Rough Rock represents the first, most promising efforts and the continuing possibilities for education in and through indigenous languages. Rough Rock is 'the most important educational experiment ... in this half-century of Indian education', bilingual educator Wayne Holm stated in a 1996 interview; 'people will never be able to go back to what it was before'. Anita Pfeiffer, Rough Rock's first elementary school principal and the former director of the Navajo Division of Education, describes Rough Rock and the local control movement it launched as a major paradigm shift in Indian education: 'What had been unimaginable only a generation before', she observes, 'had, in fact, become doable' (Pfeiffer, 1993).

Rock Point: A Quiet Revolution

> People were shocked when we suggested using Navajo. Nobody has ever suggested using Navajo in the school to learn, so how can you do that? School is to learn in English. But at Rock Point you could do that, and convince them. (Agnes Holm, Co-founder of the Rock Point, Arizona, Bilingual Program)

The community of Rock Point is located 40 miles northeast of Rough Rock. Like Rough Rock, it is a small, Navajo-majority community of about 1300, situated on a high, arid, red-rock plateau. The school, a trading post, a mission, and the chapter house (the seat of local government) constitute the community's physical, sociopolitical, and economic centre. Agnes and Wayne Holm went to Rock Point in 1960, where they began, in their words, a 'modest ESL program' (Holm & Holm, 1995: 145). As Agnes Holm's statement, given in a 1996 interview, suggests, many outside Rock Point — particularly the BIA — were sceptical of the school's early explorations of Navajo literacy (Holm & Holm, 1995). But in 1971, the school received a Title VII (Bilingual Education Act) grant, enabling it to implement a true Navajo-English bilingual programme. 'Parents agreed to the transition', Holm and Holm (1990: 174) state, 'because they felt that the school's efforts to date had indeed made a difference in their children's education'.

In 1972, Rock Point followed Rough Rock by 'going contract', signing an agreement with the BIA to run the local school. The school board's first act was to hire an entirely new staff, eliminating the role of teacher aide and equalising the statuses of English and Navajo language teachers. Navajo teachers and community members now knew that their children's education did not depend on 'the presence of Anglos or diplomas' (Holm & Holm, 1990: 175). English and Navajo language teachers worked as a team at both ends of the classroom with students alternating between the two teachers and independent work. The school later implemented an Applied Literacy Program to involve students in community-based research and publishing (Holm & Holm, 1990, 1995; cf. McLaughlin, 1992).

Perhaps because of its sceptics, Rock Point has systematically documented the progress of its students in what is now a K-12 programme that develops initial literacy in Navajo, then deepens students' Native language proficiency through content area study and formal language classes in Navajo. Student outcomes have not disappointed; they have been as significant in English as they have been in the mother tongue. 'The Board stated that their students would do at least as well as [BIA] students on whatever standardised test the [BIA] used', Holm and Holm (1990: 184) report; 'they did so. More impressive, they did so by a greater margin at each successive grade'.

In their 1990 retrospective on 25 years of the Rock Point programme's evolution, Holm and Holm describe the four-fold empowerment of the Navajo school board, staff, parents and students. Initially struggling against an entrenched federal bureaucracy resistant to Indian self-determination, the board convinced its doubters of the soundness of a bilingual/bicultural educational alternative. Navajo staff members, none of whom had had a teacher who used Navajo as the medium of instruction, validated the power of their own bilingual and bicultural pedagogy. And parents gained access to and control over an historically alien institution. Perhaps most importantly, Rock Point graduates 'came to value their Navajo-ness' (Holm & Holm, 1990: 184) and to see themselves as 'succeeding because of, not despite, that Navajo-ness'.

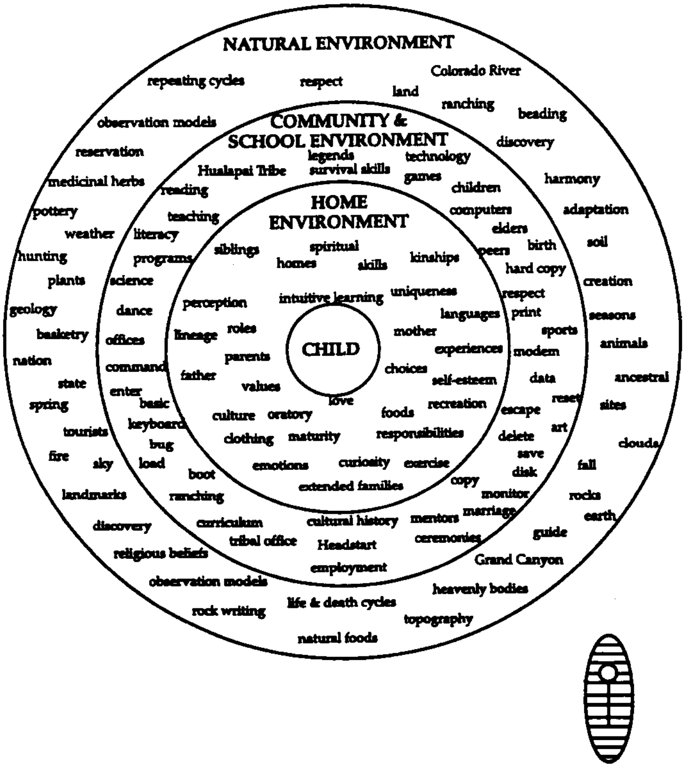
Hualapai Literacy and Language Maintenance

Of more than 200 indigenous languages still spoken in North America, Hualapai is among the smaller groups, with about 1500 speakers. Like all indigenous North American languages, Hualapai is endangered: whereas just 30 years ago nearly all Hualapai children came to school speaking Hualapai, just 50% of the current school-age population speaks the language (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997: 95). These are grave concerns within the community of Peach Springs, Arizona, where most Hualapai tribal members live. Through its bilingual/bicultural programme and its emphasis on Hualapai literacy, the public school at Peach Springs seeks to help children develop their Hualapai proficiency while preparing them with English and other skills needed for full participation in the non-Indian world.

The town of Peach Springs sits amongst desert foothills just south of the Grand Canyon, on the edge of the million-acre Hualapai reservation. Straddling the Santa Fe Railroad and US Highway 66, Peach Springs includes the K-8 school — the only educational facility within 40 miles — a post office, general store, two gas stations, and the tribal and US Public Health Service offices. Federally funded housing lines both sides of the Santa Fe Railroad tracks.

Wage labour, cattle ranching, and settlement in the town have replaced the Hualapais' traditional seasonal round of hunting and gathering. Yet a strong core of the traditional lifeway remains intact. Kinship ties, food-sharing, ceremonial gatherings, and traditional forms of oratory, arts, and crafts all continue to unite the community. Storytelling and dance activities provide new forms for ancient customs, and for transmitting tribal history and the Hualapai language.

For the past 20 years, the Peach Springs School has worked to capitalise on these community resources in children's education. Unlike Navajo, which has been committed to writing for well over a century, developing a practical orthography in Hualapai only began with the founding of the bilingual programme in 1978. This meant that the programme staff had to start 'from scratch'. Underwritten by a federal Title VII grant, the programme first identified the distinguishing characteristics of the community. This led to the creation of a 'child-centred' curriculum in which the natural and social environments are viewed as the foundation for, and as enveloping, children's cognitive, linguistic, and affective growth (see Figure 1). The idea is to bring the everyday, informal experiences of the home and community directly into the process of school-based learning (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997: 103; cf. Watahomigie & Yamamoto, 1987).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choices
values
self-esteem
love
recreation
culture
oratory
foods
clothing
maturity
responsibilities
emotions
curiosity
exercise
extended families
Baby in cradle (Education begins at birth)

Figure 1 Hualapai bilingual/bicultural curriculum framework: The child's interactive learning environment

At the same time, the staff worked with elders and academic linguists to create a practical orthography for Hualapai. 'We decided we were going to become our own linguists', the present bilingual programme coordinator states. Over time, the bilingual programme staff developed a grammar, a dictionary, attractively illustrated children's literature, and a sequence of thematic language- and culture-based teacher guides. Recently, the school introduced an interactive technology component which involves students in videography and computer publishing in two languages. These instructional innovations have led the Hualapai Bilingual Program to be recognised as a national Bilingual Academic Excellence Project, and to be adopted by other Indian schools in the USA and Canada.

Hualapai students' academic success has stimulated other language-reinforcing processes. 'When I was in grade school', one mother remembers, 'I was punished because I spoke my language, [so] I turned against my language':

> [When] I had my kids, they went through school here. And they started this bilingual program with my kids, and I was against it because of what I went through. And then my oldest daughter ... told me she learned more with bilingual ... so that turned me around again. So I really got into it, and it was interesting to know my own language, how to write it and speak it. (Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997: 106)

Literacy in Hualapai can thus be seen as an affirmation of indigenous identity which simultaneously provides a proactive bridge to English and the wider society. Indeed, precisely *because* of its effectiveness in promoting children's academic success, Hualapai is viewed by its speakers as a valued commodity. 'I'd like to have my grandchildren learn our tribal language', one elder commented, 'because it they don't ... nobody will ever speak Indian again'. The Hualapai Bilingual Program is one community-based effort attempting to ensure that such a loss does not occur.

Native Alaskan Teacher Leaders

Alaska has a total of 20 indigenous languages, only two of which, according to Krauss (1998), are being transmitted as child languages. In this situation, Native educators are working both to maintain their languages and to access and make use of the traditional knowledge those languages encode. Lipka and Ilutsik (1995) provide a model for this in their work with Yup'ik communities in southwestern Alaska. They note the widespread belief that Yup'ik 'gets in the way' of English and western knowledge. To reverse these attitudes, they write,

> Not only do we want the elders to share their knowledge with us, but we want to show the larger community — particularly the next generation — that the elders' knowledge counts, that their language holds wisdom, and that their stories teach values, science and literacy. (Lipka & Ilutsik, 1995: 201)

To achieve this, Ilutsik, a Yup'ik teacher, and Lipka, an ethnographer and teacher educator, founded a school change group, the *Ciulistet* (Teacher Leaders). The Ciulistet is composed of Yup'ik teachers, teacher aides, and elders who work collaboratively on the co-creation of curriculum. Over several years the group has formalised an indigenous knowledge base in mathematics and science that also teaches Yup'ik language and culture. For example, the Ciulistet researched the mathematical and science concepts embedded in everyday fish camp experiences. 'Fish camps were chosen', Lipka (1994: 17) states, 'because Yup'ik people still engage in catching and processing fish for the year, and their work groups are still organised in traditional ways'. By video-taping fish camp activities and analysing the video-tapes, the Ciulistet was able to articulate an indigenous knowledge base that included mathematics and science as well as the complex social relationships intrinsic to Yup'ik subsistence. Yup'ik elders also have provided curricular content on hunting, trapping, weather forecasting, the geometry of parka-making, and storyknifing, a traditional storytelling form in the snow or mud using a knife and specific symbols to represent various characters (Ilutsik, 1994; Lipka, 1994; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; cf. Fettes, this volume).

In this learning-teaching process, Lipka (1994: 18) writes, 'Two-way learning occurred, and both western and Yup'ik systems were valued'. Yup'ik students gained knowledge from their own communities which could then be applied to abstract mathematical and scientific concepts. Students see, for example, 'that mathematic systems have evolved from the concrete to the abstract, are based on familiar patterns and ways of ordering, and relate to concrete and cultural symbols' (Lipka, 1994: 25). And Yup'ik community members have had a direct voice in their children's education — a process that, as Ilutsik (1994: 10) describes it, involved a painful but necessary transformation:

> Many of our own people and many other educators were painfully aware that we were different, and that difference — based on culture and language — had been internalized in a negative sense. In that respect, we had to get over our feeling of inferiority, especially if we were truly going to be the 'leaders' in education as the term Ciulistet implies.

This transformation, Lipka (1994: 26) concludes, occurred 'by valuing Yup'ik language and knowledge and by providing an opportunity for elders and the school community to visualize the possible ways in which everyday tasks and knowledge can be a basis for learning in school'.

'Of All the Things I Know, I Know my Language Best': Language Renewal in California

In California, where 50 indigenous languages are spoken — none as a mother tongue by children — a radically different approach to Native language education is being tried. 'We cannot simply send people off to a community where their language is spoken all the time', linguist Leanne Hinton (1993: 13–14) observes; instead, Native speakers and their communities must create new language learning situations. With this goal in mind, a dozen indigenous communities in California are implementing master–apprentice programmes in which Native-speaking elders work with younger apprentices over a period of months and even years, collaborating in everyday activities and always communicating in the heritage language (Hinton, 1995, 1998).

As part of a study commissioned by the National Indian Policy Center, Christine Sims (1998) undertook a descriptive study of one such programme among the Karuks in northwestern California. Karuk has a tribal enrolment of over 2300, but only 10 to 12 fluent Karuk speakers. Karuk language loss, Sims writes, has occurred over at least three generations,

> … a process set into motion by historic events of the 1800s when the California Gold Rush began. The sudden intrusion of gold miners and settlers into traditional Karuk territory resulted in the devastating loss of life and homeland for the Karuks. This precipitated a rapid process of extensive language loss. (1998: 96)

As with other tribes, the language loss brought on by Anglo usurpations of Karuk lands was exacerbated by federal policies of compulsory schooling. Today, the remaining handful of elderly speakers is dispersed over several distant settlements. Encouraged by younger Karuks, some of these elders have become language mentors. There are now two Karuk master-apprentice teams who are involved in language immersion camps, public school activities, adult language courses, and the development of Karuk literacy materials. Sims writes of the teams:

> The uniqueness of the teams is first and foremost in the individual commitments and time this initiative requires. Teams meet at least once a week to work on language learning. [One] master-apprentice team … lives within walking distance of each other; the frequency of meetings in this case is constant. In this team of great-aunt and nephew, the … family also benefits from the language contact the elder speaker provides. (1998: 106)

Immersion camps involve even more community members in language learning organised around playing, eating, singing, dancing, storytelling and craft-making. 'Karuk instructors strive to keep the language environment filled with as much Karuk as possible', Sims (1998: 103) explains, including posting signs in Karuk as well as providing varied opportunities for oral communication in the heritage language. One local public school has also become involved in the tribe's language revitalisation efforts, supporting weekly Karuk lessons in which non-Indian classroom teachers as well as students learn Karuk together.

In her survey of California master-apprentice programmes, Hinton (1995: 10) reports that several apprentices have achieved conversational proficiency, and 'the heritage language is much more present' in households. But the benefits of such programmes, she maintains, must be measured by more than language fluency alone: Native language instructors have learned effective new teaching methods, and children have developed a sense of pride in their ancestral language (Hinton, 1995). In her language autobiography, Agnes Vera, a Yowlumne elder and master teacher, captures the power of the inter-generational connections fostered by this programme. 'Of all the things I know', she states, 'I know my language the best':

> … And now I'm working with my granddaughter Kerri, in her first year with the master–apprentice program … And I can see now how she is so hungry for the language … I just feel like I can't give her enough. But she says, 'Gramms, you've given me a lot. You've given me my language' (Vera, 1998: 81).

Hawaiian Immersion: 'It is Up to Them, the Children'

After being banned in public schools for 90 years, the Hawaiian language and culture were nearly decimated. Literacy, academic achievement, 'even the use of standard English among Native Hawaiians', all suffered (Kamanā & Wilson, 1996: 153). The island state of Hawai'i is now experiencing a Native language renaissance. Although there are less than 1,000 fluent speakers of Hawaiian, nearly 10,000 residents of the state claim to speak Hawaiian at home. 'These census figures', William Wilson (1998: 125; see also, this volume) confirms, 'are indicative of the increased status of speaking Hawaiian and a conscious effort by Hawaiians to use what they know of the language'.

Wilson, co-founder of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo immersion preschools, describes the remarkable grassroots social movement through which this renaissance occurred. The movement began at the University of Hawai'i with Hawaiian language classes, a weekly Hawaiian language talk show, a newsletter, student and teacher organisations, and the promotion of Hawaiian street names and Hawaiian-only camping trips to traditional areas. In 1978, Hawaiian was re-established as the state's co-official language and public schools were required to teach Hawaiian. But the key, Wilson relates, was bringing Hawaiian into children's socialisation at home:

> My wife, Kauanoe Kamanā ... and I were in the position to establish a Hawaiian speaking home in ... preparation for the birth of the first of our two children. Ours became the first Hawaiian speaking household outside Ni'ihau in almost 50 years. (1998: 131)

With other families, Wilson and Kamanā founded the 'Aha Pūnana Leo (Nest of Voices) preschool, supported by parentally paid tuition and parental labour. Parents also attended language classes and administered the schools through a parent committee. As students graduated from the preschools, Wilson, Kamanā and other families lobbied the state for Hawaiian-medium primary schools. By the late 1980s, Hawaiian-medium education was extended to grade six, and then, through high school. 'In three years', Wilson writes, 'the first students of Kula Kaipuni [Hawaiian-medium] high schools will graduate'. He continues:

> It is expected that Hawaiian-medium college courses that already exist will have expanded by then and that there also will be graduate-level study available in Hawaiian. A full educational system in Hawaiian thus will exist, but it must be strengthened and enlarged to the point where education through Hawaiian is widely available and includes the whole family, as at the Pūnana Leo. (1998: 134)

The Pūnana Leo now serve 175 children in nine full-day, 11-month preschools, providing instruction entirely in Hawaiian. In Hawaiian-medium elementary schools, children are educated in Hawaiian through fifth grade, when English is introduced as a subject, often through Hawaiian. Students also learn a third language (Kamanā & Wilson, 1996: 154). Student achievement in these programmes equals or surpasses that of Native Hawaiian children enrolled in English-medium schools, even in English language arts.

James Kaleiokalana Shintani, Jr, a Native speaker of Hawaiian from the island of Ni'ihau, says this of the future of his language:

> Today, I realise how valuable the Hawaiian language is for the children and our younger brothers and sisters, because this is an era that belongs to them. So it is good that we have these schools being established, the Pūnana Leo, the Kula Kaiapuni, and the Hawaiian language programmes, but it is up to them, the children, because, when they grow up and feel a sense of desire because of the value of their language, the value of their people, their land, and what grows upon their land, our land shall continue to have life and sovereignty. (Maka'ai *et al.*, 1998: 117)

Keli'ihoalani Nawahine'elua Kamanā Wilson, Wilson and Kamanā's teenage daughter, affirms Shintani's vision. 'I [am] still speaking Hawaiian', she says, 'and it will be so forever and ever and ever' (Maka'ai *et al.*, 1998: 121).

Problems and Possibilities

The cases presented here testify to the diversity of historical contexts and contemporary resources for indigenous community-based language education in the USA. Viewed as a whole, indigenous language education programmes have been a powerful force in the struggle for indigenous linguistic and educational rights. They have raised community consciousness and catalysed collective action for language renewal, while forging new and more effective ways of 'doing' western-style schooling. Moreover, these programmes have created new contexts for Native language literacy, facilitated the credentialing of indigenous teachers, and elevated the moral authority and instrumental value of indigenous languages in communities and schools.

Yet in practice, language rights have not guaranteed language maintenance, which ultimately depends on the home language choices of Native speakers. Such decisions are notoriously difficult for extra-familial institutions to control, even when those institutions are community-controlled (Fishman, 1984, 1991). Nevertheless, the cases of Rough Rock, Rock Point, Peach Springs, the Ciulistet, and initiatives to reintroduce indigenous languages in California and Hawai'i all demonstrate that much can be accomplished by small groups with great commitment. The challenge now is to expand these efforts to touch even more widely and directly the home language policies of speakers and their families.

Indigenous language education programmes are not the only resource to be marshalled in this effort. But, given the immensity of the language-loss crisis, they and their personnel constitute critical assets which cannot be overlooked. Cultivating these assets is a process that *can* be influenced by external institutions. In this regard, we note a number of promising developments. With the 1990 passage of the *Native American Languages Act* — legislation drafted by participants in indigenous language programmes throughout the USA — the federal government declared its policy to 'preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages' (Public Law 101-477, Sect. 104[1]). Though NALI funds have been meagre, they have supported some of the boldest new attempts at language renewal, including the California master-apprentice teams. Reinforcing those efforts, a recent Indian Nations at Risk Task Force and White House Conference on Indian Education called for federally funded programmes to assist students in learning their heritage language as either a first or second language (US Department of Education, 1991; White House Conference on Indian Education, 1992). Moreover, several tribes have established policies which proclaim their languages as official on tribal lands, and which advocate bilingual education programmes (Zepeda, 1990).

The need remains, however, for long-term, stable financial support for these initiatives. By virtue of treaty agreements and their federal trust status, reservation communities rely primarily on the federal government to provide education services. Funding for those services has historically been piecemeal and inconsistent, forcing tribes and educational personnel to knit together programmes from disparate and often competing legislative sources. Moreover, bilingual education policy in the USA has emphasised a compensatory, transitional approach and the quick transfer of students to English-only instruction. Not only is this antithetical to the policy of language conservation stated in the Native American Languages Act, this approach and the pattern of inconsistent federal funding have hindered the long-term processes of Native teacher preparation and curriculum development.

We conclude, then, with a call for a stable but locally flexible system of educational delivery — a concept suggested by Lakota educator Gay Kingman more than two decades ago (Kingman, 1978), and reiterated by the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force and White House Conference delegates. Such a system would lend needed assistance to language planning at the local level, or what Hornberger (1997) calls 'bottom-up' language planning. 'If a child learns only the non-Indian way of life, you have lost your child.' We return to the elder's statement with which we began, and it's an imperative charge. Indigenous language education programmes have an essential role to play in fulfilling this charge, but they cannot act alone (cf. Fettes; May, this volume). They must be coupled with other bottom-up efforts which promote the transmission of indigenous languages in the home, and with more consistent top-down policies that ensure adequate, stable, and long-term support.

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Notes

1. Following protocol established by the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (US Department of Education, 1991), we use the terms American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian to refer to peoples indigenous to what is now the USA. 'American Indian education' refers to policies and practices which have historically, and which continue to impact all of these peoples.
2. For a detailed explanation of the Rough Rock School's founding, see Dick and McCarty (1997) and McCarty (1989).

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Statement by Michael E. Krauss, Director Emeritus, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, July 20, 2000, at Hearing on S.2688, the Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2000.

First, to help evaluate what is at stake here, and to appreciate how diverse our uniquely American languages are - in a nation that calls diversity its strength - I shall present some basic statistics, with figures of which few of us may be aware. I shall then turn to show how many of these languages still survive, generally, and in each of the United States, and then evaluate their viability in terms of age of those who still speak those languages, to show exactly how close we are to losing them - unless we face these facts and finally take adequate measures, the immersion-type programs provided for by the Amendments to the Native American Languages Act which this hearing is about.

No one can know how many languages were spoken as of 1492 or 1620 or even 1776 in what is now the United States. Their number was in any case well over 300. Undoubtedly many languages disappeared without a trace, not only because languages have always been replaced by others throughout human prehistory as well as history, but also because disturbance and disease caused by European arrivals very often spread like wildfire through parts of this continent well ahead of the actual frontiers of direct European contact and record. Languages of which we have some knowledge or documentation themselves number about 300. (In counting "languages" there is more often than not the problem of distinguishing "dialect" from "language." The chief criterion used here is that of mutual intelligibility. Speakers of dialects of one language can understand each other without much practice or learning, whereas speakers of different languages cannot. There are of course often many shadings between language and dialect, but we may arrive at that figure of 300 languages by European-like standards, whereby say Spanish and Portugese, German and Dutch, Russian and Polish are different languages, but perhaps not Swedish and Norwegian, or Russian and Ukrainian.)

To appreciate better the degree or depth of diversity in this comparison, remember that e.g. Spanish, French, Italian are closely related, very similar indeed, being variants of Romance; German, English, Norwegian likewise, of Germanic; Russian, Polish, Bulgarian likewise, of Slavic; and furthermore that, in turn, Romance, Germanic, Slavic are demonstrably branches descended from a single ancestor, of the family called Indo-European. All the languages of Europe are Indo-European, except for Basque, and for Finnish-Estonian-Hungarian, so all of "traditional" Europe has only these three language families. Ancient genetic relationships older than about 5,000 years in time-depth can be highly controversial among comparative linguists; however, we can safely say that at the same level of clarity and agreement we have that Europe has only those 3 language families, Native North America easily has 5 to 15 times that many language families - to provide some rough idea of how the degree of North American language diversity compares with the European. Some American families such as Athabaskan or Algonkian are very widespread and include dozens of languages, while another dozen or so families consist of a single language like Haida, Zuni, or Natchez, like only Basque in Europe, isolates with no genetic relations yet proven. Languages of different American families like Eskimo and Athabaskan, Uto-Aztecan and Iroquois, can be as different as English and Chinese, Finnish and Zulu. Here I shall only add - a point to return to later - that the texture or density of this Native American diversity is - as true for the world in general - very uneven, and that by far the greatest diversity is in California, still with about 50 languages, of 10-15 families.

Though human languages are very unequal in the number of speakers they may have, very unequal in the political and technological or economic power they may have, that inequality has nothing whatever to do with the nature of the languages themselves; the power or fortunes of English or Japanese, Navajo or Passamaquoddy, have nothing to do with quality of their verbs or vowels, or the complexity or logic of their grammars. God created all languages equal. There are no "primitive" languages. Every human language is an exquisitely complex intellectual masterpiece, created and polished by untold generations, as the ever perfect expression of their culture and experience, of intimate knowledge of their specific environment, and of their own special interpretation of universal human experience. They are our different ways of thinking, and of understanding the world. All languages are as complex and divine a mystery as a living organism. All languages have not only the same human intellectual level, but also have the same inherent potential to develop - provided they are given the right to do so. In our country, until 1990 only English was given that right, to the exclusion of all Native American languages.

After centuries of tragedy, at last with the Native American Languages Act of 1990/1992, our American languages were explicitly recognized as an asset to our nation, and as deserving of support, instead of being considered, at best, an impediment to the progress and welfare of their speakers. (J. D. C. Adkins, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1887: "Teaching an Indian youth in his own barbarous dialect is a positive detriment to him." President Grover Cleveland, *New York Times*, April 4, 1888: "It will not do to permit these wards of the nation, in their preparation to become their own masters, to indulge in their barbarous language.") The recent radical policy shift cannot, however, so suddenly reverse the loss incurred, or reverse the negative processes so systematically set in motion through generations of repression. In fact we are finally at this hearing now to recognize what is really needed to reverse these processes. It is certainly high time, the eleventh hour.

In that connection, I shall turn again to some statistics on where we stand at this point. The figures are of course only approximate. A truly adequate account of the viability of Native U.S. languages would require skilled observation of the language situation in every Native American community, at one extreme the degree to which children actually communicate with elders and with each other in their heritage language - and at the other extreme whether there still is at least one person, no doubt very old, who actually still could carry on a conversation in the language, or who remembers even some of it; if there is not, the language is extinct. Such adequate investigation nationwide would take someone ten or twenty years to do, or a skilled crew of five or so perhaps two to four years – maybe feasible for a million dollars, especially with the help of regional or local consultants – certainly a project worth consideration.

Short of such a survey, for the moment, I can only provide an approximation from data, mostly obtained from previous limited surveys and from specialist consultants, in connection with the 1990/1992 Native American Languages Act. The two documents appended to the present statement, to which I here refer, are (1) the January 1992 version of the unpublished "Number and Viability of Native American Languages by State" which I compiled and submitted to Senator Murkowski for his use as a sponsor of the Act, and (2) my article entitled "The condition of Native American Languages: the need for realistic assessment and action," published in the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 132.9-21, 1998, edited by our co-panelist Teresa McCarty. The first published version of these statistics is in my 1992 statement in the *Hearing before the Select Committee on Indian Affairs. United States Senate. 102nd Congress. Second Session. On S.2044* (*Senate Hearing 102-809,* p. 18-22). Quoting myself from the 1998 article I reminisced that the 1992 hearing "was ably chaired by Senator Inouye of Hawaii, who noted in his opening remarks that there are more Native American languages spoken than some people think – 'perhaps 50 or 60.' I was able to open my testimony with the good news that the senator's estimate was in fact very low, and that the number of Native North American languages still spoken in the United States alone [i.e. not counting Canada] was 155." That is indeed the good news, that over one half of the languages known to be spoken in the U.S. are still with us, not extinct, by the definition above – very remarkable, in fact powerful testimony to the cultural and spiritual strength of Native America.

Since the early 1990's the most significant update to those figures comes from a 1994 report by Leanne Hinton and Yolanda Montijo which increases the number of California languages to about 50, from the 30 that I had listed in 1992; however, that was not by adding languages thought to be extinct, but rather by a much finer definition of languages previously classed as dialects. That raises the number of Native American languages still extant in the U.S. to 175 (of an original total now also 20 higher than ca. 300).

The big question facing us, however, is this: For how much longer will these languages still be spoken? True, over half of our languages are still with us after all these 500 or 200 years, of adversity, but at the rate things have been going until recently, or as I put it, "unless there is radical change and success at reversal of language shift," the next 60 years will see the extinction of 155 languages, all but 20 of the remaining 175.

To explain, I divide the extant languages into four classes:

Class A: Still spoken by all generations including children;
Class B: Spoken only by parental generation and up;
Class C: Spoken only by grandparental generation and up;
Class D: Spoken only by the very oldest, over 70, usually fewer than 10 persons – nearly

extinct.

The following figures are now five to ten years old, and would by now in most cases have to be considered somewhat generous, were it not for one all-important new factor: the classification is based on unidirectionality, not allowing e.g. for children speaking the language again after having skipped a generation or more. It thus does not account for gain, now documented only in a few cases, true, but the crucial issue for the amendments we are considering. Without counting that, the figures are as follows, at best: only 20 languages (11%) are in Class A, still spoken by children, by far the smallest class; 30 (17%) are in Class B, parental generation and up; 70 (40%) are in Class C, grandparental generation and up, the largest class; and 55 (31%) are in Class D, nearly extinct, the next largest class. The California increase - alas - added only to Classes C and D, 10 each. Without reversal of language shift, at the rate things were going, and figuring that the youngest speakers reach the age of 80, then accordingly, most of Class D would be lost by the year 2010, leaving 120 U.S. languages; Class C would be lost by 2040, leaving 50; and Class B by 2060, leaving only the 20 languages in Class A, those still spoken by children now. However, even those best-off languages are spoken by only some of the children, as in the case of Navajo, in most cases now a minority, as in the case of Yupik, or of Hawaiian (only the Ni'ihau children - not counting those who are becoming fluent speakers in the survival programs we are now considering). Without those immersion-type programs, as trends continue, though 175 of the 300+ historically known languages native to the U.S. have somehow in some sense survived extreme adversity to this day, the first 60 years of this century would see the extinction of about 90% of those survivors, and perhaps none would survive the whole century, even as only a memory. We are at the precipice.

Of the 20 languages with some children speakers, about 12 are in Arizona and New Mexico, a relative bastion of Native American language maintenance: Navajo, Western and perhaps Mescalero Apache, Hopi, Zuni, Havasupai-Hualapai, Jemez, Northern Tiwa, Eastern Keres, Tohono O'odham, one small group of Southern Paiute, perhaps still Cocopa, and Yaqui. The rest are St. Lawrence Island and Central Yupik in Alaska (in perhaps 17 of 68 villages); Hawaiian only on the tiny island of Ni'ihau - not counting the survival school children - everywhere else the speakers are 70 or older; presumably some Mikasuki in Florida, Choctaw in Mississippi, Lakota-Dakota in some places, presumably some Cherokee in Oklahoma, and perhaps Koasati in Louisiana. Children speakers of Native American languages in other states are either highly exceptional individuals, e.g. raised by conservative grandparents, or come from recent survival-school type programs. New York, for example still has 5 extant languages, all Iroquoian, 3 in Class C, 2 in Class D, but there are now reportedly again children speakers of Mohawk, from successful community language survival programs.

For all U.S. languages state by state I shall here summarize the results of the 1991-2 survey I presented to Senator Murkowski. Twenty-nine states still had one or more local living native language. Of these states, 17 had three or more such languages. I shall list these states in the order of the number of different languages in each, followed in parentheses by the hyphenated four-figure "profile" of the number of languages in each viability class, A, B, C, D, in that order. California, with by far the largest total number, 50, comes first, with the profile 0-2-18-30, meaning that most California languages, 30 of them, were nearly extinct (a few of those might already have been in fact extinct, and several more might be by now), 18 were still spoken by grandparental generation, 2 by parental (Mohave and perhaps Northern Paiute), and there were at that time no reported children speakers of any language native to California. For a listing of the name of each of the actual languages in each category, state by state, I refer to the appended 1992 document. Many languages are extant in more than one state, by original distribution or by historical movement (usually displacement), but I am not counting relatively recent movements, e.g. the thousands of Navajos in Los Angeles; a language may be in different viability classes in different states, e.g. Cherokee with presumably some children in places in Oklahoma (A-C?), but not in North Carolina (C?). Furthermore, in many cases of languages in a complex of more than one community, the classification may be a range, e.g. A through C (A-C) as in the case of Oklahoma Cherokee or Alaskan Yupik, or it might be highly discontinuous, as especially Hawaiian, A only on Ni'ihau, D everywhere else (until recently). In all complex cases (of both types), in the following numerical profiles each such language is counted only in the class of its highest/strongest segment. Thus, bearing in mind that classing languages like Hawaiian or Yupik as A, where in fact only some children in a minority of locations in the language area are fluent speakers of the language, introduces a very misleading bias, we may now consider the listing of the 17 states with 3 or more languages as follows, in descending order of their total number of languages, followed in parentheses by the "profile" (optimized as warned above) of the number of those languages in those classes A-B-C-D in that order.

California	50 (0-2-18-30)	New York	5 (0-0-3-2)
Oklahoma	21 (1-2-12-6)	Wisconsin	5 (0-2-1-2)
Alaska	20 (2-7-10-1)	Idaho	5 (0-2-2-1)
Washington	15 (0-0-8-7)	Nevada	4 (0-2-2-0)
Arizona	12 (6-4-2-0)	Utah	3 (1-1-1-0)
New Mexico	11 (5-5-0-1)	Minnesota	3 (0-1-2-0)
Montana	11 (0-3-7-1)	Nebraska	3 (0-1-2-0)
Oregon	8 (0-1-3-4)	Kansas	3? (0-0-2-1)
North Dakota	6 (0-1-4-1)		

Five more states have two: Wyoming (0-1-1-0), South Dakota (0-1-0-1), Michigan (0-0-2-0), Maine (0-0-1-1), Florida (1-1-0-0); and seven states have one: Louisiana and Mississippi (1-0-0-0), Texas and Iowa (0-1-0-0), North Carolina and Colorado probably (0-0-1-0), and also Hawaii (1-0-0-0) but that especially with the qualifications mentioned above.

[These figures are re-presented in fully tabular form appended to this report.]

None of these figures in themselves give any idea of the size or numerical importance within the state or nationally of the Native American populations involved, either as speakers or non-speakers of the heritage languages. Such figures have their own significance, of course, but the present survey is even further from being adequate to present those. Perhaps the systematic survey suggested above could also provide that very important information. Hawaiian again is an extreme. Hawaii is perhaps the only state so far as we know that has had only one language, of a people who still form such a large part of the state population, and which once was the language of a government and extensive literature.

Native American languages were once spoken in what are now each of the 50 states. Of the 21 states which have no surviving local native language and also of the 29 which still do, several states have local populations whose languages are now extinct, which now have no native speakers, but which are documented in some form well enough that on the basis of that documentation the language has a real possibility of being revived. The best known instance of that process is Hebrew, which had no native speakers at all for most of two millennia, but which was assiduously studied and cultivated with fervent dedication in scholarly and ceremonial domains, to become spoken again by children, first only in Jerusalem of the 1890s. Without that documentation, especially in the form of a highly respected text, the maintenance in any form and eventual revival of Hebrew would of course never have been possible. It is interesting to compare the linguistic quality of the documentation of Hebrew with that of many, potentially still the majority, of Native American languages. For example, only the consonants of what God spake unto Moses were written down; the vowels were basically left out. Nowadays, we not only know how to write the vowels as well as the consonants, we even know how to write vowel length or tones to boot, where such exist; i.e. our transcriptions are (or should be) far better, to give fully adequate account or indication for an excellent pronunciation. Furthermore, no one two thousand years ago thought to ask remaining Hebrew speakers the names of plants and animals, or to make any systematic vocabulary investigations or dictionaries, or of course grammars, as such. In terms of texts of cultural value and inspiration Hebrew was certainly well off, but for quality of purely linguistic documentation most Native American languages have a great advantage over Hebrew, at least potentially, even in terms of writing system - not to mention direct sound recording.

Good writing systems skillfully compiled grammars dictionaries and texts, are of course absolutely necessary for the revival of extinct languages, based on all information that can be gathered from all archival resources. With that, and with the necessary absolute determination of the people themselves, it has been shown that languages can be revived. We should therefore be prepared to see requests for support also from groups, ultimately, whose languages no longer have any native speakers.

Even where a language has native speakers, even children speakers, in order to develop for it the functions necessary for it to serve its speakers through this century, a linguistically sound writing system, well-designed dictionaries and grammars, well-transcribed or well-written texts for cultural or educational use, are all a critical need. True, living languages are first and foremost spoken, at least normally. Nothing should distract from that, as sometimes literacy can be misused to do. (Far too many limited current programs focus on writing and spelling, which some children may learn to do impressively, yet not be able to participate in the simplest conversation.) Nevertheless, bearing in mind at all times the primacy of spoken language, academically sound support for any educational language program is a necessity. Archiving is another necessity: finding, preserving, organizing, and making appropriately accessible all the documentation of the language, from the earliest to the current, in a secure dedicated place. I agree with the finding that the Alaska Native Language Center is the most advanced institution in the United States to serve as a model for the kind of academic support described above.

In concluding this statement, restricted mainly to providing background statistical information on the present state of Native American languages and on how close we are to losing this most uniquely American aspect of our heritage, I stress once again that if we wish to restore the vitality of that heritage instead of losing it, we must undertake and support the programs for which these amendments to the Native American Languages Act are designed to provide.

Language by State and Degree of Viability (T=Total, A=Spoken by children and up, B=Parents and up, C=Grandparents and up, D=Few oldest, nearly extinct.). Note qualifications in text of report.

	T	A	B	C	D
California	**50**	0	2	18	30
Oklahoma	**21**	1	2	12	6
Alaska	**20**	2	7	10	1
Washington	**15**	0	0	8	7
Arizona	**12**	6	4	2	0
New Mexico	**11**	5	5	0	1
Montana	**11**	0	3	7	1
Oregon	**8**	0	1	3	4
N. Dakota	**6**	0	1	4	1
New York	**5**	0	0	3	2
Wisconsin	**5**	0	2	1	2
Idaho	**5**	0	2	2	1
Nevada	**4**	0	2	2	0
Utah	**3**	1	1	1	0
Minnesota	**3**	0	1	2	0
Nebraska	**3**	0	1	2	0
Kansas	**3?**	0	0	2	1
Wyoming	**2**	0	1	1	0
S. Dakota	**2**	0	1	0	1
Michigan	**2**	0	0	2	0
Maine	**2**	0	0	1	1
Florida	**2**	1	1	0	0
Louisiana	**1**	1	0	0	0
Mississippi	**1**	1	0	0	0
Texas	**1**	0	1	0	0
Iowa	**1**	0	1	0	0
N. Carolina	**1**	0	0	1	0
Colorado	**1**	0	0	1	0
Hawaii	**1**	1	0	0	0

The national total of languages at each degree (Note: Totals do not directly follow from table above, as many languages are in more than one state).

A	20	11%
B	30	17%
C	70	40%
D	55	31%
Total	175	

The condition of Native North American languages: the need for realistic assessment and action

MICHAEL KRAUSS

Abstract

Of about 210 indigenous languages still extant in the USA and Canada, 34 are spoken by speakers of all generations, 35 are spoken by the parental generation and up, 84 are spoken by the grandparental generation and up, and 57 are spoken by only a few aged speakers. This general profile is compared with a survey of the circumpolar North and with that of indigenous languages in New Mexico and Arizona. Of these, the latter exhibit the greatest retention, but even these languages, at the rate things are going, will face the threat of extinction. The major issue of denial is addressed, along with the effects of bilingual education programs, which, it is argued, may tend to remove responsibility for language transmission from the home to the school. There is an urgent need for facing the facts and psychology of denial, and for realistic programs that include a commitment to intensive oral immersion. The article concludes with a consideration of the role of linguists in working in the interest of Native American languages and communities.

Introduction

No one can know how many languages were spoken before contact in what is now the United States and Canada. A fair estimate including those languages for which there is no direct documentation is well over 300. Those languages for which there is some direct documentation might be counted in the neighborhood of 300. Compared with other (usually more tropical) parts of the world, this is not a very high number in view of the size of the continent's land mass. Part of the lowness of the number can be attributed to our ignorance of early contact extinctions.

It may come as a pleasant surprise to some that in spite of the tragic postcontact history of indigenous peoples on this continent — first physi-

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cal genocide, then linguistic genocide — well over half the 300 known indigenous North American languages are still spoken or remembered. The sad irony is that even as US policy has changed explicitly to recognize and support indigenous languages as a national asset, beginning with the 1990/1992 Native American Languages Act, parents are still abandoning their heritage language in favor of English. This process is occuring at such a rapid rate that we stand to lose more indigenous North American languages in the next 60 years than have been lost since Anglo-European contact.

The status of indigenous North American languages today

There has long been considerable interest in identifying what Native North American languages exist, resulting, for example, in the Powell inventory and classification of 1891. The motivations underlying this interest were antiquarian and scientific only, however. Concern for the viability of these languages or number of speakers was if anything hostile, in accord with the national policy of assimilation. The first broad survey of extant Native North American languages and speaker numbers was undertaken by Wallace Chafe (1964, 1965). Grimes's *Ethnologue* (latest [1992] edition) also contains much information gathered by Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) workers, including some evaluations of viability, often in terms of the need for Bible translation, SIL/Wycliffe Bible Translators' basic goal. But that consideration, along with outdatedness and probably some wishful thinking on the part of some sources, are among the factors that tend to give a much rosier picture of viability — the degree of intergenerational transmission — than is real.

The fact is, we have no decent or detailed census of speakers of these languages, their numbers, or their ages. The US Census is nearly useless in this regard, as the language definitions obfuscate much to begin with. More importantly, reliable statistics for numbers of speakers cannot be obtained simply by asking respondents if they speak language X, as a large proportion of fluent speakers will deny they are fluent, because of stigma, while conversely a large proportion of nonspeakers will claim they can speak language X out of wishful thinking. The two types of biased responses might even cancel each other out statistically, but the all-important generational facts are lost. There may in fact be a desire not to know them.

Controversial though it may be whether it is helpful to learn and reveal the facts, I continue here on the assumption that we cannot cope with the problem until we know what the problem is. No one person could, in a mere year or two, conduct an adequate survey of the status and viability of Native North American languages today. It would take a dedicated crew with a goodly travel budget and the skills to visit all the communities needed to develop a good picture for each language by observation of the actual use or abilities through the generations. In 1990–1992, given the need for data to support my testimony before the US Senate committee considering the Native American Languages Act of 1992, I did what I could to derive statistical estimates from my own experience in Alaska and the North, the available literature, data from questionnaires sent to colleagues through the Linguistic Society of America, and some generous and helpful additional information from a dozen or so respondents in the field. These were first published in the Senate documents from the hearing (Krauss 1992). That hearing was ably chaired by Senator Inouye of Hawaii, who noted in his opening remarks that there are more Native American languages still spoken than some people think — "perhaps 50 or 60." I was able to open my testimony with the good news that the senator's estimate was in fact very low, and that the number of Native North American languages still spoken in the United States alone was 155.

The question, however, is this: for how much longer will these languages be spoken? To answer that, I divided the languages into four classes:

1. class A, still spoken by all generations including young children;
2. class B, spoken only by parental generation and up;
3. class C, spoken only by grandparental generation and up; and
4. class D, spoken only by the very oldest, over 70, usually fewer than ten persons — nearly extinct.

I reported that 20 (13 percent) of the 155 U.S. languages were in class A; 30 (20 percent) were in class B; 60 (40 percent, the largest proportion) were in class C; and 45 (30 percent, the next largest) were in class D (Krauss 1992). One can predict from this that unless there is radical change and success at reversal of language shift, at the rate things are going class D will be lost by the year 2010, reducing the 155 to 100; class C will be lost by 2040, leaving 50 indigenous languages; and by 2060, with the loss of class B, all but 20 would be extinct. To this certainly should be added the point that even class A is not guaranteed to last forever at the rate things are going — far from it. Every one of even these languages is severely endangered. In fact, the only Native North American language that might be considered "safe" is Greenlandic Inuit, no doubt related to the fact that it is administratively not in North America.

In 1993–1995 I revised these statistics in connection with a survey I was conducting of indigenous languages of the circumpolar North (including Canada, Russia, Scandinavia), and with the release of an important new report on the California languages (Hinton and Montijo 1994). The basic US picture remained essentially as before but was made statistically still worse by the California report. It was clear that California had the largest number and greatest diversity of indigenous languages of any state or province in North America. I had listed 30 languages for California in 1992 (Krauss 1992). However, the Hinton report and personal communications from her imply about 50 California languages still extant, increasing the US total to 175 (see also Hinton, this issue). Granted, those language definitions are finer than before (for example, six extant Pomo languages, seven Yokuts, seven Miwok), but I bow to that as probably consistent with definition elsewhere. The increase of 20 adds only to the C and D categories, ten each. The number and percentages for the United States then are thus:

1. class A, 20 (11 percent);
2. class B, 30 (17 percent);
3. class C, 70 (40 percent); and
4. class D, 55 (31 percent).

We can add 36 languages in Canada only (not counting 20 that are on both sides of the border and counted, therefore, for the United States [e.g., Inuit, A in Canada but already counted for Alaska as B]):

1. class A, 12 (33 percent)
2. class B, 6 (17 percent);
3. class C, 15 (42 percent); and
4. class D, 3 (9 percent).

Note that the proportion of languages in classes B and C is about the same for the United States and Canada, but Canada has a significantly larger proportion in class A, and a very significantly smaller proportion in class D. Together, the United States and Canada have a total of 210 languages — still perhaps two-thirds of those documented to have existed — but only 34 (16 percent) are in class A; 35 (17 percent) are in class B, 84 (40 percent) are in class C, and 57 (27 percent) are in class D.

The circumpolar North

Before looking more specifically at certain language areas and languages in the United States, and in order to add perspective to these statistics for North America, I shall summarize the results of my survey of the circumpolar North (Krauss 1997). Of about 88 languages known to have been spoken in the circumpolar North. 16 are extinct, leaving 72 extant. Of these, 15 to 22 are spoken by at least some children. Thus 30 percent (at the very best) are in class A; 21 percent are in class B; 26 percent are in class C; and 22 percent are in class D. To compare the A-B-C-D percentage profiles for the major countries, including overlapping totals for international languages, Alaska has a total of 20, A-B-C-D 10-33-38-19 percent; Canada has a total of 17, 29-24-18-29 percent; and Russia has a total of 38, 32-8-34-26 percent. Hence, the situation in Canada appears to be slightly better than in Russia, while that in Alaska is definitely the worst. In any case, one can see from this that, far from being an unspoiled frontier, the North is one of the more devastated parts of the globe linguistically, with an A-B-C-D profile of 30-21-26-22 percent. We are very far from having any such coverage for the globe, but surely the Northern condition is much worse than most of the globe so far. On the other hand, the situation in Australia is far worse than in the North, and the US situation, at 11-17-40-31 percent is somewhat worse.

US "honor roll"

To return to the US picture, at a 1995 meeting on indigenous language maintenance and renewal at the University of California at Los Angeles Indian Studies Center, instead of the negative roll call of languages nearing extinction, I emphasized the positive by reciting an "honor roll" of those indigenous US languages in class A, which are still being spoken to and by small children. The list is not that long. In Alaska these are Yupik on St. Lawrence Island, and some of Central Yupik. Hawaiian is in class A only on the tiny island of Niʻihau, and everywhere else in class D, not counting child speakers in the Pūnana Leo language nest and school programs now genuinely reversing language shift (see Wilson, this issue; this opens up a whole new type of category, languages that have skipped a generation or more and now again have children speakers). In the southeast there is Mikasuki in Florida, Choctaw in Mississippi, perhaps Koasati in Louisiana, Lakota-Dakota in some places, and (presumably) some Cherokee in Oklahoma. We can also add one small community of Southern Paiutes in Arizona (Pam Bunte, personal communication 1995). This brings us to the US Southwest — New Mexico and Arizona — the bastion of Native American language maintenance, where the majority of the 20 "honor roll" languages are still spoken by children: Navajo, Western Apache, Mescalero Apache (?), Cocopa (?), Yaqui (?), Hopi, Zuni, Havasupai-Hualapai, Jémez, Northen Tiwa, Eastern Keres, and Tohono O'odham.[1]

The situation with regard to many of these languages highlights th dangerous oversimplification of the A-B-C-D classification, as implie by phrases such as "partly in class A," or "at best in class B." Man languages are not simply or monolithically in one such class, and th larger or more complex and widely spread the group, the more likely i is that children in one area or community will speak the language an those in others will not. For instance, in Alaska, Central Yupik is counte A whereas in reality it is a continuum of A-C, where children in abou 17 villages out of 68 speak Yupik and there are as many villages wher the youngest speakers are now grandparents. Even St. Lawrence Islan Yupik, also counted A, is more precisely A –, meaning that in a minorit of families the children speak more English than Yupik or perhaps spea only English. Aleut. Alutiiq, and Tanaina are each classed B because i one very small. exceptional village for each language, the children learne the language into the 1970s, whereas everywhere else the classification C-D. Thus the statistics are consistently skewed in favor of the best an often exceptional situations for each language. Outside Alaska, as in th case of Cherokee, with such a complex and widespread language situatio that children are likely still to be speaking Cherokee somewhere, th classification of Cherokee as A hides the overwhelming reality of ho gravely endangered the language is. Moreover, we must not lose trac of the dynamics: change is still in almost every case unidirectional f the worse. For example, 15 years ago Central Yupik had 25 villag where children spoke the language, but now has 17.

Returning to Arizona and New Mexico, with 12 of the 20 US languag still spoken by children, we must look more closely at some of them i view of the above. The signs are clear: one Pueblo language speciali reported that in the case of the Pueblo languages, "the children are n longer producing the language"; in the case of Tohono O'odham, a lar proportion of children no longer speak the language. The same appea to be true of Western Apache, Hopi, Eastern Keres, Northern Tiwa, ar Navajo, and may soon be true of the rest, not to mention those that a uncertain to be in class A in the first place.[2]

Navajo

I shall take the case of Navajo quite individually, because it is by far t largest language group in the United States. Even now, in spite of t precipitous decline about to be mentioned, there are more children spea ing Navajo than children speaking all other indigenous US languages combined. The Navajo Reading Study reported in 1969 that over 90 percent of Navajo six-year-olds entering school spoke Navajo (Spolsky 1974). Currently the proportion is approaching the inverse. Concerned specialists such as Paul Platero and Wayne Holm have conducted partial surveys showing that over 50 percent of children are monolingual in English and that Navajo-speaking children tend to be concentrated in the more rural areas, though not particularly in one sector of the reservation (Holm and Holm 1995; Platero 1992). The residential concentration of a critical mass of child speakers likely to support each other and produce another generation of speakers, as in the case of Central Yup'ik, is an important factor in predicting continuing viability. Because of this scattering, it might be that Navajo (A-B and far greater numbers) is more severely endangered than Central Yupik (A-C). However, there has been no systematic full-scale survey of the Navajo viability situation, or of what proportion of six-year-olds still come to school able to speak Navajo. Here a major American tragedy is taking place, at full speed, and people do not want to know or talk about it, it seems.

Exposing the problem

Few native speakers appear willing to confront and voice the problem of language loss represented in statistics such as those reported here. Certainly there is something very natural about this. For example, at the 1991 Senate hearing for the Native American Languages Act, a Navajo delegation testified eloquently about the spiritual importance of their language but failed to mention the language's endangerment. In the corridor afterward I asked them if they disagreed that perhaps 80 percent of Navajo children now speak English rather than Navajo. They agreed the percentage might be that high but had obviously chosen not to speak of it. I did not get the chance to ask them why they chose not to. I consider this question an extremely important one to ask and to answer.

One pervasive answer is denial, first of facts and then of responsibility. Denial of fact is at first easy, especially insofar as the replacing language, English, almost invariably has the highest prestige and usefulness, and the practical penalty is minimal at least with the parental generation, for whom speaking English is not much harder, and often easier, than speaking the ancestral language. All of this is so far then simply in accord with what the community has been educated and programmed to do in assimilationist schools (see McCarty, this issue). The community thus may not see the language loss or its consequences until the monolingual

English-speaking children grow up and the youngest speakers are grandparents.

The new parental generation is in no position to reverse the loss by itself, and the grandparents have much that is difficult to face. First there is the loss itself: loss of continuity with the past, of the tradition of their youth, of the cultural wealth of knowledge and spirituality, and the threat to continuity of ethnic identity. Second, there is loss of the language itself and severe ambivalence in most cases, as no one literally forced them daily to speak English and not their traditional language to children in their homes. That was their own doing, in accordance with the educational policy. They must be aware at some level that they are responsible for ending the transmission of their language. Moreover, in many cases, especially where the youngest generation of speakers was in school before the 1960s, that generation widely underwent what today would be considered brutal child abuse — physical and psychological punishment for speaking a word of their language at school. The conditioning and trauma of that surely enters into ambivalent behavior.

One does not simply get over these experiences. Moreover, most other pressures against traditional languages in favor of English continue unabated or even increased, including increasing contact and mobility, the inability of schools to convert to the traditional language, economic incentives associated with the prestige of English, and above all the penetration of English-only media into the home, especially television. All these forces continue to add to the ambivalence and effects of childhood trauma. Under such conditions it might seem remarkable indeed that there has been as much transmission of these languages as continues today.

Bilingual education programs

It is easy to see how the last generation of speakers, ambivalent but now responsible for transmitting the language to the next generation, may readily seize on any possibility that might appear to relieve them of this difficult responsibility. Such relief might be found in public bilingual education programs authorized in the United States in 1968, really to ease the transition to English. Only since the passage of the Native American Languages Act has there been other legislation that could definitely support the maintenance of indigenous languages. Nevertheless, since about 1970, there have been widening possibilities for school programs to maintain Native American languages or even introduce them to school children as second languages. With the encouragement and support of linguists and well-meaning educational administrators, such programs can indeed become extremely attractive as avenues of release from the painful parental responsibility of heritage language transmission. "The school took away our language, but now the school can bring it back." Quite often, we see the bilingual Native language teacher, of parental or grandparental generation, trained and teaching in school her or his ancestral language in the classroom, writing it with chalk on a blackboard, teaching colors, numbers, names of animals, maybe even verbs or sentence structure, to children who receive an hour a week or an hour a day of the language in that way, for a few years on and off. Meanwhile, that very same teacher, like everyone else, is speaking English to children or grandchildren in the home.

In this way school programs can do more harm than good, insofar as they shift the responsibility for transmitting the language in the home, where it is still possible, to the school, at best such a poor alternative.[3] There is no question that the schools can teach something of the languages, and there is also no question that entities like the Alaska Native Language Center can document, analyze, and preserve a permanent record of these languages for posterity. Such work is absolutely essential in any case, and the only thing that we surely can succeed at, so that some day the possibility of revival from extinction on the basis of good documentation will always remain. In fact, with such good language work, good timing, good material and program development, and strong community commitment including teeth in the program such that Johnny could flunk for not knowing Inupiaq just as he could for not knowing English (otherwise the message is that English is important but Inupiaq is not), such programs — if given enough hours a week for enough years — could teach not only a symbolic amount (even that is to be desired), but also enough to be basically functional in the language.

However, we should not be surprised that most school programs have not reversed language loss. Possibly they have slowed it down; we cannot know how much worse the situation might be had not these changes in schools taken place. It might seem ironic that several Alaska languages that still had children speakers in some small isolated villages in 1972 when the Alaska bilingual education legislation was passed are now no longer spoken by children. With the beginning of bilingual education, it appeared that the main threat to Native language maintenance was removed, that our legislative victory had come just in time to save them. In fact, during that very decade of the 1970s, Alaskan languages ceased to be spoken to the children in Upper Kuskokwim Athabaskan at Nikolai and Telida; Tanaina Athabaskan at Lime Village; Kutchin Athabaskan at Venetie and Arctic Village; Inupiaq Eskimo at Ambler, Shungnak, Kobuk, and Wainwright; Aleut at Atka; and Alutiiq at Nanwalek. Ju as we trained teachers and developed school materials and programs f these languages in these villages, the children began coming to scho speaking only English. An explanation may be that the program was s years too late, and/or that the communities were already preprogramm to abandon transmission by then. In spite of the discussion above, I not believe that the advent of these programs hastened or abetted t loss of the languages. Bilingual programs may in fact have slowed do the loss and contributed to the fact that children still speak Yupik on Lawrence Island and in 17 Central Yupik villages rather than none.

We know that such programs are a step in the right direction, provid they are not misused as an avenue to distract the efforts of some of t best language specialists, and parental-grandparental speakers do n simply misplace the basic responsibility from the home to the scho However, even in the US Southwest, where so many indigenous langua are still spoken by children, specialists in these languages often beco preoccupied with more and better technologies such as computers a multimedia for teaching the language in school. I am sure this is go and this teaching is serious and earnest. At the same time, though th may note that the children are no longer "producing" the language, th are distracted from the real reason for this: the language is no lon consistently spoken to children in the home as a mother tongue. Child cannot produce the ancestral language; they can only reproduce it.

Some promising new developments

It is certainly a most welcome sign that understanding is spreading m quickly and widely now, that for a school program to approxim traditional teaching in the home it must emphasize some type of t immersion. This represents a deep commitment and a step in the ri direction if there is any realistic expectation that the next generation become fluent native-language speakers. Another such step is the devel ment of radical innovations such as the Polynesian "language nes which must be followed with total immersion or programs of suffici quality and quantity to maintain the language shift reversal moment The Master–Apprentice Program in California is a similar example the possibilities here (see Hinton, Sims, this issue). There too, though teacher is elderly and the learner no longer a child, the basic appro is traditional oral one-on-one, and intensive.

The commitment necessary to ensure the success of such progr includes a basic understanding of the real language situation and consequences, and an understanding of the limitations and even deceptiveness of conventional Native American schoolroom language programs. Feelings and mechanisms of denial must be squarely faced. The "doom and gloom" predictions inherent in the statistics on indigenous North American languages may, on the surface, be criticized as having a discouraging effect on the efforts of those working very hard to save languages now spoken by a handful of elders. However, I have found their determination is very firm, and rather that they are in need of realizing that they have much more company than they thought — that many groups around the country and the world share their problems and could share solutions — and that there is much to be gained by organization and cooperation. Even more is the warning needed by those language communities at the opposite end of the scale, where the parents have only recently quit speaking the language in the home to their children, or are about to. It is true that there may be compelling reasons for not wanting the real language-viability situation to be known, which may be deeply emotional, personal, political, or even financial, insofar as funding potential is still based on the number of children who come to school speaking a Native American language. That last factor may be changing with increasing support available specifically for maintenance and restoration of these languages, and increasing awareness of just how urgent their situation is.

The role of linguists and linguistics in the future of indigenous North American languages

Under the Boasian paradigm, linguistics in America grew up as a branch of anthropology, with a very strong interest in documenting indigenous North American languages, though with little or no sense of need or responsibility for helping to retain them. Under the powerful Chomskyan impetus, however, linguistics became preoccupied in quite a different direction, no longer even with discovering how languages can differ, but rather with discovering the principles of what they have in common. "Exotic" languages such as Native American languages were no longer so centrally interesting to American linguistics, and even though political activism in other areas has been by no means neglected by Chomsky, academic linguistics has seemed quite unconcerned until recently about the impending loss of so much of America's (and the world's) linguistic diversity. This situation has been changing markedly since 1990 with rapidly increasing attention to language endangerment. Concern is increasing not only for linguists' responsibility to science, with the urgent priority to study and document these languages to minimize the loss to our understanding of language, and to preserve as much as possible the knowledge and insights unique to every human language, but also for our social responsibility to humanity and this country. Linguists have skills that are extremely valuable for the teaching and cultivation of these languages into the next century. Linguistics can and must also work in the interest of indigenous North American communities, for the good of all.

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Notes

1. Page 3 of editor Ives Goddard's (1996) *Languages* (volume 17 of the Smithsonian *Handbook of North American Indians*), presents a related table listing languages according to viability status, taking into account information from my reports. Goddard's class 1 ("languages still spoken by significant numbers of children") corresponds to my class A. Though he has 46 languages in class 1 to my 34, the membership corresponds quite closely, considering that Goddard includes nine languages in Mexico (including Kickapoo, also in the US but with child speakers only in Mexico) and does not include five that I count for the US: Hawaiian, outside his scope; Mescalero Apache and Cocopa, which he assigns to his class 2, equivalent to my classes B and C combined; Koasati, which he assigns with a question mark to class 2; and Southern Paiute. The 1995 information to include Southern Paiute came to me too late for Goddard to use, as well as the correction of my error in earlier including Alabama, still spoken in Texas, but probably not by children. There is some difference in naming: Mikasuki/Hitchiti, Yaqui/Cahitan (also with child speakers in Mexico, but perhaps not in the US), Lakota-Dakota/Sioux, Havasupai-Hualapai/Upland Yuman, Northern Tiwa/Taos, Eastern Keresan/Rio Grande Keresan, Tohono O'odham/Upper Piman.

   The rest of the difference in numbers comes mainly from language definition in Canada: 11 are the same (Attikamek, Beaver, Chipewyan, Dogrib, Montagnais, Naskapi, and five varieties of Cree, though perhaps not entirely the same ones), but then Goddard splits Northern Slavey into Hare and Bearlake, and Inuktitut into Eastern and Western Canadian Inuit; he also has three varieties of Ojibwa instead of two and adds West and East Greenlandic as distinct from Canadian Inuit.
2. In connection with Western Apache, Bernadette Adley-Santamaria (1997: 130) remarks that, "At face value, Krauss's classification makes the prospects for preserving the [White Mountain Apache] language look good, but when one examines the rapidly changing dynamics of shift to English ..., there is cause for concern." This finely worded statement implies confirmation of my worst fears.
3. For example, does "where still possible" include households in which the parents are fluent speakers but so ambivalent about the language that they simply cannot bring themselves to speak it to their children as it was spoken to them? At a meeting of Alaska bilingual educators about 20 years ago, a most perceptive Inupiaq teacher and later a state legislator, the late Eileen MacLean, made an insightful remark that stuck in my mind. In good humor she said, "No, we don't need linguists, what we need is psychiatrists."

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Number and Viability of Native American Languages by State

Michael Krauss   January 1992

The following is an approximate listing of Native American languages by state (not including extinct languages or those of recent immigrants from other states, that is only living Native American languages established in the state before this century). The data came mostly from Grimes Ethnologue (SIL 1988), with some additional Information, especially for Alaska (and from ten specialists who responded to the first version of this survey, submitted October 1991).

I have tried to supply from the Ethnologue (plus additional information) not numbers of speakers and non-speakers but a designation of viability, as follows;

a language spoken still by all or many children
b language spoken by most adults but not most children
c language spoken only by older adults (e.g. over age 45)
d language spoken only by few oldest adults, nearly extinct
e extinct (such are NOT listed except for a few cases of e?; perhaps extinct or perhaps one or two very old speakers may yet be found).

In a number of cases the designation is queried because the available information seems out-of-date, or because especially for the languages listed for more than one state and for which only a general statement is available, the viability may be much greater in one state than another. Also in some more complex cases, a designation such as *a/d* or *a-c* may be given, the former indicating that in one community or area the language may be spoken by all ages, in another nearly extinct (e.g. Hawaiian, viable on Niihau, everywhere else nearly extinct), the latter that there may be a wide range of viability (e.g. Cherokee in Oklahoma).

I conclude with a statistical summary for each state, giving--again approximately-- the number of living Native American languages native to the state, followed in parentheses by the number of languages at each of the degrees of viability (*a, b, c,* d, simplifying the more complex designations in favor of the higher or middle degree, and ignoring question marks). This will give some notion of the complexity if not the importance or power of the Native American language presence in each state. Seventeen states have three or more such languages:

California	50 (0-2-18-30)*	New York	5 (0-0-3-2)
Oklahoma	21 (1-2-12-6)	Wisconsin	5 (0-2-1-2)
Alaska	20 (2-7-10-1)	Idaho	5 (0-2-2-1)
Washington	15 (0-0-8-7)	Nevada	4 (0-2-2-0)
Arizona	12 (6-4-2-0)	Utah	3 (1-1-1-0)
New Mexico	11 (5-5-0-1)	Minnesota	3 (0-1-2-0)
Montana	11 (0-3-7-1)	Nebraska	3 (0-1-2-0)
Oregon	8 (0-1-3-4)	Kansas	3? (0-0-2-1)
North Dakota	6 (0-1-4-1)		

*Numbers updated in 1994 based on the research of Leanne Hinton and Yolanda Montijo.

Five states have two languages:
Wyoming (bc), S. Dakota (bd), Michigan (cc), Maine (cd), and Florida (ab).
Seven states have one language:
Colorado (c?), Iowa (b), Texas (b), Louisiana (a), Mississippi (a), North Carolina (c?), Hawaii (a/d).

Thus 29 States have one or more local living Native American language. The remaining 21 (Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia–and many of the preceding) have languages which are extinct (about 80 of about 260 known U.S. and Canadian Native languages have become extinct, leaving about 180). Some groups may remain after their language is lost however, and in some cases the language has became extinct recently enough and is documented well enough that there may be a strong interest and possibility for a language program (e.g. Catawba in South Carolina, Tillamook in Oregon).

California 50 (0-2-18-30)*
N. Paiute b?
Mohave b-c
Diegueño c?
Hupa c
Klamath c
Luiseño c
Yuma c
Washo c
Karok c-d
Achumawi d
Atsugewi d?
Cahuilla d
Cupeño d
Kawalisu d
Lake Miwok d
Central Sierra Miwok d?
Southern Sierra Miwok d-e?
Plains Miwok d-e?
Mono d
Nomlaki-Patwin-Wintu d
Kashaya Pomo c-d
Eastern Pomo d
Central Pomo d
Northern Pomo d
Southern Pomo d-e

Shasta d
Tolowa d
Yurok d
Panamint d
Maidu Nisenan-Konkaw d-e?
(Southeastern Pomo e?)

(Serrano e?)
(Tubatulabal e?)
(Wappo e?)
(Yokuts e?)

*List for California not completely itemized

Oklahoma 21 (1-2-12-6)
Cherokee a-c
Kickapoo b?
Muskogee b-c
Arapaho c?
Caddo c
Cheyenne c
Choctaw-Chicasaw c
Comanche c
Mescalero c
Kiowa c
Sac and Fox c
Shawnee c
Potawatomi c?
Osage c-d
Oto c-d
Ponca d
Delaware d
Iowa d
Pawnee d
Wichita d
Yuchi d
(Plains Apache e?)
(Cayuga d?, e, ca. 1989?)

Alaska 20 (2-7-10-1)
Siberian Yupik a (1, 100- 1, 050)
Central Yup'ik a-b (18,000-12,000)
Aleut b, c (5,100-400)
Alutiiq b, c (3,100-600)
Inupiaq b-c (13,000-4,000)
Kutchin b, c (l.000-400)
Tanacross b (200-100)
Upper Kuskokwim b (150-100)
Upper Tanana b (300-150)
Ahtna c (500-125)
Haida c (500-75)
Han c (60-15)
Holikachuk c (150-15)
Ingalik c (300-60)
Koyukon c (2,300-400)
Tanaina c (800-125)
Tanana c (350-50)
Tlingit c (9,000-1,000)
Tsimshian c (1,000-75)
Eyak d (50-2)

Washington 16 (0-0-7-9)
Flathead c
Columbia Salish c
Makah c
Okanagon c?
Spokane c
Yakima c
Chehalis d
Clallam d
Cowlitz d
Quileute d
Quinault d
S. Puget Sd. Salish d
Skagit-Snohomish d
Straits Salish d
Wasco-Wishram d

Arizona 11 (7-2-2-0)
W. Apache a
Cocopa a
Yaqui a
Hopi a-b
Navajo a-b
Papago a, b
Havasu-Wala-Yavapai a-b-c
Tewa b?
Mohave b-c
Maricopa c
S. Paiute c?

New Mexico 11 (6-4-0-1)
Jemez a
Mescalero a
Zuni a
N. Tiwa a, b
Navajo a-b
E. Keres a-b

Jicarilla Apache b
Tewa b
S. Tiwa b. c
W. Keres b-c
Lipan Apache d

Montana 11 (0-3-7-1)
Cheyenne b
Crow b
Lakota b?
Assiniboine c
Blackfoot c
Cree c
Flathead c?
Kootenai c
Dakota c?
Ojibwa c?
Gros Ventre d

Oregon 8 (0-1-3-4)
N. Paiute b?
Warm Springs Sahaptin c
Uniatilla-Walla Walla c
Klamath-Modoc d
Nez Perce d
Tututni d
Wasco-Wishram d

N. Dakota 7 (0-2-4-1)
Dakota b?
Lakota b
A.rikara c
Hidatoa c
Mitchif c
Ojibwa c?
Mandan d

New York 5 (0-0-3-2)
Mohawk c
Seneca c
Onondaga c-d?
Oneida d
Tuscarora d
(Cayuga e?)

Idaho 5 (0-2-2- 1)
N. Paiute b?
Shoshone b?
Kootenai c
Nez Perce c
Coeur d'Alene d

Wisconsin 5 (0-2-1-2)
Winnebago b?
W. Ojibwa b?
Potawatomi c?
Menominee d
Oneida d?

Nevada 4 (0-2-2-0)
N. Paiute b?
Shoshone b?
S. Paiute c?
Washo c

Utah 3 (1-1-1-0)
Navajo a-b?
Goshute b?
Ute c?

Minnesota 3 (0-1-2-0)
W. Ojibwa b? c?,
Lakota c?
Dakota c?

Nebraska 3 (0-1-2-0)
Dakota b?
Omaha c
Winnebago c

Kansas 3? (0-0-2- 1)
Sac & Fox c
Potawatomi c?
Kickapoo d-e

S. Dakota
Lakota b
Dakota d?

Wyoming
Shoshone b?
Arapaho c?

Michigan
Chippewa c
Potawatomi c?

Maine
Passamaquoddy c
Penobscot d

Florida
Mikasuki a
Seminole b? c?

N. Carolina
Cherokee c?

Mississippi
Choctaw a

Louisiana
Alabama a

Texas
Alabama b

Iowa
Mesquakie b

Colorado
Ute c?

Hawaii
Hawaiian d/a

Senate Bill 2688
Demmert 7/26/00

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS FOR SENATE BILL 2688

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Native American Languages Amendments Act (Senate Bill 2688).

I wish to testify in support of the proposed legislation, for it is unique in what it provides support for. I will present some personal experiences about why I believe S. 2688 is so important.

I started teaching school in 1960 in a small district in Forks, Washington, on the west coast of the Olympic Peninsula in the State of Washington. I was hired, in part, because I was an American Indian and because the school served La Push Indian reservation students. The superintendent of the school (Mr. Hitchcock) recognized that the reservation students were not being served well by the school as evidenced by the fact that no La Push student had graduated from high school for years – all had left school by the end of the junior highschool year or soon thereafter.

This superintendent was ahead of his contemporaries for he recognized that the school and curriculum had to change if the school district was to meet the academic needs of the La Push students, if the school was to become successful in holding the students long enough to graduate from high school, and if the school was going to challenge these students to pursue higher levels of education.

The first step undertaken to change the culture of the school was to hire two Native teachers in the elementary school and eventually move one of us into the middle and high school as the La Push students moved through the grades. The second strategy was to encourage greater after school participation in extra curricular school activity (i.e., band, various sporting activities, and other social events).

Those simple changes began to have an affect on student attitudes because before I left Forks to work on an advanced degree, and to teach in the State of Alaska, one student graduated, there now were several students in high school, and only one student left school before graduation.

In 1988 I had an opportunity to serve as the chief school administrator (principal/superintendent) for the small school in the village where I was born (March 9, 1934). The school, located in Klawock, Alaska, had once been a Bureau of Indian Affairs school, a territorial school, and a village public school for grades k – 8 (the graduates attended BIA boarding schools in the lower 48; Mt. Edgecumbe high school located in Sitka, Alaska; Sheldon Jackson High school in Sitka; or the public school in a near by community connected by road, called Craig which by then had a high school. The school was relatively successful but a significantly high number of students left school before graduation from high school at the time and returned home.

In the two years I spent as the chief school administrator in Klawock the teachers and I worked with the community to changed the curriculum and culture of the school. These changes included the following:

1) Two Native Alaskan teachers were hired from the community (there had been none for several years);
2) Six local residents were brought into the school (one for each

classroom <k-1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6, & 7-8>), with a substitute available to fill in when there was an absence) trained as teacher aides, and placed into a teacher education program (three of them became teachers and worked locally until they retired);

1) We brought three respected elders from the community into the classrooms to teach the Tlingit language, present oral histories and mythology of the Tlingit, and offered the students opportunities to learn and practice the fine arts that represented their clan and community (music, visual arts, and theater);
1) We took the students out into the community and organized the classes around projects and activity occurring in the community or around the natural environment (i.e., using the beaches and what grew there for a starting place to learn science);
1) We offered extra-curricular activities for ALL students that focused on kinesthetic activity for all, and on a school wide program, that presented to the community at the end of the year, all of those culturally related activities the students had learned during the school year;
1) We offered an evening program that included all interested parents and students and that provided an opportunity to practice their fine arts skills, their singing and traditional dancing, and design and construction of traditional dress in preparation for the end of year school wide presentation.

The Postmistress (a prominent elder in the community) asked me what we were doing in the school. She told me that in all the years she has served as the Postmistress she watched the students every year walk to school and play along the way killing time until the last bell rang at 9:00 a.m. at which time they would finally continue on to school. She now observed them going to school early, often before the school doors opened, and they no longer lingered enroute. She indicated that the students appeared eager to get to school.

All of the students in that grade school completed the eighth grade, moved into the high school in the near by community, and all but one or two of those students completed high school. The educational program was organized to continue the language and cultural activity throughout the students' four years of high school and was instrumental in keeping them motivated and in school.

Those experiences, representing what I learned as a teacher, principal, and superintendent were key to what I attempted to incorporate in future activity as the 1st U.S. Deputy Commissioner of Indian Education in the U.S. Office of Education, a position created by the original Indian Education Act of 1972; in what I learned as the Director of the Office of Indian Education Programs in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of Interior when I served in that capacity; in what I learned as the Commissioner of Education for the State of Alaska; and in what I learned as the chairman of an international steering committee that works with all of the Ministries of Education in the Circumpolar North (Russia, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Greenland, Alaska, and the Canadian provinces or territories of Quebec, Northwest Territories, and the Yukon Territory.

I have learned a most important principle from all of those experiences and that is: In order for schools to become significantly more successful in educating higher percentages of Native students the school must create a challenging curriculum in the context of the language, culture, and educational priorities of the community served, using local and traditional knowledge as a base from which to start the formal educational process.

The examples that support this conclusion are not many for most systems will not or are not able to adjust sufficiently enough to do this successfully, but the examples that I am familiar with are conclusive (e.g., Punana Leo in Hawaii, Kativik Schools in Northern Quebec, Sami language schools in northern Norway, Greenlandic schools, Craig & Klawock Public Schools in Alaska).

As a member of the National Commission on Teaching and Americas Future a second principle has emerged that tells me teachers are critical to improving schools and schooling. My experience in Klawock and international activity, also tell me that the inclusion of Native teachers influence change in the culture of the school for a variety of reasons including expectations, perspectives of the curriculum taught, modeling, and levels of understanding communication and cultural subtleties. I recognize the influence a teacher has on students when that teacher understands the language, the culture, the pedagogy, cognitive development, and is able to communicate effectively with parents and students alike.

Finally, current research on cognitive development (on how the brain works and the influences of kinesthetic activity and high quality personal experiences of the child) reinforce the importance of early childhood programs that focus on language development, kinesthetic activity, social and cultural development, and on the physical and mental health of the child.

What does all this have to do with Senate Bill 2688?

Regular Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and regular public schools serving Native students find it very difficult, if not impossible for political or other purposes, to build comprehensive educational programs and schools that build partnerships with early childhood programs and that build a language and cultural curriculum that reflects the community served, an important characteristic is that school is to make a difference and motivate and challenge each student to learn.

Senate Bill 2688 will provide select communities and schools opportunities to create school partnerships and environments that take current research and knowledge into account and that build schools that are created in the context of the language, culture and educational priorities of the community served and that use local and traditional knowledge as a base from which to start – a principle of effective schools serving Native communities in the U.S. and internationally among Native or indigenous communities.

I urge passage of this new and innovative legislation and wish to thank you for the chance to testify.

William G. Demmert, Jr., Ed.D., Professor of Education, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington

TESTIMONY of
The Navajo Nation
on Senate Bill 2688, The Native American Language Act Amendments Act of 2000
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
July 20, 2000

The Navajo Nation is pleased to submit written testimony on S. 2688. The Navajo Nation is very concerned about the accelerating language shift from the Navajo Language to English. The Navajo Nation is spearheading efforts to ensure the survival and perpetuation of the Navajo Language survival and preservation. However, the Navajo Nation realizes these efforts may not be sufficient; Consequently, the Navajo Nation respects the work being done in "language nests" and "language survival schools".

The Navajo Nation's testimony is organized in four parts, as outlined below:

I. A Proposed Addition
  - ***A) Background***
  - ***B) The Proposed Addition***

II. Four General Concerns
  - ***A) The Definition of "Native American"***
  - ***B) The Role of Tribal Governments***
  - ***C) The 'three + one year' Requirement***
  - ***D) The Location of Demonstration Centers***

III. Details
  - ***A) Section 1. Short Title***
  - ***B) Section 2. Purpose***
  - ***C) Section 3. Definitions***
  - ***D) Section 4. Native American Language Survival Schools***
  - ***E) Native American Language Nests***
  - ***F) Demonstration Programs Regarding Linguistics Assistance***

IV. Possible Omissions
  - ***A) Operational Details***
  - ***B) Allocation of Funds by Program-type***
  - ***C) Lessons to be Learned from the Experience***
  - ***D) Follow-up***

I. A Proposed Addition

A. *Background.*

S. 2688 proposes three kinds of language programs: Native American Language Nests, Native American Language Survival Schools, and Demonstration Programs The two demonstration programs are assigned to centers in Hawaii and Alaska.

There are three kinds of "organizations" that can apply for Language Survival Schools and Language Nests: Native American Language Organizations, Native American Language College, Indian tribal government, and consortia of such organizations.

A consortium of such organizations is deleted from applying for Language Nest status. It is replaced by another type of organization: nonprofit organizations that demonstrate the potential to become Native American Language Educational Organizations. This type of nonprofit organization can apply *only* for Language Nests and not for any type of language program outlined in the bill

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Thus Native American Language Colleges could apply to operate either a Language Nest for "children aged 6 and under" or a Language Survival School for "students from infancy through grade 12" although primarily for school-age children. As the law is now written, Native American Language Colleges could not apply for an intense Language Survival School-type program at the college level.

The bill incorporates language regarding colleges or universities providing "direct or indirect educational and support services for families of enrolled students on site" (§108(c)(1)(C). The institutions would provide "a program of concurrent and summer college or university education course enrollment for secondary students enrolled in Native American Language Survival Schools" (§108(c)(2)(B).

These institutions might be asked to:

- Provide "curricula" and "language use in communities" (§108(d)(1 &2).
- Take part in "providing programs in pre-service and in-service teacher training, staff training, personnel development programs, programs to upgrade teacher and staff skills, and community resource development training that shall include a program component which has as its objective increased Native American language speaking proficiency for teachers and staff" (§108(e)(1).
- Take part in "special non-degree programs focusing on the use of a Native American language or languages for the education of students, teachers, staff, students, [sic] or families of students (§108(e)(2)(B).
- Provide education of [survival school] "faculty and staff" on "full or partial scholarships and fellowships. . .for professional development" (§108(e)(2)(C).
- Provide "training in the language and culture associated with a. . .School (§108(e)(2)(D).
- Provide "train[ing]. . .in the Native American Language Survival school" (§108(e)(3).

The common denominator of all these activities is that they are designed for students, staff, or parents involved with Language Survival Schools. The Language Survival School would initiate these activities. With the exception of the two designated "demonstration centers", no college/university would be authorized to offer intense language instruction on its own--under the resources of this bill. The Navajo Nation agrees with this requirement. Where there are Language Nests or Language Survival Schools, colleges should not be offering courses for Language Survival School staff, faculty, or parents.

The Navajo Nation understands the concerns of the bill that colleges work for Language Nests and Language Survival Schools. The Navajo Nation has had experiences with colleges that have wanted to implement language programs without tribal government approval. The situation at issue is when there are no Language Nests or Language Survival Schools; or the Language Nests or Language Survival Schools are not involved in intensive college-based language instruction.

The Navajo Nation is concerned about tribes that have no Language Nests and Language Survival Schools. On the Navajo Nation, there are no Language Nests and Language Survival Schools. There are teacher training programs at Diné College for those who would become

Navajo language teachers in school-based programs. (The Navajo Nation calls for Navajo Language instruction in all grades in all Navajo schools. The Arizona State School Board has made instruction in a "foreign or Native American language" the ninth required subject in the curriculum of all state schools in grades 1-through-8.) Navajo Language fluency is an entrance requirement for participation in the Diné Teacher Education Program There are students who are highly motivated to teach the Navajo language or academic content through Navajo language but who are neither proficient or fluent in the Navajo language. Diné College offers up to 30 hours of different Navajo language courses, however, these courses are not designed to lead a limited Navajo speaker to near-native proficiency.

B. The Proposed Addition

The Navajo Nation proposes that this bill add a fourth program, intended for college students who want to 'stop out' a whole school year to develop their mastery of a language for which there are no Language Nests or Language Survival schools. The bill proposes providing Language Nests for "students who are not Native American language speakers but who seek to establish fluency through instruction in a Native American language or to re-establish fluency as descendants of Native American language speakers" (§108(c)(2)(A).

The Navajo Nation understands that one year would not be enough for non-speakers. The Navajo Nation is referring to *limited* native Language speakers who have reasonable hopes of achieving near-native proficiency in the course of a single school year of intensive language development.

- The general requirements would be the same as for a Language Survival School: 700 hours of language instruction in the course of a single school year.
- Colleges/universities could apply for such programs only if there were no Language Nests or Language Survival Schools teaching that language.
- To be eligible, the college must have been teaching the equivalent of four different semester-long courses in the language for the preceding three years.
- These could be either tribally-controlled colleges or non-tribally-controlled colleges, although tribally-controlled community colleges would be given preference. Non-tribal colleges would have to gain the support of the tribe whose language they were teaching.
- There would have to be a minimum of 10 students.

- There would have to be some measure of student proficiency.

These institutions would have to be able to show that they have access to a sizable pool of native speakers. They would make reasonable efforts to involve students in native language speech-communities beyond the college.

The Navajo Nation requests the sponsors of the S. 2688 and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs study this proposed addition carefully.

II. Four General Concerns.

The Navajo Nation has four concerns that have grown out of our responses to the details addressed under III (below) of the Navajo Nation's testimony.

A) *The Definition of "Native American".*

Section 3 of S. 2699. The definition of "Native American" The term 'Native American' means an Indian, Native Hawaiian, or Native American Pacific Islander.

"Alaskan Native" appears to have been omitted. It was omitted in the definition in the original PL 101-477. Then, as now, there are consequences in the omission. The Navajo Nation feels that this error should be corrected.

B) *The Role of Tribal Governments.*

The role of tribal governments is a second, more complex problem. The tribal government situation is different in Hawaii; situation is different is Alaska. In the continental United States, there has been a long history of various groups seeking funds for various purposes, say Navajo health, Navajo social services, Navajo education. Some of these groups were well intentioned, competent, and responsive to communities and tribes. Others were not.

The relationship between tribal governments and the United States government is a government-to-government relationship. The government to government relationship must be respected and implemented Various ways have been found over the years to allow for tribal group or community initiatives but with tribal government approval.

Under Section 108 (a), there are three kinds of groups that can apply for contracts/grants...to conduct language survival schools: a Native American Language Educational Organization, a

Native American Language College, an Indian tribal government, and a consortium of [two or more of] the above. (The consortium option is problematic)

Further, though specifically offered for Language Nests, the Navajo Nation is concerned with "nonprofit organizations" under Section 109 (a) applying for contracts and grants.

Native American Language Educational Organization Under Section 3 of the S. 2688, Native American Language Education Organization is defined as (a) governed by a board consisting of speakers of one of more Native American languages; (b) currently providing intense instruction; (c) has provided intense instruction for the last three years. This definition may or may not be problematic.

Regarding the definition of the Native American Language Educational Organization (a). This is no doubt intended to deal with Hawaiian realities; however, the definition seems at once too tight and too loose elsewhere. *Too tight*: because of language loss, some boards may include some non-speakers. Those who have lost the language are sometimes those most acutely aware of the need for the children to (re-)gain the language. *Too lo*ose: the definition doesn't say that the speakers must be speakers of the language the group seeks to teach. The Navajo Nation feels this issue should be issue.

Regarding the definition the Native American Language Educational Organization (b) *and* (c). It may be that by insisting on both current activity and a three-year track record that groups would already have the approval of their tribe or relevant Native American governing group.

Native American Language College Under Section 3 of 2688, A Native American Language College is defined at as (a) a tribally controlled college or university, (b) Ka Ilaka 'Ula O Ke'elikolana College, and (c) a college which has the support of an Indian tribal government traditionally affiliated with that native Language.

Regarding the definition of Native American Language College (a). The Navajo Nation assumes a tribally controlled college to be tribally controlled

Regarding the definition of Native American Language College (b). The Navajo Nation defers to our Hawaiian colleagues' assertion that this is a native-controlled organization

Regarding the definition of Native American Language College (c). The Navajo Nation wants it explicitly understood that such a college would not just have some vague 'general' approval but the tribe's specific approval of this particular proposal. Where two or more non-tribal colleges/universities might apply for grants to work with the same language, the tribal government should be asked to prioritize these.

Tribal Government

Under Section 3 of 2688, the language refers to prior legislation. The Navajo Nation assumes, by definition, a tribal government is tribally controlled.

The Consortium Option

The Navajo Nation requests that tribal government approval be required for the consortium option. As the bill language is written, it allows for the possible exclusion of tribal governments

Section 109 (a) The Inclusion of "Nonprofit Organization"

The Navajo Nation respects and understands what its Hawaiians colleagues are trying to accomplish by including *"nonprofit organizations that demonstrate the potential to become Native American Language Educational Organizations".* However, the Navajo Nation recommends more specific guidelines and minimal characteristics of such organizations be established and defined in the definition section. Unlike the Native American Language Educational Organizations, these organizations will have no track records. The Navajo Nation insists that where there *are* tribal governments such groups must obtain the approval of the tribe whose language they propose to teach.

C) *The 'three + one year' Requirement.*

It is hard to conduct either Language Nests or Language Survival Schools in conventionally funded programs. Most will be in privately- or alternatively funded schools. This will severely limit the initiation of such schools among tribal groups that do not have access to private money.

One other alternative might be programs funded under the Health and Human Services Administration for Native American-funded Native American Language Act grants. These are three-year grants.

As the law is now written, such schools would not be able to make the 'transition' to becoming a Department of Education funded Native American Language Act school. To meet the definition of a "Native American Language Educational Organization", such a group would have to (B) be operating a program now *and* (C) have done so for the preceding three years.

A school that could fund the fourth year might not need Department of Education funds. But a school without some other funds for the fourth year would fail to meet the definition and the program would die.

Unless there are other, compelling, reasons for the three prior year rule, The Navajo Nation recommends changing it to two prior years to allow just such transitions.

D) *The Location of Demonstration Centers.*

The Navajo Nation notes the location of the two "demonstration centers": one in Hawaii and the other in Alaska. These are deserving centers. However, the Navajo Nation is concerned about the lack of such a center in the continental United States.

III. Details.

The Navajo Nation has reviewed the text of S. 2688 in considerable details. It has a number of questions and suggestions that, if addressed, would make this a stronger bill.

A) Section 1. Short Title

The Navajo Nation is concerned about the potential confusion between a Health and Human Services Administration Native American program administered Native American Language Act grant program and the proposed Department of Education program. The Navajo Nation recommends this be clarified.

B) Section 2. Purpose

The Navajo Nation is in substantial agreement with this.

C) Section 3. Definitions

(5) NATIVE AMERICAN.–The term Native American' means an Indian, Native Hawaiian, or Native American Pacific Islander.

This matches definition (1) in earlier law as codified at 25 U.S.C. §2902. The Navajo Nation is concerned at the omission of "Alaskan Natives" in the United States Code and in S. 2688. This is all the more surprising since at Sec 110(a)(2), the bill identifies the "Alaska Native Language Center of the University of Alaska at Fairbanks" as one of two "demonstration programs".

(7) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE COLLEGE.–The term means (A) a tribally-controlled community college or university; (B) Ka Ilaka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College or (C) a college applying for a Native American Language Survival School in a Native American language which that college regularly offers as part of its curriculum and which has the support of an Indian tribal government traditionally affiliated with that Native American language.

Regarding (A) and (B), the Navajo Nation is concern that there are no programmatic requirements on tribally controlled colleges/universities or Ka Ilaka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College'. These Institutions appear to be considered "Native American Language Colleges" whether or not they offer Native American Language programs.

Regarding (C), this appears to allow any college/university that offers a course in a Native American language–and obtain the support of that tribe to become a Native American Language College. There are probably many colleges/universities that already regularly offer a few native language courses. If colleges/universities qualify so easily but educational organizations do so with considerable difficulty, most of the grants may go to colleges/universities. In time, colleges/universities may not offer Native American languages unless they can get them subsidized by the Native American Language Act. The Navajo Nation recommends increasing the requirements for colleges so that there would be some evidence both of substantial native language instruction to college students *and* some interest/concern in teaching native languages to children.

(8) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION.- The Term 'Native American Language Educational Organization' means an organization that (A) is governed by a board consisting of speakers of 1 or more Native American languages; (B) is currently providing

instruction through the use of a Native American language for not less than 10 students for at least 700 hours of instruction per year. And (C) has provided such instruction for at least 10 students annually through a Native American language for not less than 10 students for at least 700 hours of instruction per year for less than 3 years prior to applying for a grant under this Act.

Regarding (A), this definition is unclear. It could mean that "all members" or "some members" speak a Native American language or any Native American Language or the just Native American language the organization teaches. The Navajo Nation is concerned that while continental colleges/universities require the approval of the tribe whose language they are teaching organizations do not. This lack of tribal approval might allow an organization with two members of the governing board who claim to speak Native American language other than that taught by the organization to seek Native American Language Educational Organization to seek funds.

Further, the Navajo Nation questions whether only speakers serve on the governing board. There might be a number of situations where language loss is such that none of the tribal members of the governing board speak the language. Perhaps more relevant criteria would be that a majority of the board are members of the tribal group whose language is being taught. In the continental United States and perhaps Alaska, the tribal group should approve such programs--as with the colleges/universities.

Regarding (B), the way in which the organization might meet the 700 hour requirement is vague here. In the Native American Language Nest requirements, the language specifies "20 hours per week and not less than 35 weeks". Perhaps the vagueness in 8 intentional, to allow for instance, intensive programs of 48 hours a week for 15 weeks. The Navajo Nation recommends this be clarified.

Regarding (C), The Navajo Nation poses the same concerns about the "700 hours" stated above about (B). In addition, the Navajo Nation notes that very few programs outside of Hawaii will meet the three prior year requirement. This will benefit mostly existing private Hawaiian programs. They deserve support. They have been doing extremely good work that can serve as an example. However, the Navajo Nation is concerned that by the time that other organizations become eligible, all the available funds will be committed to Hawaii.

(9) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE NEST.--The term 'Native American Language Nest' means a . . .program enrolling families with children aged 6 and under. . .

(10) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE SURVIVAL SCHOOL.--The term 'Native American Language Survival School' means a. . .program. . .to enroll families eligible for elementary or secondary education. . .

Regading (9) and(10), the Navajo Nation is concerned that Language Nests includes six-year olds and that Survival Schools might families eligible for elementary education. In many cases, five year olds (Kindergartners) are eligible for elementary education. The Navajo Nation recommends the overlap be clarified.

(13) SECRETARY--The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Department of Education.

The Navajo Nation is unclear where the responsibilities for these activities will be lodged within the Department of Education. The case may be that this is up to the Secretary of Education's discretion. The Navajo Nation recommends this be clarified.

(14) TRADITIONAL LEADERS.--The term 'traditional leaders' include Native Americans who have special expertise in Native American culture and Native American languages. The Navajo Nation understands the desire to include non-certified people as teachers in such programs. The Navajo Nation is not confident that good "leaders" are necessarily good "teachers". The Navajo Nation recommends using "traditional teachers" rather than "traditional leaders".

At least in the continental United States, there should be some provision for tribes determining who is or is not a language/culture teacher--if tribal governments have some means of determining this. The Navajo Nation does have the means to do so. The Navajo Nation is disturbed when some state or college programs require only a statement from a "tribal elder"--often a relative.

(15) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.-- The Navajo Nation wonders why it is necessary to define both "Native American Language Educational Organization" and "Tribal Organization". The Navajo Nation notes that "tribal organizations" are not included in the list at Section108(a). Perhaps, this definition needed elsewhere. The Navajo Nation recommends this be addressed.

D) SECTION 4. Native American Language Survival Schools

Section 108 (a) IN GENERAL.–The Secretary is authorized to provide funds, through grant or contract, to Native American Language Educational Organizations, Native American Language Colleges, Indian tribal governments, or a consortia of such organizations, colleges, or tribal governments. . .

The Navajo Nation recommends that in the continental United States such consortia should either include the tribal government or the approval of the tribal government, or the Indian Nation's whose language is being taught.

Section 108 (b) (1) (A) ELIGIBILITY.–As a condition of receiving funds under section (a) a[n organization]...shall...have at least 3 years experience in operating and administering a. Survival School, a. . .language Nest, or other educational programs in which instruction is conducted in a Native American language. . .

The intent seems to be that the applicants who have not conducted Language Survival Schools or Language Nests should have at least some experience with a native Language program. The Navajo Nation supports this provision; otherwise, only a few non-Hawaiian programs would be eligible.

On the other hand, the definition of "Native American Language Educational Organization" excludes most would-be applicants. Public, contract, grant, and mission schools that have not run 700 hour programs for the last three years would be excluded. This leaves Native American Language Colleges–although few would be running programs for children. That appears to leave Indian tribal governments.

As worded, the requirement for prior programs could be quite minimal. Perhaps some criteria should be included. Some possibilities: some number of students, perhaps at least ten each year; some minimum of instruction, perhaps half an hour or an hour a day for a school year; some indication of continuity, that (most) students receive instruction for more than one year.

Section 108 (c) (1) (B) USES OF FUNDS.– A. . .School receiving funds under this section shall...provide direct educational services and support services that may also include...support services for children with special needs; transportation; boarding; food service; teacher and staff housing; purchase of basic materials; adaptation of teaching; materials; translation and development; or other appropriate services.

The list includes almost everything needed to conduct a school. The Navajo Nation is concerned about this. This could lead to a situation where an organization asks for funds to fund their total program although they were providing intensive language instruction to as few as 15 students. It could also lead to situations where an organization might be well funded while comparable organizations would receive nothing. The Navajo Nation recommends that the list of direct and support services should be pared down and that direct or support services should be provided only for the students involved in the intensive language instruction.

Section 108 (c) (1) (C) USES OF FUNDS.-- A. . .School receiving funds under this section shall...provide direct or indirect educational and support services for the families of enrolled students on site, through colleges, or through other means to increase their knowledge and use of the Native American language and culture. ..

Again, this is commendable but it should be made clear that this refers *only* to services that directly increase their knowledge and use of the language. Unrelated instruction might be seen as 'payment' of a kind other less-well funded programs could not afford.

Section 108 (c) (2) (A) USES OF FUNDS.--A Native American Language Survival School receiving funds under this section may...include. . .programs for students who are not Native American language speakers but who seek to establish fluency through instruction in a Native American language. . .

Again, this is commendable. However, the Navajo Nation is concerned that funds being scarce, funding significant numbers of non-Native Americans in some programs would reduce the number of funds for Native American students in other programs. There should be some limits on this. For instance, non-Native American students could be included as long as they do not pre-empt Native American students. No class or program would have more non-Native Americans than Native Americans.

Section 108 (c) (2) (C) USES OF FUNDS.--A Native American Language Survival School receiving funds under this section may...provide special support for Native American languages for which there are very few *or no* remaining Native American language speakers.

The Navajo Nation recommends deleting "or no" or add something like "child-speakers". The Navajo Nation is unclear as to whom would teach a language with no speakers. Further, the Navajo Nation is extremely suspicious of efforts to reconstruct languages no longer spoken.

Section 108 (d) (1) CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY LANGUAGE USE DEVELOPMENT--The Secretary is authorized to provide funds. . .to. . .[organizations] for the purpose of developing...comprehensive curricula. . .

The Navajo Nation recommends, at the very least, this should be limited to organizations that are actually providing some minimum of services to children. See the suggestions a §108(b) above.

Section 108 (e) TEACHER, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT.--
The Navajo Nation is concerned about this whole section. It's hard to believe that the funds that might be made available could fund all the services listed in §108(c)(1)(B)(i-ix) and §108(e) for more than one program. A program so well funded could never serve as a "demonstration" program. Such a program would not be replicable.

Section 108 (f) ENDOWMENT AND FACILITIES.--
The Navajo Nation is concerned about this whole section. It's hard to believe that the funds that might be made available could fund all the services listed in §108(c)(1)(B)(i-ix) and §108(e) for more than one program. A program so well funded could never serve as a "demonstration" program. Such a program would not be replicable.

E) Native American Language Nests

Section 109 (a) IN GENERAL.--The Secretary is authorized to provide funds. . .*to nonprofit organizations* that demonstrate the potential for becoming Native American Language Educational Organizations. . .

Nonprofit organizations are not defined in Section 3. Definitions. Apparently, the intent is to say that those seeking funds for Language Survival Schools would have to have prior experience. Those seeking funds for Language Nests would not.

Enabling groups to get started is commendable. However, there needs to be clarification about what kinds of non-profit groups would be eligible. There is potential for non-Native American organizations to seek funds. Further, criteria of how nonprofit organizations would "demonstrate potential" need to be established..

Again, in the continental United States, such groups should have the approval of the tribe whose language is to be taught.

Section 109 (b) (1) REQUIREMENTS.--A Native American Language Nest program receiving funds under this section shall...provide instruction and child care through the use of a Native American language or a combination of the English language and a Native American language for at least 10 children for at least 700 hours per year;

This invites abuse. In a worst case scenario, an organization might provide 700 hours of "English language and a Native American language" in which there were only token amounts of the Native Language. This is potentially contrary to the definition of "Native American Language Nest" at §103(9). If this is allowed, the law should specify some allowable minimum amount of time in the Native American language--350-600 hours in nothing but the Native American language but it would be better that any English-language instruction is *in addition to* the 700 hours of native language instruction.

F) Demonstration Programs Regarding Linguistic Assistance

Section 110 (a) (1) & (2) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.--The Secretary shall provide funds. . .for the establishment of 2 demonstration programs. . . Such demonstration programs shall be established at...Hawaii *and* Alaska.

The Navajo Nation is concerned that neither of the "demonstration centers"--which appear to be resource centers which will also conduct at least one demonstration center--are in the continental United States. It is hard to believe that such centers would be able to provide much assistance to programs in the continental United States.

Section 110. (a) (2) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.--The Secretary shall provide funds. . .for the establishment of 2 demonstration programs. . . Such demonstration programs shall be established at...the Alaska Native Language Center of the University at Fairbanks. . .to conduct

a demonstration program. . .and other assistance in. . .language documentation, language preservation. . .

All the activities of the Hawaiian center, with the possible exception of conferences, seem rather closely related to instructing children. The last two activities cited above for the Alaskan center do not.

Section 110 (d) ENDOWMENTS AND FACILITIES.--The demonstration programs authorized to be established under this section may establish endowments for the purpose of furthering their activities relative to the study and preservation of Native American languages, and may use funds to provide of rental, lease, purchase, construction, maintenance, and repair of facilities.

It's unclear whether it is intended to use federal funds to establish endowments. This seems to be suggested for Language Survival Schools at §108(f). While the Navajo Nation is certainly not opposed to these demonstration centers seeking outside endowments, the Navajo Nation has serious concerns about using federal funds for such.

The Navajo Nation is also concerned about the "rental, lease, purchase, construction, maintenance, and repair of facilities." The Navajo Nation believes that providing such funds for some projects would deprive other worthy projects of funds for direct instruction.

IV. Possible Omissions.

A) *Operational Details.*

The Navajo Nation is concerned about the lack of specificity of where and how this program would be housed within the Department of Education.

B) *Allocation of Funds by Program-type.*

The Navajo Nation is concerned about the lack of specificity as to what proportion of the funds might be used for the three program-types--and the fourth program the Navajo Nation is proposing. The Navajo Nation is also concerned about the lack of a cap on the amount that could be awarded to specific programs of the various program-types. The Navajo Nation assumes that funding will be scarce. Effort needs to be made that as many programs as possible are funded, even if at lower levels.

C) *Lessons to be Learned from the Experience.*

The Navajo Nation is concerned about the apparent lack of effort to learn from this experience. The Navajo Nation recommends that the demonstration centers attempt to develop a study of what factors seem to make success of such programs more likely.

D) *Follow-up.*

The Navajo Nation is concerned about the apparent lack of follow up. Organizations may not have the time or the interest to follow-up these students. The federal government should. The Navajo Nation recommends that the demonstration center be asked to compile data on the program's students and some comparable students. Perhaps with funds set aside--follow up these students five and ten years later.

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

A. Brian Wallace, Chairman

Testimony in support of S. 2688

Native American Languages Act Amendments of 2000

with

Steven James, President, Washiw ‘itlu Gawgayay

Thelma Tripp, Board Member, Washiw ‘itlu Gawgayay

July 20, 2000

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Introduction:

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California is pleased to have the opportunity to testify before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in support of S. 2688, to amend the Native American Languages Act to provide support for Native American Language Survival Schools. The Washoe Tribe, and Washiw 'itlu Gawgayay, a 501(c)3 non profit corporation, in February of 1997, opened the doors on a language immersion school now attended by 20 students pre-K through 9th grade. (It took three years of preparation in our communities before we were ready to open our community school.) In the three and one-half years we have operated the school, we have both made a substantial renewal of our language and the created a new Washoe paradigm for indigenous education by educating our students well in this context. The school has been a great success, and every day those of us who participate in this community of learners are cognizant of the fact that we are making history.

Background of the Washoe Tribe

The center of the Washoe ancestral homeland is Da'aw 'a:ga'a, *'The Lake (Tahoe)*, and for 10,000 the Washoe people occupied and controlled over 4,000 square miles of land in and around Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Nevada Crest. Following the California Gold Rush and the discovery of the Comstock silver load, the Washoe Tribe was removed from the Lake Tahoe Basin and forced on to one 40 acre parcel of land located in the Carson Valley, and the population was reduced from 3,000 Tribal members to 300 members. Since that time, the Tribe has struggled to reestablish its population, homelands, and culture. Currently Washoe Tribal lands, which total approximately 70,000 acres, are located are located in 8 different counties in western Nevada and eastern California, and there are now 1,587 Tribal members and 545 school aged (K-12) children. The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California is a federally recognized Indian tribe and the governing body of the Tribe is organized under the provisions of the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 (48 State 984). The Tribal government provides numerous services ranging from law enforcement and courts to environmental and cultural resource protection to social welfare and education programs.

The Washoe People, called the Washishiw *'Washoe People from Here'* are of a linguistic group considered unique because the Washoe language is not related to surrounding language families,[1] which supports that which our Elders tell us: the Washishiw have always lived on this land. Additionally, we were among the last Native People on this continent to suffer significant contact because of the geographic barrier of the Sierra mountains to the west, and the Great Basin desert to the east.[2] Colonization of the Washoe homelands happened so quickly as a result of the California gold rush, that it lead President Cleveland in 1887 to predict the imminent extinction of the Washoe People and abolition of Washoe tribal homelands. Since that dark time, the Washoe Tribe has focused on the following priorities; the maintenance of Washiw cultural sovereignty, protection of the freedom to express Washoe traditional lifeways, protection and repatriation of traditional tribal homelands, and the advancement of Washoe political and economic self- determination. We have not only survived but made great progress in rebuilding our nation and our culture.

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[1] Jacobsen, William H. Handbook of the North American Indians: Vol. 11 Great Basin; "Washoe Language" Smithsonian Institution, Washington 1986

[2] D'Azevedo, Warren L. Handbook of the North American Indians: Vol. 11 Great Basin; "Washoe" Smithsonian Institution Washington 1986

Need for Support of Native Language Immersion Schools

Many Native American languages have been lost and many of the surviving languages are threatened. When we initiated our language immersion effort, the number of fluent speakers who learned the language in infancy was rapidly diminishing, with only about 90 speakers, almost all of them over the age of 50 remained. Today 11 of those speakers no longer leave tracks on the earth, and of those four were founders of the Native Language Nest in our community. Now most of our speakers are in their 80's.

From the perspective of the Washishiw, it is the complexity of indigenous thought and traditional cultural knowledge through our languages that stands to be lost. It is this complexity that speaks to the renewal of our lands and our medicinal knowledge. It is this complexity that created the great civilizations from which each modern indigenous culture springs. And today, in our fast-paced world, it is our immersion students who can now address this complexity. Today they often stand and deliver prayers in their language, it is they who can articulate the ancestral knowledge we so treasure. It is these students who are now the ambassadors of our traditions. Because we are watching these students flourish, it is our firm belief that knowledge of our culture through their ancestral language makes a proud, steady, and engaged student. We are reversing the BIA Indian boarding school policies that sought to "educate the Indian out of"[3] our ancestors and destroy our languages. Our students will not become proficient just in the industrial and domestic arts, but for the first time in history have their sights set on becoming scholars for the future.

Washiw Wagayay Mangal

'House Where Washiw is Spoken'

Conscious teaching of the Washiw language to our children and grandchildren (rather than the natural 'passing on' from one generation to another) by immersion teaching methodology was born in the Dresslerville Head Start in the Spring of 1995. By the spring of 1997, the Washoe program had opened an independent private language immersion lab school in a Tribal building made available in the Dresslerville Community of the Washoe Indian Reservation. In September 1997, Washiw Wagayay Mangal was opened in a converted convenience store with four Elder Speaker teachers, a Project Organizer, and eventually two Language Teacher's Aides.

Enrollment increased from 10 pre-K through 2nd graders in 1997 to 18 students pre-K through 7th in year two, and finally to our present student body, numbering 22 in grades pre-K through 9th grade. We are at our limit in terms of space at this time, with a growing waiting list of students interested in attending the school. Last fall we added a young Washoe tribal member with a degree in elementary education to Washiw Wagayay Mangal. First, all of the children who attend school here are fluent English speakers when they enroll. We are teaching our children and grandchildren all required academic subjects (math, literature, the sciences, history, social studies, language, and the arts) in the medium of our ancestral language, and we are pairing that with Washiw traditional cultural knowledge

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[3] Mabel James, Washoe Elder, personal communication 1993. She once said that the Indians had had the "Indian educated out of them". When we asked her later about this, she said, "Yeah! At Stewart [Indian Boarding School]".

There is a Washiw word that is spoken with a lot of respect here Washiw 'itde'a *'on Washiw land'*. This word embodies the Washiw traditional ways, and means *'Washiw advice, teachings, to-tell-you, to-show-you,* which is the traditional way in which knowledge is passed on. This word describes teaching, but it also alludes to what a well-taught and considerate Washiw person full of respect and humility as one who understands and embodies this word will be. This word specifically describes Elders passing their knowledge on to younger relatives. This is not just a simple word, but a word that describes the Washiw philosophy of life. It is a sacred word. There are other words in the Washiw language that are also this powerful.

We are teaching in a multi-age, inter-generational collaborative and cooperative school community setting, and we are doing so in a school that is often without walls. Field work is an integral element of our curriculum because it brings the teachings alive for our children, taking them out onto the land to work together, to be free with their Elders to rediscover the traditions that they seek to preserve. We are constantly building field work into our curriculum. We also are constantly utilizing scholars, both Native and non-Native, such as professors from the University of Nevada and scientists in the fields of hydrology, geology, botany, ethnography, linguistics, history — whose knowledge we look to employ for the preservation of our lands and environment for the future. We have worked extensively with the Tribal Environmental Resources Program to create a traditional plant field guide. Hand in hand, Elders and children, they are the embodiment of all that is valuable in our country.

Our students are involved in the daily development of new curriculum for our program, for while there are models we use as guides, the work we do in the classroom is made new by continually striving to do it through the Washiw language. In this way, the children see their teachers learning alongside them, and this contributes substantially to our stated goal that we develop lifelong learners in our school community.

Educational Goals

The following mission statement for the Washiw itlu gayayagy, was written in March of 1997. It includes the thinking of our founding elders and community members along with four certified teachers, two of whom are tribal members.

> Recognizing that the perpetuation and renewal of the Washiw language in the academic setting is valid and vital for the preservation of indigenous language and culture, we are utilizing the expertise of Washoe tribal Elders and traditional speakers to teach academic subjects in a setting where the Washiw language is used as the medium of instruction in an immersion language school. We will create a strong community in support of language renewal and lifelong academic success. This will include students, parents, teachers, elders, researchers, and educators involved in the Nevada public schools. The school will continue to be a site of ongoing research into

> language acquisition, methodology, and the Washiw language and culture. An existing library will be preserved, expanded and continue to serve the school and larger community.

Four specific objectives for Washiw 'itlu Gawgayay were articulated in April 1997 when the organization filed for Nevada State nonprofit status:

1. To conduct educational programs and studies for the Washiw Indians and the general public which will record, preserve, rejuvenate, and advance the understanding and importance of the Washiw language.
2. To research the language and history of the Washiw Indians and their ancestral peoples and promote the understanding of the philosophy, linguistics, and social and religious elements contained within the language.
3. To obtain facilities for Washiw 'itlu Gawgayay to serve as a teaching center and a depository for the archives, artifacts, and contemporary materials relating to the study of the language and history of the Washiw people.
4. To publish educational materials that enhance the study and preservation of the Washiw language and history.

The Success of the Washoe Language Immersion School

Statistics and experience shows that there is inadequate education of Washoe children in the extant public school system. This is reflective of the performance of Native American children on standardized tests nationally and their high drop out rate. The public education of our children was recognized as an abysmal failure by the Executive Order on Indian Education signed by President Clinton on August 8, 1998.

For the past three generations, the Washoe Tribe and Washoe people have continued to move forward and recover from the near genocide of the early part of this century, but our progress has been hindered by the inability of the public school system to adequately serve the Washoe student population. It has become evident that, in general, Washoe children are not served well in the public school system.[4]

In three generations of having been educated in the state and federal school system, we have an educational baseline. We are now asking you to consider that among our People there is a new paradigm—one that combines the best of our culture with the academic rigors of your system. Although some of us have been very successful: we now have Washiw educators, Washiw medical doctors, Washiw lawyers, geologists and even successful bankers and business people, the majority of our children are not succeeding in your schools. The reasons for this lack of success have been that are well documented in anthropological and educational literature.[5]

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[4] Of course there are exceptions to this, and some children do exceptionally well in the surrounding community public schools as well as in college.

[5] T.L. McCarty et al "Classroom Inquiry and Navajo Learning Styles: A Call for Reassessment; Mehan, Hugh "'What Time Is It, Denise?': Asking Known Information Questions in Classroom Discourse"; Diaz, Stephen et al "Sociocultural Resources in Institution: A Context-Specific Approach"

Our children are no exception. We know there is much more. Our Elders tell us that the values of respect, of community, of working together and respecting one another, of taking care of the weak, of sharing whatever we have are the tenants of our culture. These core Washiw values need to be a part of the education we provide to our children. Our language embodies these values, these memories, if you will, and we have been instructed to not forget these things.

We are not seeking to return to the pre-contact period. Obviously our world has been changed. However, we do recognize that which is the "essence/soul/foundation"[6] of our culture: our language. As the Hawaiian people have said before us, we do not disrespect the English language. We are not precluding the use of English and recognize the need for English language skills. Again, all of our children are fluent speakers of English *before* they enroll in our immersion school. We are a community now trying to bridge a break with our past. The same cultural skills, values and will that enabled the Washoe people to thrive faced with the natural environmental challenges of the homeland prior to contact—these are the skills that will enable the Washoe people to succeed in the 21st century. We can adapt and change, but we have rediscovered that there is much we bring to the table that must be incorporated in the education of our children.

We have now a community of learners in our immersion school—a community from Elders to the tiniest child, hand in hand, the way it has always been. We are once again instilling a strong sense of community and extended family in our children, and the confidence and self esteem that we see growing from within this school community is impressive. Our children are reclaiming the sense of ancestral responsibility for the care of their homelands, and have a deep understanding of environmental sciences and cultural values that we as parents were distracted from in our own education.

It is a unique perspective that we bring before you today, and it springs from our knowledge of biological well-being. We're the only people who have a perception of what it is to be truly healthy in this place, on this land. The biological destruction of our homeland has brought The Lake (Tahoe) to the brink of disaster. It has been said that Tahoe is "a totem nationally for the environment".[7] If one looks carefully at this idea, then the United States policies that seek to mediate this destruction of the environment, to save endangered plant and animal species from the goshawk to the old growth forests should now look carefully at the protection of the cultural diversity of mankind.

We know that our traditional perspective strengthens our children. It strengthens us—their parents, and even our Elders as they tell us they are remembering things they thought they had forgotten. In the first year, all four Elder speaker teachers became literate in their ancestral language—something that is now commonplace at our school. We have some very strong evidence from educators teaching students who have matriculated from our school, and from educators who work with our program from the University of Nevada, Reno. For example, a direct quote about one of our students from his new public school teacher is, "in 15 years of teaching the first grade I have never had a better student come through my classroom…He knows how to listen, and how to learn, and it has been a joy to teach him this year."[8] This teacher actually thanked us for sending him such a model student.

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[6] Washiw 'itlu Gawgayay Mission Statement, December 14, 1994

[7] Lein, 1999

I would like to share with you that we had one student who was going to be sidelined into a special education program by himself because he wasn't reading English at the end of his second grade year in a public school. His mother brought him to us, and by the end of his third grade year he was literate in Washiw. This year we have him reading in English, and testing above his grade level in mathematics. The child is not and was not differently abled. We don't know why this classification so wrongly happens to our children in public school classrooms (although we suspect racial bias is one reason), but we know that we can do better, and that taking this child out of a mainstream classroom helped him to realize his potential.

The Washishiw have a sacred duty to ensure that our children have the opportunity and skills necessary to succeed, provide benefits for themselves and their extended family and fulfill their role within Washoe society. This cannot be done if our children are not learning and are disregarding the basic traditional values of our society. What is the Washoe Tribe doing to address this critical need? The Tribe did not go to the federal government or to the state governments for a solution. Rather the Washoe Tribe and other Indian tribes have looked inward, and we went to our tribal elders, who are the traditional teachers in our culture[9].

The Movement at Home and Abroad

Without a dime of federal assistance the Washoe Tribe established a non-profit, on-reservation, school to educate our children. This school is built upon the volunteer efforts of our elders and advocates within our community. We had a potluck in February of 1994 and asked the community to gather and discuss whether or not they would like to see the language renewed, and we packed the community gym. It was concerned parents who got this going, we are the generation that didn't learn to speak Washiw. Most of our parents spoke Washiw, but had been taught not to pas this knowledge on to their children. The governmental campaign to erase our languages was pretty effective. It is our Elders who continue to lead this movement in our communities, though, and we are proud to be here today alongside them, in support of their knowledge and their generosity.

We are also humbled by being on a panel with the Hawaiian People, and with the representatives from the Piegan Institute. We always say that we are only as strong as the hand of friendship that has been extended to us, and these hands are here today, and they are strong, capable hands, and they have shared many things with us. First they encouraged us, and then they told us how to found a Language Nest. As we continued to meet and communicate, they told us what to watch out for. They watched us grow, and gave us good criticism. We have, in turn hosted others at our school—the Northern Paiute people at Pyramid Lake are teaching language in their high school and would like to found an immersion Language Nest. Last month we hosted a visit from 5 Laguna Pueblo people who also would like to found a Language Nest in their home community. They left stronger, and a story they told us about how all of our children are stars became a part of our curriculum and was re-enacted by our students for their families during our graduation ceremonies this year.

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[8] Mr. Henry, Auburn Elementary School teacher, personal communication 1999

[9] Their teaching responsibilities extend not only to children but also to adults to whom knowledge is continuously passed down.

Experiences of established Native Language Nests and Native Language Survival Schools globally erase away any doubt about the effectiveness of immersion language teaching in our children's lives. We have all shared our programs successes and failures in an effort to renew our languages. When we speak of Language Nests globally, there are indigenous peoples world wide who embrace this notion, from the Catalian people in Spain and France to the Sami people in Norway to the Inuit people in Greenland to the Maori people in Aotearoa (New Zealand). These are the peoples who have, before us, made Native Language Nests, and so we are not isolated from the global community but instead a very real part of it. It makes this legislation good foreign policy as well.

Financial Need at Washiw Wagayay Mangal

At our school we volunteered at first in our program, and although committed volunteers can do a lot, a school needs financial resources and facilities. The Washoe Tribe provides facility space, administrative support, and such funding as the Tribe could afford on a very limited budget. Beyond the Tribe, the school has been able to secure periodic funding from private foundations, and just this year, we received some federal assistance through a discretionary grant from the Administration for Native Americans. But every year it is a struggle to find funding for our school. Were we to send our children to the surrounding community public schools they would spend some $5,000 a year to educate our children, but we choose to keep them at home in our community to study in their ancestral language. This is a point we will come back to many times, but it is an important one. This is our conscious choice.

What will this legislation mean to us? These funds will enable us to provide our children with the highest quality education, strengthen indigenous languages, and will strengthen traditional indigenous cultures. It will mean access to cutting-edge immersion teacher training and it will strengthen our teachers. Our children will have better facilities, better nutrition and better teachers and they will continue to grow stronger for the future.

Washiw strength has also always been a cultural value here, and we look forward to the day when we no longer have to take time away from making our programs better and stronger to worry about having the resources to continue operating them.

This is our opportunity to preserve and protect the diversity of Indigenous People's who are speaking and teaching by speaking their ancestral languages. To us, our Elders are national treasures, as is their knowledge. And every day that we return Elders to the earth, we lose one of these treasures and all that they harbor.

As leaders of this great country, we feel you have a duty to the American people to protect this diversity. One of the most dramatic reasons is the way languages differently mirror our understanding of the world we live in. The importance of speaking more than one language is not always clear to those who speak only one—they are threatened by hearing a language they do not understand. There are scholars who feel the same way that we do: that speaking more than one language is truly good for fostering understanding between peoples. This scholar teaches at San Francisco State University and is newly studying the Italian language:

> Old World-cultured Europeans and the upheaved millions who have migrated in the last half century represent opposite means, but the end is the same—they move among languages—while most of us who were culturally isolated on the great land-mass of North America speak English at best. Already, we are a growing minority. Generations hence, our descendants will say to their children, "Once there were people who spoke only one language" and the children will be amazed. But I have become determined to survive with the fittest.[10]

Americanized is a relatively new word that describes the homogeneity of the dominant culture. We offer, as Native People, rich and complex traditions and languages that can only make this country richer.

The current state of Native American cultures and languages is not the incidental result of "modernization" or "westward expansion". It was the direct and intentional policy of the US to destroy Indian tribes and Indian cultures. This policy was expressed in acts of war, in acts of cultural genocide, in government child removal and institutionalization policies, in termination acts, in intentional failure to provide protection from civilian atrocities. The United States has a moral obligation to help enable Indian tribes to undo this past wrong and to reestablish cultural systems, including traditional education systems. What better measure of the magnificence of this great country than to recognize errant past policies and to create new ones that will enable those harmed to heal?

Proposed Ammendments/Changes to S-2688

Amendment 1: Section 111

After careful consideration of the existing and prospective need, we urge that this section be amended to provide a specific level of funding authorization to provide the Administration and the appropriators with a target level of funding.

We have operated Washiw Wagayay Mangal for 3 ½ years on the heart of volunteers and a shoestring budget cobbled together from a range of sources. The lack of secure funding limits the program and distracts staff and even students who have offered to sell what little they own to raise the funds necessary to keep the school open. Our teachers and children have become tremendous fundraisers, but this should not be their responsibility. It takes away from the time and energy needed to insure that we deliver the best education possible to the children. The 2 million dollars a year currently spent by the United States government through the Administration for Native Americans for indigenous language renewal is not enough and is clearly insufficient for the operation of Language Survival Schools. We are providing a full education for children who do not regularly attend another school, and we should be funded at a level equal to the funds spent on their peers in public schools in the surrounding community.

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[10] Frances Mayes, Bella Tuscany, Broadway Books 1999

As one of our friends--Steven GreyMorning--who founded the Arapaho Language Nests, always says: if the United States government were to spend a fraction of what was spent taking our languages away to renew them we would have no problems finding funds to do this work.

Ammendment2: Amend Section 108 to add the following subsection

"(g) Pilot Native American Language Survival Schools. The Secretary is directed to provide funds through grant or contract, to five pilot Native American Language Survival Schools, which meet the eligibility criteria set forth in this section and have demonstrated success, with priority given to the schools with the greatest financial need and teaching the most endangered languages."

It is important that the funding of actual operating Native American Language Survival schools be made a priority for the Secretary of Education. We want to ensure that if this bill enacted and funded, eligible existing schools will receive the funding necessary to continue their efforts.

Amendment 3: Amend Section 110 to include the establishment of a national clearinghouse of information gathered from the experiences and data generated by Native American Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nests around the nation.

Amendment 4: Section 4(c)(2)(C) be amended to add the following sentence:

> "To support research efforts that directly aid in the development of materials used specifically for language dominant site-based educational programs."[11]

In order for the bill to be useful to languages with "no remaining Native American language speakers", I would recommend defining the research component more specifically. We also respectfully suggest that the research agendas in our communities be set internally by speakers of our respective languages, so that we may do our own research from the inside out this time--in concert with the scholars who have contributed most significantly to our programs.

Recommended Administrative Actions

We have a great need for research to be done to contribute to our programs. We have participated in the regional and national meetings held to fulfill the objectives of the Presidential Executive Order on Indian Education held by the Department of Education in Phoenix last March and later in May in Albuquerque. We opened a dialogue on indigenous immersion language teaching at those meetings, and we know we touched some hearts because many people told us so. In Albuquerque we met with indigenous educators from all over the country, and we were told there is money for research in Indian education set aside. We respectfully suggest that there be an immersion summit where the gains we have made to create this new paradigm in education can be discussed and the research agenda set by the leadership in this movement. If there are strategies that need to be discussed concerning the way the monies that may be allocated for this legislation should be used, we would like to participate in that discussion, and we would like to invite the founders and speakers who work in the Native Language Survival Schools to our homeland where we would be honored to host such a meeting.

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[11] Daryl Baldwin, Miami speaker and Native scholar, personal communication 2000

We have discussed the need for a Native American Language Education Summit with the Director of the Office of Indian Education, and we strongly urge the Department of Education to use discretionary funds to convene such a summit this fall.

Conclusion

It should be reinforced that Native Language Nests and Native Language Survival Schools and the speakers who direct these programs should continue to lead this initiative. If you empower people who are not strong proponents of Native Language Survival Schools to receive this funding, you will again be draining our strength.
This legislation states clearly that Native Americans must make it through the critical start-up period of three years of operation of these schools before they are eligible for this funding. Please do not reduce or change that portion of this legislation.

I would like to close by introducing two Elder Speakers of the Washiw language: Steven James, who is the president of our school board and another board member, Thelma Tripp. Both of these Elders, whom earlier I referred to as national treasures, work at Washiw Wagayay Mangal as teachers. Both are sacrificing their retirements to do so. I am honored to present them to you today, and they will be speaking of a trip made over 100 years ago to Washington DC to ask the federal government for a school of our own. I have attached the transcription from the videotaped interview where we learned of that story to this testimony.

Steven James will speak Washiw, and Thelma will translate for you. We have planned for him to retell the story of our leaders travelling to Washington DC sometime in the 1880's when the Washishiw first asked the federal government for help building a school, and then to tell you of the success of his peers at Stewart Indian Boarding School and the way that we would now like to create students who are successful on our terms. Then he will illustrate for you the importance of the language in his own life during his service to this country during the Korean war. Finally he will say a prayer for all of us and for this great land.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to all of you.

> ***"You must learn the White man language to survive in this world. But you must learn your own language to survive forever." --Gladys O'Neill, Ajuma'wi, Achuma'wi***

Oral Historical Videotaped Recording of Sylvia Andrews Retelling the Story of the Founding of the Stewart Indian Boarding School to Marvin Dressler, Sr.

Neither of these Elders still leave tracks on the earth today, and this recording was made because we had decided to make a record in the Washiw language for the future, so that our children will not forget their history. Recorded by Laura Fillmore in front of the administration building on the Stewart campus, September 19, 1995.

Sylvia: *We're out here to tell the story of why Stewart was here, and so...and lets be glad that it was here, otherwise we wouldn't have any education at all: that would have been bad.*

Laura: *OK, tell 'em in Indian now, what...what...how you heard, why Stewart was founded.*

Sylvia: Maʔaš he·šišgeʔ leʔ wi·diʔ didamal gulaygi.
Did you know this one, did you hear this a long time ago?

MeLuLu waʔ git ʔulitŋawŋaŋ ʔešku·l gay ʔigi šayʔišgeʔ k'eŋ ʔı·gi gaʔla·me·sa.
The older people, here their children went to school away from here and they didn't like it.

Duʔ Wašiŋton ʔı·yeweʔaʔ ʔida ʔešku·l ʔišil daʔ ʔida gumsemsemaʔ.
Over there, Washington they went to and there they asked them for a school.

Daʔboʔoʔ damal šemuŋye·siŋa *interpreter* gadi·yewšaygi guʔuša Dick Bender k'eʔ luliš geduŋ ʔidaʔ *because that was the you know he was the*

only one [gi·keŋ k'eʔišduŋ ʔıda] *at the time* [hak t'eš k'eŋ] *that understood it* [ʔašaše·sa].
The White-man talk they couldn't understand, and so Dick Bender went a long with them because he was they only one at that time that understood it.

And so they went back to Wašiŋton...[Wašiŋton ʔı·yeweʔ ʔida] Daboʔoʔ dewbe·yu muga·guma waʔ...um...ʔešku·l wa·šiw ŋaŋawŋ ʔišil ga·baʔ ʔida.
They went to Washington and the White leader-president they asked here...school for Washiw children give to us, they said.

Giŋami·miŋ šku·l gay ʔišk'eŋ gi·gi duweʔe·saʔ gumbu·ʔida.
Their children they were going where they couldn't see them, so they asked, they said.

Daʔ waʔe·s duʔ Karlayil helukʔiš *Indian school* ʔɪʔišda lak'aʔ li· gudiŋa megu·weʔ he·š daʔ leʔešuweʔ ʔešku·l gišuwehayaʔ me·hu tešlutiʔ ʔudiš yahayʔetʔišŋa waŋa deye·yelo lak'laʔašaše·haya ʔudi me·hu k'ešaye·s ʔudiš daʔ git le·biha lulahay ʔida ʔiškeʔaluʔ hamuʔaŋawe·s ʔida duʔ daʔ pi·galay muga·gum luligi.
There, not here, over there, Carlyse Indian school way back then--here went one boy they were to watch over, there they took him to go to school, and that boy was newly there and got very ill and they didn't tell his relatives and then the boy died and here he arrived back here and everyone felt bad that he had returned here this way and that they had not told them before he got back all those years ago.

Daʔ Wašišiw helmiw k'eluʔ ʔišduŋ ʔida...um...dewbe·yugiš Wa·šiwa degumdi·ya gedihamup'ayʔiŋa LeʔLeʔ hak'aŋ lediŋa...Dewbe·yu...*I think it was Captain Jim* ʔudi k'eŋa...um...
There, The Washoe People from here, three people went to see the leader-president, their Washiw names I can't remember, that's all I'll say...leader (Washiw—trying to remember)...I think it was Captain Jim and then he was...um...

Marvin: Frederick Dress...I mean, uh...Frederick Snyder?

Sylvia: *Yeah, well, he was here then when I came* [Ye· waʔ gi· detumu waʔ k'eŋ ʔuŋiluligi, li· waʔaʔaš le·bi gulaygi]...
Yes, here he was the headmaster-leader here (Stewart) a long time ago when I arrived he was here.

Leʔ di·damal waʔaʔaš dišku·l gulaygi, *but, a they went back there, and so that's how they got* [ʔišŋa dapi·galaya] Štu·it wi·diʔ waʔ ʔɪyetihaya, Štu·it Wa·šiw ʔišlegeʔ ʔudiš waʔ Muʔušemu ʔišda dimiʔLeLe wewiš ʔešku·l gaŋahayaʔ.
That's what I heard a long time ago, and then they went back there and Stewart, this one, here, they made, Stewart was given to the Washiw and then the kids still ran like everything from there and so my Eldest relatives sort of started to go to school there.

Benny Jim hi·luk waʔ gelu ʔidi geleʔ k'elaʔaʔaš gulay k'eluŋ lak'laʔaʔašhaya ʔida t'eliwhu mamay ʔiŋa geʔešku·l mewilhay ʔiš *one year* [lak'aʔ gum dibeʔ] gelulula ʔɪ·daʔ.
Benny Jim he was here and with it they wanted to make him know things back then, so they told him even though you're really through being a man, start school and for one year he went here, they said.

Dewdiʔiš waʔ t'ɪ·legeʔ gi· mi·gishaʔ lulišgi waʔ ʔida...um hum...ʔišda waʔaŋawaʔ waʔ lulišgi dahak'waʔe·s luliš dišku·liʔe·ššihu helišgi leʔišiʔleʔ.
The trees here that you see here, he planted them all that time back here, and ...um...hum...and then that's good here they did it that way a long time ago, otherwise if they didn't do that, you and I, we wouldn't have gone to school.

Hearing
Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate
July 20, 2000
Russell Senate Bldg. Room 485
S. 2688- A Bill to Amend the Native American Languages Act
Testimony of Dr. Kalena Silva
Director, Ke‘elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language

I ola nō au i ku‘u kino wailua,
I ‘a‘ea mai e ke ali‘i o Kahiki,
Ke ali‘i nāna i ‘a‘e ke kai uli,
Kail ‘Ele‘ele, Kai Melemele,
Kai Popolohuamea A Kane,
I ka wā i po‘i ai Ke Kaiakahinali‘i,
Kai mū, kai lewa,
Ho‘opua ke ao iā Lohi‘au,
‘O Lohi‘au, i lono ‘oukou,
Ola ē, ola lā, ua ola Lohi‘au ē,
‘O Lohi‘au ho‘i ē!

Life has returned to my body,
Its sacredness trampled by the chiefess from a foreign land,
The chiefess who broke the taboos of traveling the deepest ocean,
The Black Ocean, The Yellow Ocean,
The Blueblack-Red-Tinged-Sea of the Deity, Kāne
When our land was inundated by The-Flood-Of-Kahinali‘i.
The now silent sea, the sea that floats on the horizon,
The floating cloud brings forth Lohi‘au.
Yes it is I, Lohi‘au,
Body trampled by the foreign chiefess --
I am now alive!

E nā lālā o ke Kōomike Kuleana ‘Ilikini O ka ‘Aha Kenekoa, aloha kākou:

Aloha members of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, I am Dr. Kalena Silva, Director of Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikolani College of Hawaiian Language of the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. I have come to testify in complete support of S. 2688, while focusing specifically on the role of Ke‘elikolani College's consortium with the ‘Aha Pūnana Leo, a community Native Hawaiian language organization.

I began my testimony with a declaration by Lohi'au, a lover of Hawai'i's volcano goddess, Pele, whom the goddess meets in her dreams of the most northerly of our islands, Kaua'i. Because she lives on Hawai'i island, hundreds of miles away from Lohi'au, Pele sends her sister Hi'iaka to bring Lohi'au to her. In this ancient epic, Hi'iaka falls in love with Lohi'au, moving Pele to kill him in a jealous rage. Many in Hawai'i know that Lohi'au was killed by Pele, a foreigner who came to Hawai'i over distant seas. However, few know that the epic ends with a brother of Pele's capturing Lohi'au's wandering spirit and coaxing it gently back into his body until he is once again fully alive, as if awakened from a deep sleep.

Like Lohi'au, the Hawaiian language is awakening from near death. Still weak from the disastrous effects of past encounters with those from overseas; recently, our language has increasingly benefitted from the desire and commitment of those same people from overseas to support our efforts to revive it.

My own family is typical in that those born before 1900 were fluent Hawaiian speakers, and those born between 1900 and 1920 replaced Hawaiian with Pidgin English. The loss of Hawaiian was due to relentless anti-Hawaiian language campaigns in the schools initiated as part of Hawai'i's annexation to the United States. When I was in high school I developed an interest in learning my ancestral language and pursued it with the help of my grandmother and the budding efforts at the time to teach Hawaiian in Hawai'i high schools and universities. Today I am fluent in Hawaiian and use it everyday as the internal administrative language of our college.

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo began teaching Hawaiian in the 1970s and in 1982 developed a BA program in the language. At around the same time, a group of Hawaiian language teachers and speakers formed the 'Aha Pūnana Leo organization to reestablish Hawaiian as a language of the family and of schools. There are now 2,000 children enrolled in such schools in Hawai'i and the first class of graduating seniors graduated in May of 1999. From the very beginning our university and the 'Aha Pūnana Leo worked together to provide resources for this educational movement. In 1998, Ke'elikōlani College was established through state legislative mandate.

The College has two divisions. The academic programs division includes the bachelor's degree, masters degree, and teaching certificate -- the most developed college program in a Native American language anywhere in the United States. The research and outreach division of the College focuses on language revitalization. It includes a curriculum development component for preschool through college, a new lexicon committee that develops new words for the schools, an in-service teacher training program for teachers already in the schools, a newsletter, a newspaper for the schools, a Worldwide Web Server, an intranet telecommunications system connecting all Hawaiian language schools and offices in the state, and an outreach program to Native America and the rest of the world.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo works very closely with our College. It has powers that our state-funded College lacks and is not impeded by the slowness of government bureaucracy nor by University policies that are not oriented to language revitalization. The 'Aha Pūnana Leo runs two curriculum centers, one focusing on print materials -- books, posters, flashcards, maps, etc. and the other focusing on non-print materials -- videos, audio tapes and CDs for television, computer and radio formats. The 'Aha Pūnana Leo has a materials distribution office from which, in coordination with Ke'elikōlani College, materials are sent to schools throughout the state (visit our coordinated websites at www.olelo.hawaii.edu). It also has a college scholarship program for those wishing to develop fluency in Hawaiian while pursuing a wide range of majors in college and an administrative office that provides direct support for its current total of 11 schools.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo preschools provide children with the language foundation enabling them to continue learning through the medium of Hawaiian in the public school system. The public school program is provided direction by three model laboratory schools that the 'Aha Pūnana Leo and Ke'elikōlani College operate in consortium. Each with preschool through grade twelve, the laboratory schools are located in different types of communities -- one urban, one very rural and attended by an isolated community that never abandoned Hawaiian, and one semi-rural near our University. A strong feature of these laboratory schools is a focus on hands-on learning using Hawai'i's natural environment which provides the basis for Native Hawaiian traditional life.

The consortium between Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani and the 'Aha Pūnana Leo has already been assisting other Native American peoples establish schools, curriculum, teacher development, and technological support along our model. We have assisted the Blackfeet Schools, Tlingit School, Dine College of the Navajo Reservation, and also the Washo School with representatives here at the table with me today. The Hawaiian tradition of aloha requires that we extend assistance to others. This bill will provide us the resources to provide increased assistance properly while further strengthening our model which is currently just 17 years old.

Like Lohi'au, we Native Hawaiians are experiencing a rekindling of life through the revitalization of our nearly exterminated language. We want to join with other native peoples in similar circumstances throughout the United States so that, together, we may all move forward. Although Lohi'au was killed by Pele, her own brother, Kānemiloha'i, brought him back to life. There have been many Pele bills in the history of Native American languages. S. 2688 is her brother, Kānemiloha'i's bill, and through it, our languages, like Lohi'au, can find new life.

Kai mū, kai lewa,
Ho'opua ke ao iā Lohi'au,
'O Lohi'au, i lono 'oukou,
Ola ē, ola lā, ua ola Lohi'au ē,
'O Lohi'au ho'i ē!

The now silent sea, the sea that floats on the horizon,
The floating cloud brings forth Lohi'au.
Yes it is I, Lohi'au,
Body trampled by the foreign chiefess --
I am now alive!

SUSAN MASTEN, PRESIDENT
NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS
PREPARED STATEMENT TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS ON

S. 2688,THE NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2000

JULY 20, 2000

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest, largest, and most representative Indian organization in the United States, I would like to provide this statement for the record on the June 28, 2000, hearing in support of S. 2688, the Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2000.

Throughout the history of Indian Country, there existed, several thousand separate Indian languages. Today, that number has shrunk to approximately 155 languages, mostly spoken by elders and older adults. Linguists warn that, unless financial resources are devoted to language education and immersion for young tribal members, only about 20 Native American languages will survive into the next century. Clearly, the time for Congress to act to preserve indigenous languages is now.

Until the 1950's, the federal government mounted a concerted effort to eliminate Native languages. One of the most widespread tactics was the prohibition against speaking anything other than english at Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools. If a young student was discovered using his or her Native language, he or she would be punished, using tactics such as washing his or her mouth out with soap. Even to this day, the long-term effects of this shameful federal policy exist.

During the 1990's, Congress sought to redress this wrong by enacting the Native American Languages Act, P.L. 101-477. The 1990 Act made it official federal policy to "preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop" their languages. In 1992, the Act was expanded to authorize grants for the protection of indigenous languages. While this grant program is important, it simply is not enough to stop the disappearance of languages at an ever-increasing rate.

S. 2688 would amend the 1990 Act to increase the federal government's commitment to the preservation and revitalization of Native languages. NCAI fully supports this legislation, and commends the focus of this important measure on ensuring that children have access to native languages.

The bill's provisions that would create Native American Language Nests to provide immersion for children aged six and under are laudable. These efforts are especially important since linguistic experts know that it is much more difficult to teach native languages to children who have not been exposed to their native language by the time they are ten years old. In addition, studies have shown that younger children have a higher predisposition to learning languages quickly.

In 1999, NCAI adopted Resolution #VAN-99-058 (attached), which supports efforts to preserve tribal cultures by calling on the federal government to provide funding for tribal cultural recovery to the levels necessary to sustain tribal efforts to preserve, protect, promote, and enhance tribal cultures. S. 2688 is a major step toward achieving that goal, and we urge that Congress enact this important legislation before more native languages die.

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

[redacted]

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THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

RESOLUTION # VAN-99-058

Title: Support for Efforts to Preserve Tribal Cultures

WHEREAS, we the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, all rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is the oldest and largest national Indian organization, established in 1944 and comprised of representatives of and advocates for national, regional, and local Tribal concerns; and

WHEREAS, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of NCAI; and

WHEREAS, the Culture and Heritage/Elders Committee recommends to ourselves and ATNI that we have solemn obligations to perpetuate our cultural identities; and

WHEREAS, our religion, language, traditions, understanding of the Creator's gifts to us are important to insure cultural continuity; and

WHEREAS, the United States government actively suppressed our native cultures directly contributing to their dramatic decline and the Government has the responsibility and obligation to help in our cultural recovery efforts; and

WHEREAS, tribal sovereignty is individually and specifically defined according to a tribes spirituality, its language, and culture; and

WHEREAS, Native culture is inseparable from cultural identity and spirituality; and

WHEREAS, tribal governments have the right to develop their tribal specific cultural practices at all levels in order to preserve, protect, promote, and enhance our cultural integrity.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby support the development of infrastructures which promote cultural education and knowledge to tribal governments and their communities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby call upon the federal government to provide funding sources for tribal cultural recovery to the levels necessary to sustain tribal efforts to preserve, protect, promote, and enhance tribal cultures.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 1999 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Center, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada on July 20-23, 1999 with a quorum present.

W. Ron Allen

W. Ron Allen, President

ATTEST:

Lela Kaskalla

Lela Kaskalla, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 1999 Mid-Year Session held at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Center in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada on July 20-23, 1999.

Colin Baker
Professor of Education / Athro Addysg
University of Wales at Bangor / Prifysgol Cymru, Bangor

I submit the following in support of Senate Bill 2688 at the request of Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College in order that information on the very positive outcomes of Welsh medium education might be available to your Committee in considering the bill.

Welsh has a history with strong parallels with Native American languages and cultures. As is the case with Native American languages, the Welsh language and culture is a central feature of the unique identity of the people of Wales. The linguistic and cultural identity based in the Welsh language is unique to the United Kingdom and is not found elsewhere. Thus like Native American languages in the United States, Welsh is an autochonous or indigenous language of our country and is the sole responsibility of our government in terms of its survival, rather than the responsibility of a foreign country. The importance of the Welsh language to the Welsh people is the reason for the current revival of the language through education and interventionist language planning policies.

A hundred years ago Welsh was spoken by the majority of people in Wales. By the 1950s, however, it was daily spoken by as low as 14% of the population and was dying fast. Policies of the schools, similar to the policies in American Indian boarding schools, played a major role in the loss of Welsh.

Children were forced to use only English in school. Speaking Welsh in school met with being beaten with a cane. Children's performance at school naturally suffered. Not only was their indigenous language rejected but they felt wholly rejected themselves. It was a rejection of their family and community, their traditions and history. Low standards of education typically resulted.

It it hadn't been for Welsh medium education in Wales, it is likely the language would now be almost dead. Welsh parents had given up using Welsh with their children were speaking English to them instead. Welsh was not being reproduced in the home. Therefore Welsh language acquisition had to occur at school. No other institution could produce Welsh speakers.

In 1947 one Welsh medium school was started. It did well in terms of academic achievement. It also did well in terms of mastery of oral and written English. The success story was repeated in other schools.

Now 1 in 5 elementary school children are in schools taught for 50% or more of the time through the medium of Welsh. At the secondary level, 1 in 8 students are in schools taught mostly (e.g. 50% to 95%) in Welsh.

Welsh research (government and academic) shows that schools, where Welsh is used for for content teaching, show higher performance than monolingual English schools. The reasons for such schools out-performing English-only schools are located in the higher self-esteem of the children whose traditional language and culture is celebrated, in the thinking advantages of those with full fluency in two languages (creativity, sensitivity to communication, greater language awareness) and in full literacy in two languages - where children gain access to two worlds of experience, two windows on the world.

It is also clear that the full advantages of Welsh medium education can only occur if the language which has a history of being suppressed, that is Welsh, is given special priority in the school. While academic skills are generally taught through Welsh, these skills readily transfer to English. Students attending Welsh medium schools have access to learning English not only through courses in Welsh medium schools, but also through the extensive presence of English as the majority language in Wales. Students thus also strengthen their English outside school through the media, internet, and contact with the large English population.

Not only has Welsh medium education been a very major factor in preserving the Welsh language, it has also raised the educational standards of children and schools.

We started with one acorn - one school. From that a great oak tree has grown - strong and sturdy.

The same can happen among the indigenous peoples of the United States with political will, educational enthusiasm and being marketed to the public.

U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Testimony of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
July 25, 2000

Gentlemen, the issue that I will discuss concerns the situation that my tribe found itself in after we were awarded our repatriation request from the Wyoming State Museum. Cheyenne River had submitted a request to the museum seeking the return of 4 cultural items that had been identified as coming from the Wounded Knee Massacre. Our tribe entered into a consultation with the museum to return these 4 items and by working together, consulting with each other the museum and the tribe reached an agreement between us whereby our request for repatriation was awarded. I was informed that the museum would submit our tribal notice of intent to repatriate for publication in the federal register and it appeared that everything was in order and that our case would quickly be concluded once the 30-day publication notice was completed. However in May of 1998 I received a telephone call from the museum informing me that the NPS Departmental Consulting Archaeologist had contacted the museum and informed them that our tribal notice had been refused for publication.

The reason why the Consulting Archaeologist had refused to accept and publish our notice was because he did not agree with our tribal identification for the cultural items. We had identified these objects as being sacred objects to our people. And in our request we had clearly stated the need for why we sought their return and we provided the necessary justification explaining our need. I was also told by the museum that the Consulting Archaeologist had recommended to them that because the items had been taken off of a "battlefield" then obviously no right of possession for the objects existed. And if right of possession did not exist then the museum would be free to simply give them back to my tribe and do so without having to go through the repatriation process.

Alarm bells began ringing inside of my head as I continued to listen to what I was being told. What could the Consulting Archaeologist be thinking? I kept asking myself. Not only had he overruled a tribal identification for the items. But he was actually supporting the tribal contention that no right of possession to the items existed for the museum that would allow them to keep them. That should have been a good thing for us. But it wasn't. The reason why it wasn't is that the issue of right of possession is central to NAGPRA law and repatriation. In order for an Indian tribe to return items to their people the question of right of possession must be addressed in their repatriation requests. And if it can be proven that right of possession for an item is not possessed by the museum then a tribe can bring that particular item home because they still own it. A lack of right of possession by a museum helps an Indian tribe to get something back and bring it home.

The Consulting Archaeologists refusal to publish our tribal notice was actually preventing a legal repatriation of cultural items by an Indian tribe from a museum from taking place. Overruling our tribal identification for the cultural items could only be interpreted as informing us that he and he alone "knows" what type of cultural items are sacred to Indian people. Please remember that this is the primary reason why he refused our notice in the first place because he disagreed with our identification for the items. The other issues that I will discuss in this testimony all come from this one point.

I telephoned the Consulting Archaeologist on May 26, 1998 to question him about his actions. I wanted to know what expertise he possessed that allowed him to overrule a tribal identification for a cultural item. And I wanted to know what authority he had and where it comes from that allows him to refuse publishing tribal notice. I really wanted him to show me where it states in NAGPRA law that the Departmental Consulting Archaeologist has the power to do what he had done to us regarding our notice. And when I discussed our situation with him our conversation revolved primarily around the following issues.

1. The Status of Wounded Knee material under NAGPRA law.
2. The status of "battlefield collections" under NAGPRA law.
3. The reliability of museum accessioning records in associating these particular items to Wounded Knee.
4. The issue of right of possession.
5. The authority of the Park Service as it relates to publishing Notices of Intent to repatriate.
6. Written documentation defining their actual authority and the limits of that authority.

The Consulting Archaeologist stated that he believed Wounded Knee material is in a gray area under NAGPRA and that "he" would need more time to consider their status under the law. Furthermore he said that a "battlefield souvenir" which I could only take as stated value for what he thought Wounded Knee material to be, is not a part of NAGPRA. And he went on to state that the museum documentation for the items, the accession records, are what he termed "general" and not implicate in stating that these items were found in association with an individual. He speculated that perhaps the items might have been scattered about and that they might have been part of the battlefield or they might not have been. Since the records are general statements then somehow this casts doubt on the authenticity of the items in associating them to Wounded Knee.

The Consulting Archaeologist admitted that he had recommended that the museum simply give back these items because no right of possession to the objects existed. However I would like to point out that his recommendation is directly related to the accuracy of the accessioning records in authenticating the items and associating them to Wounded Knee. To question the record to support his contention the items may or may not have been part of a battlefield. And then referencing those same records to justify his recommendation to give the items back to the tribe without going through the repatriation process because obviously no right of possession exists for the museum to keep them is hypocritical. Furthermore when the Consulting Archaeologist attempted to describe the Wounded Knee items as battlefield souvenirs and use right of possession as a means to place the items outside of NAGPRA. Then an exclusionary act to NAGPRA takes place. And if the museum had accepted his logic and classified the items as battlefield souvenirs which would place them outside of NAGPRA. Then there is no compelling rule of law to make the museum even consider giving the material back to the tribe.

I asked the Consulting Archaeologist to provide me with official documentation that clearly defines the NAGPRA duties and responsibilities of the Park Service. I told him that I would accept some type of inter-departmental policy document or an office memo perhaps from Secretary Babbitt, where it reads that the Consulting Archaeologist has the authority to overrule a tribal identification of cultural items. I wanted something in writing defining his powers because if he was truly authorized by statue or regulation to do what he had done then our efforts to bring home the Wounded Knee items would be fruitless to pursue. Ending our telephone conversation I drafted a memo to him reiterating my request to receive some type of document that defines his authority. The next action that I took was to contact the museum and inform them that I would be taking this matter to the NAGPRA Review Committee for resolution. There were several issues to address now because of what the Consulting Archaeologist had done and I knew that I needed to address the points that I have previously stated on page 2 and develop counter arguments to those issues in order to make this repatriation happen. I basically addressed 2 questions that best frame what was occurring between the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, the Wyoming State Museum and the National Park Service over the publication of our notice of intent to repatriate.

1. Can the National Park Service refuse to publish a tribal notice of intent to repatriate?
2. What is the authority of the National Park Service in publishing tribal notices of intent to repatriate?

I reviewed the NAGPRA statue and its regulations looking to see where it says that the Consulting Archaeologist can overrule a tribal identification for a cultural item. And I can tell you that no where in the statue or the regulations does it say that the Consulting Archaeologist has the power to overrule a tribal identification of cultural items and otherwise determine that something is not sacred to Indian people. Neither is it written that the Consulting Archaeologist has the power to refuse publishing a tribal notice of intent to repatriate. There is nothing in the language authorizing the Park Service to return a submitted notice and direct that a notice be rewritten because they do not approve of how it may read. The only thing the language states is that the Consulting Archaeologist is responsible for publishing notices in the federal register once a notice has been by his office. That is what the law says and it does not say anything else.

Anyway I contacted the Chairman of the Review Committee and informed her of what had happened to our notice of intent. I discussed with her the implications of the Consulting Archaeologists actions in overruling our tribal identification for the items and his introducing the issue of "battlefield collections." I informed her that if something were labeled as a battlefield souvenir and was therefore considered as not being a part of NAGPRA I explained how this could establish an exclusionary act to the law. I told the Chairman that there was more at stake here than just some federal official mistakenly deluding himself into thinking that he knows more about my peoples belief systems then we do. I felt then and still do today that the Consulting Archaeologists actions constituted what I termed as a "presumption of authority." My contention was that he did not possess the authority to do what he had done and therefore I was obliged to challenge his actions. My only recourse for seeking a resolution to the matter was to bring it in front of the Review Committee and request their input and recommendation for settling the issue. The Chairman agreed to allow me to make a presentation to the Committee during the Sante Fe hearings in December of 1998.

To prepare for my presentation to the Review Committee I drafted an outline for the points that I intended to make. I developed a position paper discussing what I believe could happen to all tribal repatriation efforts if the concept of introducing the category of "battlefield collections" for cultural items could be used by museums to describe their collections. I fully expected to encounter a significant amount of resistance from the Consulting Archaeologist in getting our repatriation effort back on track and get our notice of intent published in the federal register. However when I was called upon to make my presentation the Consulting Archaeologist was given the floor before me. So while I sat quietly at the table waiting for my turn to speak he unexpectedly informed the Committee that he was ready to publish our notice now. This surprising turn of events did away with any need for me to make my presentation. The Consulting Archaeologist had reversed himself and doing so he "blunted my arrows" and I didn't have an issue to fight for anymore. But since I was sitting at the table and still offered the opportunity to speak. I felt that I should at least state for the record that what had happened to us should never be allowed to happen again. I was happy that we had apparently won in our efforts to get the Park Service to publish our notice and I believed that everything was now resolved and that I would shortly receive a federal register notice publishing our notice of intent. I telephoned Wyoming State Museum and relayed to them what had happened at the hearings and told them to resubmit our notice.

In January 1999 the museum contacted me to clarify the tribal identification of the Wounded Knee items. Apparently the notice they were preparing to submit classified the objects as "unassociated funerary objects" an identification for the objects that the tribe never made. So I directed the museum to insert the proper tribal identification for the item's which is sacred objects. The museum complied with the directive and submitted the NOI for publication. But then in February the museum telephoned and told me that the Consulting Archaeologist was again refusing to publish our notice. Once again the refusal to publish our notice concerned the tribal identification for the items. Apparently the original notice submitted to the Park Service, the one that set off this entire matter, had classified the objects as "unassociated funerary objects" and not sacred objects, which is what we identified these items to be. How the unassociated funerary classification got introduced is unknown to the tribe. But apparently the Consulting Archaeologist took the position that when he was in Sante Fe and stated that he would publish our notice the notice he had agreed to publish identified the Wounded Knee items as unassociated funerary objects. So when he received our notice in January and the item's were identified as sacred objects and not unassociated funerary he seized upon this to justify his refusal to accept our notice again. So once again our repatriation effort with the museum had come to a screaming halt. This time I took the only course action left open me to get this matter settled once and for all. And that was to report this latest turn of events to our tribal Attorney Generals Office and request that our tribal attorneys get involved in this case.

In March I met with our tribal attorneys and briefed them about what was happening between the Park Service and us and I believed that we were going to have to go into court to settle this matter. After meeting with the attorneys I contacted the NAGPRA Review Committee Chairman once again and informed her of this latest and most ludicrous turn of events. In writing I requested that the Committee during its May hearings allocate my tribe time on its agenda to make a presentation addressing the events, circumstances, findings and result of the Consulting Archaeologists actions in this case. I also told her that for all intents and purposes I was no longer handling this case. The tribal attorneys were.

More or less removed from actively working on the case but still watching how things were progressing. In latter half of the month of April I had an opportunity to meet with a member of Senator Tom Daschle's staff. Seizing upon the occasion to brief him about our situation with the Park Service I requested his assistance in getting the Senator involved in this case. I believed that if Senator Daschle could intervention on our behalf then surely this fight with the Park Service could be resolved without having to go to court. All I really wanted Senator Daschle to do was make a telephone call on our behalf and ask that the Consulting Archaeologist explain too him his reasons for refusing our notice. Fortunately the staff person agreed with me that the Senator should become involved in our case and he promised to bring the matter to the Senators attention and relay my request to have him intercede with the Park Service on our behalf. But please remember that I was no longer actively working this case and after meeting with the Senators staff person and providing him with a copy of the case file so he could review all of the events that had taken place between us and the Park Service. I really do not know and therefore cannot testify about what eventually occurred so that our notice finally got published. All I do know is that shortly after my contact with Senator Daschle's staff person in May my office received notification that our notice was published in the federal register. I can only assume that Senator Daschle interceded on our behalf and as we say back home did what he had too and lined out the Departmental Consulting Archaeologist and made him do his job.

There is one final point that I would like to make for the record and that is responding to the question: Did the Park Service ever provide my tribe with any documentation that proves that the Consulting Archaeologist had the legal authority to do to us what he did? The answer is no. And to date we still have not received anything in writing from the Park Service defining their duties and responsibilities under NAGPRA.

This concludes my testimony to this Committee.

Prepared by:
Sebastian (Bronco) LeBeau
Preservation Officer
Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Indians' languages near extinction

By Mark Shaffer
The Arizona Republic
July 16, 2000

CAMP VERDE - There are only a dozen speakers of the language left- and only one person under 18 learning it - but Lorraine Sanchez isn't about to give up on the local dialect of Yavapai, once the dominant language of the Verde Valley.

Sanchez leans forward in her wheelchair, listening intently, as the weekly Yavapai language class of the Camp Verde Yavapai-Apache Nation begins. The subject this night, in a language no child has spoken in the home since Harry Truman was president, is the Yavapai words for the trees of the valley. Sanchez reflects back to the long-ago words of her parents and grandparents.

Ahnahla - mesquite, she says, as 14 other mainly elderly people write what they hear phonetically. Ah dtas sah - sycamore. She repeats the word forcefully three times for a woman who has trouble pronouncing the 'dt' sound. Ah yohh - willow, she intones.

After class, Sanchez acknowledged the hardships of trying to save a dying language, one of several Native American dialects in the state on the verge of extinction. She had volunteered to be an apprentice to the young. Only two local teenagers had been willing to learn. One dropped out after a few weeks. The one who remained wasn't even Yavapai.

English dominates

That situation is hardly unusual in a society increasingly dominated by English and Spanish where, short of an influx of money and language immersion for young tribal members, only about 20 of the 155 Native American languages in the United States are expected to survive this century.

Linguists say the situation is grim in Arizona. Consider: of the state's 21 federally recognized tribes, nearly half have 50 or fewer tribal members who can speak their native language.

The number of tribal councils conducting meetings in English has increased dramatically in recent years. Even isolated, growing tribes such as the Navajos, who make up nearly half of the Native American language speakers in this country, face a language crisis. Bilingual educators on the nation's largest reservation say the number of fluent speakers of the language is half what it was a decade ago. Meanwhile, the number of Navajo children speaking only English nearly tripled to almost 30 percent from 1980 to 1990, and educators say that trend has accelerated during the past decade.

Although an anti-bilingual education measure being pushed for the Nov. ballot has targeted Spanish speakers, Native American educators say that if such a law passes, it could end efforts to instruct tribal languages on the reservations. Despite congressional measures in the early 1990s that pay lip service to preserving Native American languages, funding has been limited and the competition for the language-instruction dollar has been intense.

The only hope for the trend to be reversed is youngsters in preschool programs being immersed in the tribal languages by elders who speak the ancient tongues, said Elizabeth Brandt, an Arizona State University anthropologist who has worked extensively with the Apache tribes.

"It's going to take an extraordinary grass-roots effort now to turn this around," Brandt said, adding that tribes need to think seriously about adopting the Hawaiian model of required immersion programs for young people to learn the language and culture.

Many tribes have been in denial, Brandt said, hiding behind a false sense of security based on such reports as the U.S. Census Bureau 1990 Native American study. The study, among other things, reported that there are nearly 150,000 Navajo speakers in Arizona, Utah and New Mexico, and almost 13,000 Apache speakers and 12,000 speakers of the Tohono O'odham/Pima languages in Arizona.

Number question

Those numbers were arrived at by asking Native American census participants only if the person speaks a language at home other than English.

The truth of the matter, Brandt and other experts in the field say, is that there's probably only about one-quarter to one-third that number who actually are fluent speakers. And an overwhelming number of them are old enough to qualify for Social Security benefits now.

"I had a colleague who did a language survey in the Gilson Wash district of the San Carlos Apache Reservation," Brandt said. "He didn't find one speaker of the language under age 18."

That tracks with what Irene Silentman, a bilingual specialist for the Navajo Department of Education in Window Rock, has observed.

'Shocking decline'

"There has been a shocking decline in people speaking our language, especially in the Arizona part of the reservation," Silentman said. "On top of that, we only have one school district in the entire Navajo Nation with immersion and that only involves about 200 students. I wonder how effective even that is, though, because I've walked through the aisles of those classes and never heard any of the students interact in Navajo."

The current malaise in Native American languages is the result of long-standing federal policy to eliminate them, something that has worked all too well, said Jon Reyhner, a bilingual specialist at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff.

After the U.S. government herded Indians onto reservations in the 1800s, the focus turned to eliminating the native languages. One of the favored tactics in Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools, even up to the 1950s, was washing out students' mouths with soap if they spoke their languages at the schools.

That left deep psychological scars among generations of people that carry over to this day. Coupled with the accessibility of mass communications to even the most remote corners of all reservations, the indigenous languages have declined.

"If nothing has happened with the children on their native language front by the time they are 10, you've lost the battle because peer pressure kicks in then and that's where English becomes all pervasive," Reyhner said.

Congress finally officially recognized the dire straits of the non-English languages and passed the Native American Languages Acts of 1990 and 1992, which articulate a government policy of protecting indigenous languages and authorize grants for that purpose. The first grants of $1 million to tribes were given in late 1994, but the lack of funding has made the grants highly competitive.

But problems have remained for many tribes even after receiving grant money.

The Cocopah Tribe near Yuma, which has fewer than 100 speakers, obtained a $300,000 language-renewal grant for a two-year program. But the tribe lost the grant in the midst of setting up the program because of a dispute with the program administrator over the person's 401(k) account, said Kermit Palmer, a tribal spokesman.

Some optimism

Not everything is gloomy, though, on the language front, according to Barnaby Lewis, cultural director for the Gila River Indian Community.

He said casino profits have led to a limited revitalization of the Pima and O'odham languages in central and southern Arizona.

"There are 1,000 to 1,500 people on our reservation who still are fluent and another 3,000 at Tohono O'odham," Lewis said. "But I sense that the attitude toward learning the language has improved a lot in recent times, and that bodes well for the future."

But is it too late for many Arizona reservations?

The native language has all but disappeared on the Ak-Chin, Colorado River, Fort Mojave, Kaibab-Paiute and San Juan Southern Paiute reservations.

Only about 45 speakers of Yavapai remain on the three reservations where it is spoken: Prescott, Camp Verde and Fort McDowell.

"Indian languages are a dying species," said Katherine Marquez, cultural director for the Yavapai-Apache Nation, adding that the tribe has a last-gasp $200,000 grant application to reinvigorate its language. "But you know what? Hebrew came back from the dead, and we can, too."

I maintained a strong belief in my language and culture: a Navajo language autobiography[1]

GALENA SELLS DICK

Galena Sells Dick is a native speaker of Navajo, a language with approximately 160,000 speakers belonging to the huge Athabaskan language family. She was raised in the community of Rough Rock, Arizona, which rose to national prominence in 1966 as the site of the first American Indian community-controlled school. Dick began her teaching career at Rough Rock, first as a teaching assistant, and later as a bilingual teacher. She currently directs the school's bilingual/bicultural program, which is designed to promote both literacy and spoken fluency in Navajo and English.

I grew up in a home where only Navajo was spoken, in Rough Rock, Arizona. We lived in a one-room *hooghan* (an earth-and-log dwelling), with no modern amenities. I learned to greet people by kinship. We never called each other by our English names, only by our Navajo names: *shadí* 'older sister', *shidéézhi* 'younger sister', *shinaaí* 'older brother', *shitsilí* 'younger brother', and so on.

At an early age I learned the values, beliefs, and traditions of my people. For instance, in Navajo we begin prayers with *shimá hahasdzáán, shitaa yáh dilhil.* By this we mean that we have the same relationship to mother earth (*shimá nahasdzáán*) as we have to the person who gave birth to us. The passing on of these values and of history, ritual, and family traditions was done through oral tradition. Navajo had been written in the 1800s by missionaries, but written Navajo had no practical purpose in our lives at the time.

My grandparents never attended Anglo schools, but my maternal grandfather was aware of Anglo schools and how they would change our lives. He warned that one day in the future, only English would be spoken.

My formal education began at the age of seven in a boarding school 35 miles from home. My first teacher was a Navajo woman. I remember

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that she spoke only English and constantly reminded us that we had to speak, read, and write in English. It was confusing and difficult; we had to struggle. The schools operated on a military system, and if we were caught speaking Navajo, the dormitory matrons, who were Navajo, gave us chores like scrubbing the floors. Some students had their mouths "washed" with yellow bar soap.

This shows that even for Navajo educators and school employees, school was not a place for Navajos to be Navajos. The Navajo word for school is *ólta'*, meaning 'a learning place associated with the white man's world'. But the treatment we received in school gave us little to admire about the white man's world or his language.

My first English literacy experiences were with the "Dick and Jane" basal readers. I remember looking at the books and wondering where this fantasy place was. "Will I ever get to see this place?" I wondered. I learned to read by memorizing the forms of individual words and how they looked on the page — the curves and shapes they had. At first I wasn't aware that printed words had meaning. All I wanted to do was remember all the words to satisfy the teacher.

In the fourth grade I transferred to a public school in a bordertown about 200 miles from home. At that time, my father demanded that I learn to speak English fluently. My parents and grandparents wanted me to succeed, even though they had no control over my schooling. They were never informed of what was being taught in school. When school let out in May, I came home and my parents and grandparents would ask if I had been promoted to the next grade. They were happy when we were promoted, but they had no knowledge of what school life was like, or what we had to go through. I grew less interested in school.

I remember once when I returned home from school, my father told me, "*Shi yáazhi* [my little one], I'm going to test you on how much you have learned in school." It was evening and we were all laying on our sheepskins in the *hooghan*. Only a kerosene lamp lighted the house. My father gave me many words to spell. The only word I couldn't spell was bourbon. The next day, I saw that word on a cardboard box my father used to bring groceries back from town. In retrospect, I know this spelling exercise was my father's way of trying to be part of my schooling.

Formal education did change my behaviors and attitudes. I learned to function in another culture. At the same time, I maintained a strong belief in my language and culture. Looking back, I believe this foundation led me to become a bilingual teacher in my own community.

The Rough Rock Demonstration School began in 1966 (see McCarty this issue). It was the first American Indian bilingual school in the country, and the first to have an all-Navajo school board. There was a great need for bilingual teachers and materials when the school began. To meet this need, the school board supported local people in obtaining teaching degrees. As I worked on my degree and in my classroom, I began to learn to read and write my language along with my students. I had to pick up where I stopped when I entered boarding school, because my language and culture had been taken away from me.

Unlike the boarding schools, which made us ashamed of our language and culture, the school at Rough Rock viewed Navajo language and culture as sources of great pride. We call Rough Rock *Diné Bi'ólta'* — The People's School.

Today, the bilingual teachers at Rough Rock are implementing a bilingual/bicultural program that we hope will prepare students to function in two languages and two worlds. When we went to school, all we learned about was Western culture. We were never told the stories that Rough Rock children are now told, and write themselves. We're telling those stories now. In the process, we are reversing the type of schooling we experienced. We see both sides of it, and we're helping children, through schooling, make connections to their own language and lives.

Note

1. An expanded version of this account appears in N. H. Hornberger (ed.), (1997), *Indigenous Literacies in the Americas*. 71-77. Berlin — New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Back to story

Islands of distinct languages dot the Southern California landscape, shaping our society. Islands of nerve cells in the brain control how we speak. The world's endangered languages are isolated islands ever in peril of being overwhelmed. This series explores how language shapes our world and the new discoveries that shape our understanding of language.

LAST IN A SERIES

The Impassioned Fight to Save Dying Languages

More and more voices are speaking up to keep them from being overwhelmed by English and global pressures.

By ROBERT LEE HOTZ, Times Science Writer

HILO, HAWAII--It was not the teachers bearing baskets of feather leis, the fanfares played on conch shells or the beating of the sacred sharkskin drum that made Hulilauakea Wilson's high school graduation so memorable.

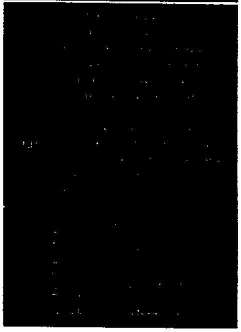
It was this: For the first time in a century, a child of the islands had been educated exclusively in his native Hawaiian language, immersed from birth in a special way of speaking his mind like a tropical fish steeped in the salt waters of its nativity.

It was a language being reborn.

More than an academic rite of passage, the graduation last May of Wilson and four other students at the Nawahiokalani'opu'u School on the Big Island of Hawaii signaled a coming of age for one of the world's most ambitious efforts to bring an endangered language back from the brink of extinction.

The world has become a hospice for dying languages, which are succumbing to the pressure of global commerce, telecommunications, tourism, and the inescapable influence of English. By the most reliable estimates, more than half of the world's 6,500 languages may be extinct by the end of this century.

LOSING CALIFORNIA'S LANGUAGES



"The number of languages is plummeting, imploding downward in an altogether unprecedented rate, just as human population is shooting straight upward," said University of Alaska linguist Michael Krauss.

But scattered across the globe, many ethnic groups are struggling to find their own voice, even at the risk of making their dealings with the broader world they inhabit more fractious.

From the Hoklo and Hakka in Hong Kong to the Euskara in Spain's Basque country, thousands of minority languages are clinging precariously to existence. A few, like Hebrew and Gaelic, have been rejuvenated as part of resurgent nationalism. Indeed, so important is language to political and personal self-determination that a people's right to speak its mind in the language of its choice is becoming an international human right.

California once had the densest concentration of indigenous languages in North America. Today, almost every one of its 50 or so surviving native languages is on its deathbed. Indeed, the last fluent speaker of Chumash, a family of six languages once heard throughout Southern California and the West, is a professional linguist at UC Santa Barbara.

More people in California speak Mongolian at home than speak any of the state's most endangered indigenous languages.

"Not one of them is spoken by children at home," said UC Berkeley linguist Leanne Hinton.

None of this happened by accident.

All Native American languages, as well as Hawaiian, were for a century the target of government policies designed to eradicate them in public and in private, to ensure that they were not passed from parent to child.

Until 1987, it was illegal to teach Hawaiian in the islands' public schools except as a foreign language. The language that once claimed the highest literacy rate in the world was banned even from the islands' private schools.

Teacher Kaipuaala Crabbe and pupils, above, sing at a Hawaiian immersion preschool.
RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

Indeed, there may be no more powerful testimony to the visceral importance of language than the government's systematic efforts to destroy all the indigenous languages in the United States and replace them with English.

No language in memory, except Spanish, has sought so forcefully to colonize the mind. Of an estimated 300 languages spoken in the territorial United States when Columbus made landfall in 1492, only 175 are still spoken. Of those, only 20 are being passed on to children.

In 1868, a federal commission on Indian affairs concluded: "In the difference of language today lies two-thirds of our trouble. . . . Their barbarous dialect should be blotted out and the English language substituted." The commission reasoned that "through sameness of language is produced sameness of sentiment, and thought. . . . In process of time the differences producing trouble would have been gradually obliterated."

Not until 1990 did the federal government reverse its official hostility to indigenous languages, when the Native American Languages Act made it a policy to preserve native tongues.

Hulilauakea Wilson now volunteers at the preschool where he was taught exclusively in Hawaiian.
RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

Her efforts earned her a place in the National Women's Hall of Fame and a certificate of merit from the state Indian Museum in Sacramento. Even so, her language is slipping away.

"I wanted to teach the children the language, but their mothers wanted them to know English. A lot of them want the language taught to them now," Saubel said. "Maybe it will revive."

If it does, it will be a recovery based almost solely on the memories she has pronounced and defined for academic tape recorders, the words she has filed in the only known dictionary of Cahuilla, and the songs she has helped commit to living tribal memory. Tribal artifacts and memorabilia are housed in the nearby Makli Museum that she founded, the first in North America to be organized and managed by Native Americans.

Born on the Los Coyotes Reservation east of Warm Springs, Saubel did not even see a white person until she was 4 years old--"I thought he was sick," she recalled--and English had no place in her world until she was 7.

Then her mother--who spoke neither English nor Spanish--sent her to a public school.

She was, she recalled, the only Indian girl in the classroom. She could not speak English. No one tried to teach her to speak the language, she said. Mostly, she was ignored.

"I would speak to them in the Indian language and they would answer me in English. I don't remember when I began to understand what was being said to me," Saubel said. "Maybe a year."

Even so, by eighth grade she had discovered a love of learning that led her to become the first Indian woman to graduate from Palm Springs High School. But she also saw the other Indian children taken aside at recess and whipped if they spoke their language in school.

In time, the child of an Indian medicine woman became an ethno-botanist.

For linguists as far away as Germany and Japan, she became both a research subject and a collaborator. She is working now with UC San Diego researchers to catalog all the medicinal plants identified in tribal lore.

"My race is dying," she said. "I am saving the remnants of my culture in these books.

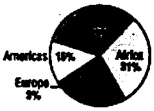
"I am just a voice in the wilderness all by myself," Saubel said. "But I have made these books as something for my great-grandchildren. And I have great-grandchildren."

In its broadest outlines, her life is a refrain repeated on many mainland reservations.

"Basically, every American Indian language is endangered," said Douglas

MANY TONGUES

Total number of languages worldwide: 6,528



Language Distribution
Top 10 language families, in numbers of current speakers

[illegible]	[illegible]
Sino-Tibetan	1.04 billion
[illegible]	[illegible]
Afro-Asiatic	230 million
[illegible]	[illegible]
Dravidian (India)	140 million
[illegible]	[illegible]
Altaic (Central Asia)	90 million
[illegible]	[illegible]

language is endangered," said Douglas Whalen at Yale University's Haskins Laboratory, who is chairman of the Endangered Languages Fund.

As a matter of policy, Native American families often were broken up to keep children from learning to speak like their parents. Indian boarding schools, founded in the last century to implement that policy, left generations of Indians with no direct connection to their language or tribal cultures.

Today, the federal Administration for Native Americans dispenses about $2 million in language grants to tribes every year.

But even the best efforts to preserve the skeletons of grammar, vocabulary and syntax cannot breathe life into a language that its people have abandoned.

Still, from the Kuruk of Northern California to the Chitimacha of Louisiana and the Abenaki of Vermont, dozens of tribes are trying to rekindle their languages.

Korean	60 million

Top 10 states by percentage of people who speak a language other than English at home:

[redacted]	[redacted]
California	32%
[redacted]	[redacted]
Hawaii	25%
[redacted]	[redacted]
Arizona	21%
[redacted]	[redacted]
Florida	17%
[redacted]	[redacted]
Connecticut	15%

Mohawk is taught in upstate New York, Lakota on the Oglala Sioux reservation in South Dakota, Ute in Utah, Choctaw in Mississippi, and Kickapoo in Oklahoma. The Navajo Nation--with 80,000 native speakers--has its own comprehensive, college-level training to produce Navajo-speaking teachers for the 240 schools in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah that have large numbers of Navajo students.

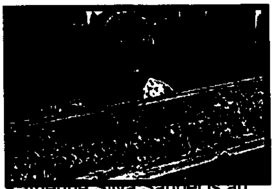
Some tribes, acknowledging that too few tribal members still speak their language, have switched to English for official business while trying to give children a feel for the words and catch-phrases of their native language.

Even when instruction falls short of achieving fluency, it can inspire pride that, in turn, translates into lower school dropout rates and improved test scores, several experts said.

Like the Hawaiian students, Mohawk children near Montreal, who are taught in their native language, do better academically than their tribal schoolmates taught in English.

But revitalization efforts often founder on the political geography of the reservation system, economic pressure and the language gap that divides grandparent from grandchild.

As many tribes assert the prerogatives of sovereignty for the first time in generations, some tribal leaders are jarred to discover themselves more at ease in English than in the language of their ancestors.



Katherine Silva Saubel is an Indian scholar on the Morongo Reservation who hopes to save the dying Cahuilla language. She holds a 1920 photo showing an Indian meeting.
RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

"Often people who are now in power in Indian communities are the first generation that does not speak the language, and it can be very, very hard for them," Mithun at UC Santa Barbara said. "It is hard to be an Indian and not being able to prove it with language. You have to be a big person to say I want my kids to be more Indian than I am."

When people do break through to fluency, they tap a hidden wellspring of community.

"I was in my own language, not just saying the words, but my own thoughts," said Nancy Steele of Crescent City, an advanced apprentice in the Karuk language.

"It is a way of being, something that has been here for a long, long time, a sense of balance with the world."

An All-Out Effort to Save Hawaiian

The effort to revive Hawaiian today is a cultural battle for hearts and minds waged with dictionaries, Internet sites, children's books, videos, multimedia databases and radio broadcasts. At its forefront are a handful of parents and educators determined to remake Hawaiian into a language in which every aspect of modern life--from rocket science to rap--can be expressed.

Spearheading the revival is a nonprofit foundation called the Aha Punano Leo, which means the "language nest" in Hawaiian.

Inspired by the Maori of New Zealand and the Mohawks of Canada, Punano Leo teachers use the immersion approach, in which only the language being learned is used throughout the school day.

In 15 years, the Punano Leo has grown from a few volunteers running a preschool with 12 students to a $5-million-a-year enterprise with 130 employees that encompasses 11 private Hawaiian language schools, the world's most sophisticated native language computer network, and millions in university scholarships.

It works in partnership with the state department of education, which now operates 16 public Hawaiian language schools, and the University of Hawaii, which recently established the first Hawaiian language college in Hilo.

So far, it is succeeding most in the place where so many other revitalization efforts have failed: in the homes that, all too often, are the first place a language begins to die.

To enroll their children in a Punano Leo immersion school, parents must pledge to also become fluent in Hawaiian and promise that only Hawaiian will be spoken at home.

The effort arose from the frustration of seven Hawaiian language teachers, amid a general political reawakening of Hawaiian native rights, and one couple's promise to an unborn child.

The couple was University of Hawaii linguist William H. Wilson and Hawaiian language expert Kauanoe Kamana, who today is president of Punano Leo and principal of the Nawahiokalani'opu'u School.

The child was their son: 1999 graduating senior Hulilauakea Wilson. Their daughter Keli'i will graduate next year.

"When we married, my wife and I decided we wanted to use Hawaiian when our children were born because no one was speaking it," William Wilson said.

"It was a personal thing for us. We were building the schools for us, almost, as well as for other people. We started with a preschool and now they are in college."

They planted the seed of a language revival and cultivated it.

ENDANGERED VOICES

[illegible]

Like many others, Wilson and Kamana were frustrated that Hawaiian could be taught only as a foreign language, even though it was, along with English, the official language of a state in which the linguistic landscape had been redrawn repeatedly by annexation, immigration and tourism.

It must compete with more than 16 languages today to retain a foothold in the island state, from Japanese and Spanish to Tagalog and Portuguese. Hawaiian ranks only eighth in its homeland, census figures show, trailing Samoan in the number of households where it can be heard.

It was not always so.

Although Hawaiian did not even acquire an alphabet until the early 1800s, the islanders' appetite for their language proved so insatiable that missionary presses produced about 150 million pages of Hawaiian text between 1820 and 1850. At least 150 Hawaiian-language newspapers also thrived.

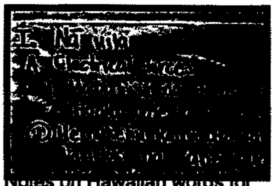
In 1880, there were 150 schools teaching in Hawaiian. A decade later--after the islands were forcibly annexed by the U.S.--there were none.

As part of a small group of committed language teachers, inspired by influential University of Hawaii linguist Larry Kimura, Wilson and and Kamana vowed to restore the language to a central place among Hawaiians.

"This is the most exciting thing I can do for my people," Kamana said of the foundation's mission. "This is the core of Hawaiian identity: the Hawaiian way. The Hawaiian language is the code of that way."

Updating Old Language With New Vocabulary

Many reviving languages, however, face the new world of the 21st century with a 19th century vocabulary.



Notes on Hawaiian words for modern topics.
RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

"A living language means you have to be able to talk about everything," said Kamana. "If you can't talk about everything, you will talk in English. It is simple."

The task of updating Hawaiian falls to a group called the Lexicon Committee.

Once a year, the committee issues a bright yellow dictionary called the Mamaka Kaiao, which defines new words created to fill gaps in Hawaiian's knowledge of the contemporary world, from a noun for the space shuttle's manned maneuvering unit--ahikao ha awe--to a term for coherent laser light: malamalama aukahi.

This year's edition runs to 311 pages, with 4,000 terms. A is for aeolele: pogo stick; Z is for Zimababue: a citizen of Zimbabwe.

Whenever possible, the new words relate to traditional vocabulary and customs. The Hawaiian word for rap music--Paleoleo--refers to warring factions who would trade taunts. The word for e-mail--Lika uila--merges words for lightning and letter. The word for pager-- Kele' O--echoes the idea of calling someone's name.

Like so many other aspects of the Hawaiian language revival--from translating the state educational curriculum to organizing an accredited school system--the committee has the authority to shape the future of Hawaiian only because its linguists, native speakers and volunteers simply started doing it.

"It exists; that is its authority," said Wilson.

But many of those whose languages are undergoing such resuscitation efforts don't want to accommodate the present.

They worry that grafting new verbs and nouns will violate the sanctity of the ancient language they hope will draw them back into a world of their own.

At Cochiti Pueblo, in New Mexico, where the Keresan language is spoken, the tribal council decided in 1997 that it would not develop a written form of the language. The language itself was a sacred text too closely tied to the pueblo's religion and traditional societies to be changed in any way.

Under the onslaught of new technology and new customs, however, even the most well-established languages are pushed off balance by the natural evolution of words and grammar.

Certainly, the 40 intellectuals of the Academie Francaise in Paris and the Office de la Langue Francaise in Quebec are fiercely resisting the inroads of Franglais, as a matter of national pride and linguistic purity.

But a thousand leaks spring from the linguistic dikes they maintain with such determination, if not from the engineering patter of the Internet, then from the international slang of sports.

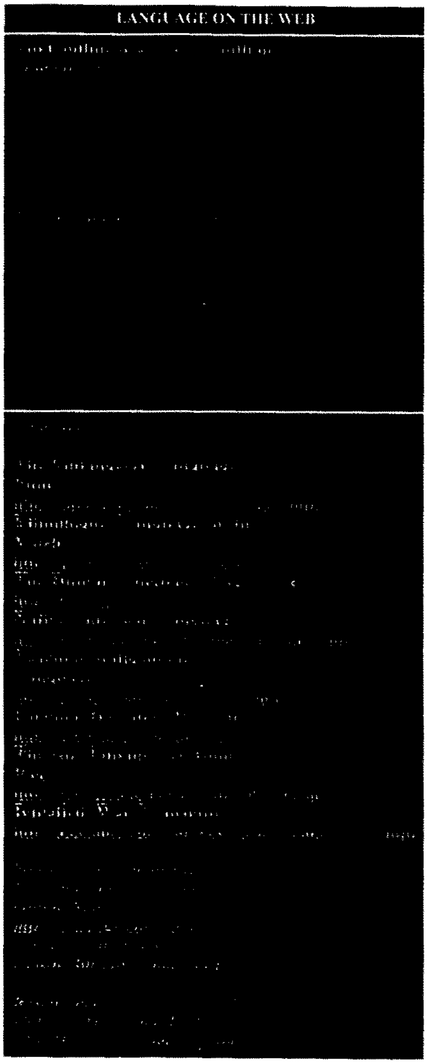
Recently, the prestigious Pasteur Institute in Paris started publishing its three most important scientific journals in English. Earlier this year, the Quebec French office felt obliged to post an officially approved dictionary of French substitutes for English golf terms.

In the same way, many indigenous tribes feel that their native tongues must be made to encompass every aspect of a world that continued to change long after the language itself stagnated.

The vocabulary of Karuk stopped growing naturally more than half a century ago, said Nancy Steele. Even the words for auto parts stopped with the models of the 1930s.

As her tribe coins words today, they reflect the spirit of their language. The new Karuk word for wristwatch, for example, translates as "little sun worn on the wrist."

"If you do not allow a language to be spoken as a living language," Steele said, "it will, in a sense, be a



dead language. You have to allow it to be alive and animated."

Schools Funded by Donations, Grants

In eighth-grade science class, Hui Hui Mossman's students are conducting germination experiments.

Down the hall, Kaleihoku Kala'i's math class wrestles with the arithmetic of medians and averages. In social studies class, Lehua Veincent taps the floor with a yardstick for emphasis as his students recite their family genealogies.

And Caroline Fallau is teaching her 13 11th-graders English--as a foreign language.

So the school day hits its stride at the Nawahiokalani'opu'u immersion high school, where 84 teenagers, with only an occasional adolescent yawn, are hitting the books.

But for the sound of Hawaiian in the hallways, computer workstations and classrooms, this could be any well-funded private school in America.

The appearance of prosperity is deceptive.

The Punano Leo schools are sustained year to year by a fragile patchwork of donations, state education aid and federal grants. The lush, well-manicured campus, with its complex of immaculate blue classroom buildings, itself is the work of parent volunteers, aided by an island flora in which even the weeds are as ornamental as orchids.

Several miles away, the younger children are arriving at the public Keukaha Elementary School, which offers both English and Hawaiian immersion classes under one roof.

Those in English classes walk directly to their homerooms, while the Hawaiian immersion students--almost half the school--gather in nine rows on the school steps for a morning ceremony. Chanting in their native language, they formally seek permission to enter and affirm their commitment to their community.

They will not encounter English as a subject until fifth grade, where it will be taught one hour a day.

Running an elementary school with two languages "is a delicate balance and not always an easy one," said Principal Katharine Webster. There is competition for resources and the demand for immersion classes increases every year, while--in a depressed island economy--the education budget does not, she said.

"Teaching in an immersion environment is not easy at all," said third-grade teacher Leimaile Bontag.

"You spend weekends and hours after school to prepare lessons. We often need to translate on our own, find the new vocabulary. It takes hours and hours."

But it is a proud complaint.

Clearly, the teachers are sustained by their love for Hawaiian and the community it has fostered. And it appears to be having a beneficial effect on the native Hawaiian students, who traditionally test at the bottom of the educational system and have the highest dropout rate.

Given the difficulty in comparing the language groups, an objective yardstick of student performance is hard to come by.

But one set of Stanford Achievement Tests taken by sixth-graders at Keukaha Elementary educated since preschool in Hawaiian suggests that they are doing as well or better than their schoolmates.

In tests given in English, all of the Hawaiian-educated students scored average or above in math while only two-thirds of the students in all-English classes scored as well. In reading, two-thirds of Hawaiian-educated students scored average or above, compared to half of the English-educated students.

Getting an Early Start on Hawaiian

In the shade of the African tulip trees, Kaipua'ala Crabbe is leading 22 toddlers in song: a lilting Hawaiian translation of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

Four other teachers and two university students help the children pronounce the Hawaiian lyrics at the Punano Leo immersion preschool in Hilo.

Hulilauakea Wilson, who volunteers regularly at the preschool when he is not attending university classes, helps a little boy tie his shoes. The child climbs onto his lap and listens attentively, not yet sure of the meaning of every word he hears in school.

"Every child reacts differently," said Alohalani Housman, who has been teaching Hawaiian immersion classes for 13 years. "The students might listen for months and not say anything. But all of them soon become speakers."

And so the seeds of a language revival are cultivated.

"It is the language of this land," young Wilson said. "It is like growing the native plants. This is their land. We are the plants of this land too."

The success of the Hawaiian program raises a larger question of longevity: How well can such diverse languages coexist and how much should the majority culture do to accommodate them?

Foundation officials and parents said their embrace of Hawaiian is no rejection of English. They are only insisting on their right to be bilingual, determined to ensure that Hawaiian is their first language of the heart.

"Everybody is so concerned about whether they are going to learn English and whether we are parenting them properly," said Kau Ontai, cradling her 2-year-old daughter Kamalei in one arm.

Her two older children attend the Punano Leo preschool. Her husband teaches the language. She studied it in high school, then achieved fluency as a Punano Leo volunteer.

Hawaiian is the voice of their home, yet the native language they speak marks them as alien to many in their island homeland.

"When we walk through a mall in Hawaii speaking Hawaiian, people are shocked," she said. "They stop us and ask: What about English? We hear Chinese being spoken, Japanese spoken, Filipino spoken. Nobody ever stops them in their tracks and says why are you speaking that?

"For now, their first and only language is Hawaiian," she said of her children.

She is confident that they will learn English easily enough when the time comes.

"But my husband and I will never look into our children's eyes and speak English to them," she said. "That is something I could never do."

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SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95064

July 24, 2000

US Senate Committee on
Indian Affairs
Washington, DC 20510-6458

RE: S.2688, "Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2000"

Dear Senator Inouye:

The Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence is a federally funded, national center focused on improving education for kindergarten through 12th grade students placed at risk by factors of linguistic and cultural diversity. Among other topics, our 32 research projects across the United States are exploring issues of language learning and academic achievement. I strongly support S.2688 because the activities proposed in this bill are consistent with what our research shows to be effective teaching and learning strategies for all students, including native Americans.

We know from our research, and indeed from an analysis of more than thirty years of education research, that learning happens best when instruction is connected to students lives, and when language and literacy are developed in all subjects. S.2688 supports these research-based education techniques through the Native American Language Survival Schools. We know that family and community involvement is crucial for student success. S.2688 promotes and facilitates just such involvement through the Native American Language Nest provision.

The value of well run, research-based bilingual education programs has been established. Secretary of Education Riley defended bilingual education and specifically endorsed one program alternative, dual language immersion, during a speech in March, 2000. Preliminary data from one of our projects studying Papahana Kaiapuni, the Hawaiian language immersion program, indicates that the English language development of students in the program is comparable to that of peers in the English language public schools. In addition, students in the program are fluent in Hawaiian.

Papahana Kaiapuni is also successful in promoting education among families who, typically, have not had positive experiences in schools. As you may be aware, native Hawaiians and other native Americans score lower than other groups on standardized achievement measures; have high drop-out rates; and are over-represented in special education while being under-represented in higher education. Grandparents and parents of children in the Papahana Kaiapuni program recall being punished in school for speaking their native language and chastised for being

Hawaiian. Unlike these previous generations, however, children in the Papahana Kaiapuni program are proud of their indigenous heritage and associate being Hawaiian with doing well in school, being good citizens, and speaking the Hawaiian language.

Papahana Kaiapuni is also known for its influence in educating the whole family, not just the child. Because the Hawaiian language was banned for 100 years, many parents of Papahana Kaiapuni students did not learn the language from their parents. The Papahana Kaiapuni program provides support for families to learn Hawaiian together. In one case, a child who was labeled as a "problem child" by teachers in an English language program became one of the highest achieving children in her Papahana Kaiapuni school. Involvement in the program also influenced the child's mother to learn Hawaiian and to pursue a college education.

Please see the bibliography following this letter for additional research on the effectiveness of bilingual education and two-way immersion. Another source of information on this issue is: *Educating Language-Minority Children*, D. August and K. Hakuta, ed. 1998. National Academy Press: Washington, DC

Supporting this bill means supporting the inclusion of native Americans in education programs that work. I urge you to vote yes on S.2688.

Sincerely,

Roland Tharp

Roland G. Tharp
Director

CAL Center for Applied Linguistics

Improving communication through better understanding of language and culture

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Selected Resources on Two-Way Immersion

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The native language is a gift: a Hualapai language autobiography

LUCILLE J. WATAHOMIGIE

Ya ba gwawji bany e'wi.
'The native language is a gift'

Lucille Jackson Watahomigie is a native speaker of Hualapai, a Yuman language with approximately 1,500 speakers, and a member of the Hualapai Tribe of northwestern Arizona. She is the founder of the nationally acclaimed Hualapai Bilingual/Bicultural Program and of the American Indian Language Development Institute, the first teacher-education program in American Indian linguistics and bilingual/bicultural curriculum development. She currently directs Indian education programs and teaches Hualapai language at Peach Springs Elementary School, on the Hualapai reservation.

In the beginning, after the creation of the people at Spirit Mountain, Elder Brother and Younger Brother were instructed through visions by the breath-giver to teach the people about cultural values and mores, and how the newly created people were to live. All the instructions were in the native language. The people lived happily for many years at Maɗwiɗa, an Indian garden located in a cataract in the western Grand Canyon. Something bad happened and there was a battle among the peaceful people. The head chief then commanded that there would be many languages. No more would the people speak the same language. The people migrated and divided into different language groups.

These are the traditional beliefs of the Hualapai, who live on the edge of the Grand Canyon in northwestern Arizona. Our ancestors knew at least three other languages, as trading practices required that they be able to communicate with the Navajo, Hopi, Paiute, and other Yuman-speaking tribes. It is said among Hualapai elders, however, that we are to continue to speak the Hualapai language; it is a gift to us from the Creator. When you are given a gift — especially one that is alive — it must be cherished, nurtured, and treated with respect to honor the giver. The language is sacred. And the sacred gift must be passed on from generation to generation; it cannot be allowed to die. For the language

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to live, it must be spoken at all times and places and events in the community. It is the responsibility of the generations to carry on these traditions.

It is said that when the languages were created, language identified the people — who we are, where we came from, and where we are going; our family, territory, and culture. Language is the transmitter of culture. There are concepts in Hualapai that can never be translated into English — concepts that must be experienced in Hualapai to be fully understood. We must speak the language to express our innermost feelings, explain the world around us, and remind each other of the teachings that were given so long ago when the people were created on Spirit Mountain.

Despite these teachings, the Hualapai language is in danger of being lost. Language loss began with parents not teaching their children the language because they did not want them to have a hard time in school. In 1965, 90 percent of the fifth grade class at Peach Springs School was referred to special education because they spoke Hualapai as their dominant language. In 1971, when I began teaching, one-third of my class was dominant in Hualapai. Finally, one brave little boy asked me in Hualapai, "Like this, teacher?" I began teaching the students in Hualapai even though the principal had forbidden it and said there was a state law against speaking the native language in school. When my daughter was four years old and went to Headstart [a federally funded preschool program], she would only speak English, although her first words were in Hualapai. One day, my four sisters and I were at my mother's house, laughing and talking in Hualapai, and my three-year-old nephew demanded, "Speak English! Speak English!" He had been in Headstart only six months.

Experiences such as these have contributed to language loss. Underlying these experiences are negative or ambivalent community attitudes toward the native language. When I was in the eighth grade, for example, I was at the store purchasing meat and speaking in Hualapai. A woman from a prominent Hualapai family overheard me and said, "You're talking in Hualapai?" — as if it were a crime. She spoke only English to her children as they were growing up. Now, she says her grown children understand Hualapai, but ironically, her English-speaking nephew is taking Hualapai lessons from her. Was it worth it to speak only English when her children were growing up?

Yes, parents are the first teachers and it is important to convey to them to be proud speakers of Hualapai. I wish there was some type of reward for parents who still speak Hualapai to their children, for the children who still speak Hualapai, and for those who promote intergenerational language use in the home. Speaking Hualapai is a unique gift that only 1,500 people possess. It is tragic to witness parents speaking Hualapai to other adults and, in the next breath, turning to their children and speaking English.

Schools and bilingual education programs do have a role to play in maintaining the native language; in communities such as Peach Springs, schools are now places of native-language renaissance. But the survival of American Indian languages cannot be shouldered by schools alone. Schools can build on the knowledge of the home and bring informal, family- and community-based language experiences to the process of formal learning. It is Indian people — parents and grandparents — who must accept the responsibility of speaking their languages; we must stop reinforcing the myth that knowing the Indian language is detrimental to children's success in life.

I remain hopeful that the gift of Hualapai will continue to be passed on to future generations. Hualapai is still used in community gatherings, ceremonies, tribal council meetings, assembly addresses, and everyday conversations among speakers. It remains the primary language of many children's early years. If caretakers respect, accept, and act upon the child's right to the native language and an indigenous identity, children will learn not only to survive in the "two worlds" of Hualapai and English, but to thrive *as Hualapais* in a multicultural, multilingual world.