S. HRG. 108–107

NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

S. 575

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

MAY 15, 2003
WASHINGTON, DC

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NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT

THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2003

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:42 a.m. in room 485, Russell Senate Building, Hon. Daniel K. Inouye (vice chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Inouye, Campbell, and Murkowski.

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

Senator INOUYE. I am sorry for all this inconvenience. I hope you will forgive us. We have 34 amendments remaining on the tax bill, and it is considered a very important measure, so it will be stop and go for a while. But I can assure you that I will be here all day and all night, if necessary.

I have an opening statement, but I think all of you will agree with me that language is important; it is a link to the past, and I think it is an anchor for the future. We, in Hawaii, like the native people of Indian country, had to go through an experience where, forcibly, native languages were taken away. But today I am happy to report to you that in the State of Hawaii, the Hawaiian language is one of the State's official languages is taught in public schools, and we have found by studies and experience that those who are in the language immersion program generally have better academic performance; we have more students seeking higher education going through this method.

[Prepared statement of Senator Inouye appears in appendix.]

[Text of S. 575 follows:]

II

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 575

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

MARCH 7, 2003

Mr. INOUYE 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 2003''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to encourage and support, consistent with the policy of the United States as expressed in the

Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.)—

(A) the development of Native American language survival schools as innovative means of addressing the effects of past discrimination against Native American language speakers; and

(B) the revitalization of Native American languages through—

(i) education in Native American languages; and

(ii) instruction in other academic subjects using Native American languages as an instructional medium;

(2) to demonstrate the positive effects of Native American language survival schools on the academic success of Native American students and the students' mastery of standard English;

(3) to encourage and support the involvement of families in the educational and cultural survival efforts of Native American language survival schools;

(4) to encourage communication, cooperation, and educational exchange among Native American language survival schools and the administrators of Native American language survival schools;

(5) to provide support for Native American language survival school facilities and endowments;

(6) to provide support for Native American language nests—

(A) as part of Native American language survival schools; or

(B) as separate programs that will be developed into more comprehensive Native American language survival schools;

(7) to 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

(8) to develop a support center system for Native American language survival schools at the university level.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

Section 103 of the Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2902) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 103. DEFINITIONS.

''In this title:

''(1) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.—The term 'elementary school' has the meaning given the term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

"(2) INDIAN.—The term 'Indian' has the meaning given the term in section 7151 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7491).

"(3) 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).

"(4) INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term 'Indian tribal government' has the meaning given the term in section 502 of the Indian Environmental General Assistance Program Act of 1992 (42 U.S.C. 4368b).

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

"(6) NATIVE AMERICAN.—The term 'Native American' means—

"(A) an Indian;

"(B) a Native American Pacific Islander; and

"(C) a Native Hawaiian.

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

"(8) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE COLLEGE.—The term 'Native American language college' means—

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

"(B) a college that is applying for, or has obtained, funds under section 109 for a Native American language survival school in a Native American language that—

"(i) the college regularly offers as part of the curriculum of the college; and

"(ii) has the support of an Indian tribal government traditionally affiliated with the Native American language; and

"(C) Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College.

"(9) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION.—The term 'Native American language educational organization' means an organization that—

"(A) is governed by a board consisting—

"(i) primarily of Native Americans; and

"(ii) as many speakers of 1 or more Native American languages as practicable;

"(B) is currently providing instruction through the use of a Native American language to at least 10 preschool, elementary school, or secondary school students for at least 700 hours per year per student;

"(C) has provided instruction through the use of a Native American language to at least 10 preschool, elementary school, or secondary school students for at least 700 hours per year per student for a period of not less than 3 years before the date of application for a grant or contract under this title; and

"(D) may be a public school that meets the requirements of subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C).

"(10) NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE NEST.—The term 'Native American language nest' means a site-based educational program that—

"(A) enrolls families with children under the age of 7;

"(B) is conducted through a Native American language for at least 700 hours per year per student; and

"(C) has 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 LANGUAGE SURVIVAL SCHOOL.—The term 'Native American language survival school' means a site-based educational program—

"(A) in which a Native American language is dominant;

"(B) that expands from a Native American language nest, as a separate entity or inclusive of a Native American language nest, to enroll families with children eligible for elementary school or secondary school; and

"(C) that 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.

"(12) 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.

"(13) NATIVE HAWAIIAN.—The term 'Native Hawaiian' has the meaning given the term in section 7207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517).

"(14) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term 'secondary school' has the meaning given the term in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

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

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

SEC. 4. NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE NESTS AND SURVIVAL SCHOOLS.

The Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 108. NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE NESTS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants to, or enter into contracts with, Native American language educational organizations, Native American language colleges, Indian tribal governments, organizations that demonstrate the potential to become Native American language educational organizations, or consortia of such entities for the purpose of establishing Native American language nests for—

"(1) students under the age of 7; and

"(2) families of the students.

"(b) REQUIREMENTS.—A Native American language nest receiving funds under this section shall—

"(1) provide instruction and child care through the use of a Native American language for at least 10 children under the age of 7 for at least 700 hours per year per student;

"(2) provide compulsory classes in a Native American language for parents of students enrolled in a Native American language nest (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;

"(5) receive at least 5 percent of the funding for the program from another source, which may include any federally funded program (such as a Head Start program funded under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.)); and

"(6) ensure that a Native American language becomes the dominant medium of instruction in the Native American language nest not later than 6 years after the date on which the Native American language nest first receives funding under this title.

"SEC. 109. NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGE SURVIVAL SCHOOLS.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants to, or enter into contracts with, Native American language educational organizations, Native American language colleges, Indian tribal governments, or consortia of such entities, to operate, expand, and increase the number of Native American language survival schools throughout the United States and the territories of the United States 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 consortium of such entities—

"(1) shall have at least 3 years experience in operating and administering—

"(A) a Native American language survival school;

"(B) a Native American language nest; or

"(C) any other educational program in which instruction is conducted in a Native American language;

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

"(3) may include—

"(A) students from infancy through grade 12; and

"(B) the families of the students.

"(c) PRIORITY.—In making grants or entering into contracts under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to—

"(1) the provision of direct educational services;

"(2) applicants that have the support of each appropriate tribal government; and

"(3) applicants that have researched language revitalization and the unique characteristics and circumstances of the languages of their schools.

"(d) USE OF FUNDS.—

"(1) REQUIRED USES.—A Native American language survival school receiving funds under this section—

"(A) shall consist of not less than 700 hours of instruction per student conducted annually through 1 or more Native American languages for at least 15 students for whom a Native American language survival school is their principal place of instruction;

"(B) shall provide direct educational services and school support services to students, which may 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; and

"(ix) other appropriate services;

"(C)(i) 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 the families' knowledge and use of the Native American language and culture; and

"(ii) may impose a requirement of family participation as a condition of student enrollment; and

"(D) shall ensure that within 3 years of enrollment, all students achieve functional fluency in a Native American language that is appropriate to the unique circumstances and endangerment status of the Native American language, with the ultimate goal of academic or cognitive fluency.

"(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—

"(i) are not Native American language speakers; but

"(ii) seek—

"(I) to establish fluency through instruction in a Native American language; or

"(II) to reestablish fluency as descendants of Native American language speakers;

"(B) provide instruction through more than 1 language;

"(C) provide instruction through a regional program (as opposed to 1 site) to better serve geographically dispersed students;

"(D) include a program of concurrent and summer college or university education course enrollment for secondary school students enrolled in the Native American language survival school;

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

"(F) develop comprehensive curricula in Native American language instruction and in-

struction through Native American languages, including—

"(i) curricula that can be used by public schools for—

"(I) instruction through a Native American language; or

"(II) teaching Native American languages as subjects;

"(ii) community Native American language use in communities served by Native American language survival schools; and

"(iii) knowledge of a specific Native American language gained through research for the purpose of directly aiding the development of curriculum materials;

"(G) provide programs in pre-service and in-service teacher training, staff training, personnel development, upgrading of teacher and staff skills, and community resource development training, that shall include a program component that has as the objective of the program component increased speaking proficiency in Native American languages for teachers and staff employed in Native American language

survival schools and Native American language nests, which may include—

"(i) visits or exchanges among Native American language survival schools and Native American language nests of teachers, staff, students, or families of students;

"(ii) participation in conferences or special nondegree programs focusing on the use of 1 or more Native American languages for the education of teachers, staff, students, or families of students;

"(iii) subject to paragraph (3), full or partial scholarships and fellowships to colleges or universities—

"(I) to provide for the professional development of faculty and staff;

"(II) 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; and

"(III) to develop resource personnel for Native American language programs in public schools;

"(iv) training in the language and culture associated with a Native American language survival school that is provided by a community or academic expert, including credit courses;

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

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

"(vii) recruitment for participation in teacher, staff, student, and community development; or

"(H) rent, lease, purchase, construct, maintain, or repair educational facilities to ensure the academic achievement of Native American language survival school students.

"(3) REQUIREMENTS FOR RECIPIENTS OF FELLOWSHIPS OR SCHOLARSHIPS.—A recipient of a fellowship or scholarship under paragraph (2)(G)(iii)

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 that obligates the recipient to provide the recipient's professional services, during the period of the fellowship or scholarship or on 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.

"SEC. 110. DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall make grants, or enter into contracts, to establish 3 demonstration programs that will provide assistance to Native American language survival schools and Native American language nests.

"(b) LOCATIONS AND PURPOSES.—The 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 determined to be appropriate by the College—

"(A) for the conduct of a demonstration program in the development and operation of the various components of a regional Native American language survival school program and college level Native American language teaching and use that is supportive of Native American language survival schools; and

"(B) for the provision of assistance in the establishment, operation, and administration of Native American language nests and Native American language survival schools by such means as—

"(i) training;

"(ii) hosting informational visits to demonstration sites; and

"(iii) providing a national clearinghouse for data and information relevant to—

"(I) teaching Native American languages;

"(II) conducting outreach;

"(III) offering courses;

"(IV) providing conferences; and

"(V) carrying out other activities;

"(2) Piegan Institute of Browning, Montana, for demonstration of the operation of a Native American language nest and Native American language survival school; and

"(3) the Alaska Native Language Center of the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, in consortium with other entities as the Center determines to be appropriate, for the conduct of a demonstration program, training, outreach, conferences, and visitation programs, and for provision of other assistance, in developing—

"(A) orthographies;

"(B) resource materials;

"(C) language documentation;

"(D) language preservation;

"(E) material archiving; and

"(F) community support development.

"(c) USE OF TECHNOLOGY.—The demonstration programs established under this section may employ syn-

chronic and asynchronic telecommunications and other appropriate means to maintain coordination and cooperation among the programs and with participating Native American language survival schools and Native American language nests.

''(d) SITE VISIT EVALUATIONS.—The demonstration programs 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.

''(e) FOLLOWUP AND DATA COLLECTION.—A demonstration program established under this section may conduct followup data collection and analysis on students while the students are in school—

''(1) to assess how Native American language survival school students are performing in comparison with other students; and

''(2) to identify instructional methods that are working and instructional methods that are not working.

''(f) ENDOWMENTS AND FACILITIES.—A demonstration program established under this section may—

''(1) establish endowments to further the activities of the demonstration program relating to the

study and preservation of Native American languages; and

''(2) use funds to provide for the rental, lease, purchase, construction, maintenance, and repair of facilities.

''SEC. 111. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2004 through 2009.''.

○

Senator INOUYE. So with that may I call upon the first panel: Leanne Hinton, president of the Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas, of Berkeley, California; Christine Sims, chairwoman, Linguistic Institute for Native Americans and member of Pueblo of Acoma, of New Mexico, who will be accompanied by Vina Leno of Acoma Pueblo, Carla Herrera, Pueblo de Cochiti; and Travis Pecos, Pueblo de Cochiti; Mary Eunice Romero, College of Education, University of Arizona, Tucson; and William Demmert, Jr., Professor of Education, Woodring College of Education, Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome.

May I first recognize Dr. Leanne Hinton.

STATEMENT OF LEANNE HINTON, PRESIDENT, SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES OF THE AMERICAS, BERKELEY, CA

Ms. HINTON. Thank you very much, Senator Inouye.

I come from California, which is probably the most diverse part of this diverse country in terms of indigenous languages. Out of probably 85 to 100 indigenous languages that used to exist in California, one-half of them are gone now, with only documentation from linguists to recognize their existence; and the other one-half, about 50 living languages today, the vast majority of them have 5 or fewer speakers, all over 70 years old.

But California, like other parts of the United States and like other parts of the world, has been going through a strengthening movement to make sure that their own original identity isn't lost, even as they adapt, per force, to the dominant society. Language is the center of these efforts, and it is wonderful to see that American language policy toward Native Americans has started to move in the same direction that the Native Americans themselves are moving in to try to keep their languages alive, to begin to see Native American languages as a resource rather than as a problem.

As you know, for the vast majority of languages all over the country and, in fact, all over the world, very few people are learning them at home anymore, and so the problem is how to get new speakers if they are not learning them at home. And it is demonstrably true that the fastest and most effective way to get a critical mass of new fluent speakers of an endangered language is through the schools, the same institution that was used to destroy those very languages in the past. The languages are silent at home and in the community, and so the only path to fluency at this time is through language nests and language survival schools, where the main instruction language is the indigenous language itself.

The Hawaiians and Blackfeet both named in S. 575 have done an admirable job of developing highly successful language nests and language survival schools, and have served as models to many other tribes, and we know through their hard work and leadership that these systems work successfully to educate students to be literate and fluent in their ancestral language and accustomed to using it in daily communication, and also are literate and fluent in English and fully prepared to go on to higher education in English-speaking institutions.

Other language nests and survival schools have also developed or are currently being planned around the country, such as those of the Cochitis and Acomas in New Mexico, the Yuroks in California, the Ojibwe in Wisconsin, the Washoes in Nevada, the Mohawks in New York, the Lakotas in South and North Dakota, among others. ANA funding, granted by Congress through 1992 Native American Languages Act, has been vital to the development of these programs, and I trust it will last for a very long time.

There are many challenges to developing good survival schools, but they are surmountable. One of the severest challenges is often that those who know the language are too old to teach. And at the same time there are young tribal members who can teach, but don't know the language. How can these dedicated tribal members learn their ancestral tongues? In Hawaii there are universities and colleges where they can learn these things, but in California there is not.

The Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival and the University of California have been trying to develop solutions to this problem. In particular, the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program for languages where professional-aged tribal members who didn't learn their language at home can begin to do so through intense apprenticeship to a speaker, and this model has been spreading through the country.

I must say that from the vantage point of my home State, very few of the many tribes of California will be able to benefit from this bill. They are small tribes to begin with, with only a handful of elderly speakers, and so getting the critical mass of fluent speakers to even teach the language in the first place is the big challenge for us. And there is a sentence in 575 that says that small communities whose languages have few or no speakers can be assisted by language colleges or language survival schools, but this is vague and indirect, and I have been charged by the California Indians who I have been speaking to in the last few days to plead for close attention to the needs of these small groups.

This is a sad time for Native American languages, many of which are disappearing before our eyes, but it is also a very exciting time when pioneering experiments in language revitalization are taking place and we are seeing the wonderful result of a new generation of children who are fluent in their Native American language and fully bilingual in English as well, with Hawaii leading the way in this. Long ago, previous congressional acts devoted enormous efforts to the schools who were charged with the eradication of Native American languages and cultural traditions. Now, in this hopefully wiser time, it behooves this Congress to devote an equivalent amount of effort to help indigenous people regain the languages that were erased from their lives, and I thank you for this bill.

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

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Doctor. And you can be assured that we will do our best to restore the languages, some long forgotten, but they will be restored.

And now may I call upon Dr. Sims.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE SIMS, CHAIRWOMAN, LINGUISTIC INSTITUTE FOR NATIVE AMERICANS AND MEMBER OF PUEBLO OF ACOMA, NM, ACCOMPANIED BY VINA LENO, ACOMA PUEBLO; CARLA HERRERA, PUEBLO DE COCHITI; AND TRAVIS PECOS, PUEBLO DE COCHITI

Ms. SIMS. Senator Inouye, thank you for giving me the opportunity to come and present our testimony.

My name is Christine P. Sims, and I come from the Pueblo of Acoma, located in Northwestern New Mexico, and today I have brought with me the director of our Acoma language project, Vina Leno, who is sitting in the audience. I think she is in the corner there. And we are also accompanied by two young students from the Pueblo of Cochiti, they are also sitting in the back, Carla Herrera, Travis Pecos from the Pueblo of Cochiti.

Senator INOUYE. Will you all please be seated at the table.

Ms. SIMS. Senator Inouye, these young students are representing the Pueblo of Cochiti, their tribe has sent them. They are products of Cochiti's long efforts to implement language immersion programs, and they have become speakers again of their native language, and they will be coming back again this summer as participants in the Congressional U.S. Leadership Program. So this is their first introduction to Washington.

Senator INOUYE. Now they are senators.

Ms. SIMS. Now they are senators.

Senator INOUYE. Let us get into the top real quick.

On behalf of the Pueblo of Acoma, Senator Inouye, and the Linguistic Institute, I appreciate this opportunity to present our support of S. 575, as well as our recommendations to the amendments proposed in the Native Languages Act. Today, as your committee reviews this vital and important Act, our hope is that this body will once more reaffirm its commitment to native people and to the survival of their languages and culture.

As all of us know here in this room, for indigenous people across this Nation, the significance of issues that are related to language survival are inextricably entwined with cultural survival. For many native communities, the continuance of cultural values, traditions, and belief in governance systems are dependent on this continued transmission of language. Efforts to maintain and revise native language and to stem the pace of language shift are being seriously pursued in many communities throughout Indian country, through either school-based programs or community-based programs.

Language revitalization efforts in my home State of New Mexico are being implemented with tribes using community-based approaches, their purpose being to create young generations of speakers, as we see here in Travis and Carla today. The emphasis is on creating speakers from within these communities, and they are being taught by parents and traditional leaders and fluent-speaking elders in the community. Some of the efforts have been supported in part by language grants from the Administration for Native Americans.

Among native language communities of the southwest, the phenomenon of language shift is increasingly evident, although it varies from community to community in a State like ours where there are 21 different tribes and six major languages. Among the Pueblo

Indian tribes, language has always functioned as the medium of spiritual and cultural life among the 19 Pueblo Indian tribes that speak these languages. The Athabascan language spoken by the Apache and Navajo people are equally vital to the continuation of their cultural heritage. Yet, we are all faced with the reality that language survival is threatened by tremendous socio-economic, educational, and socio-cultural pressures in today's society.

The uniqueness of Pueblo languages in New Mexico reflects a history of some of the oldest and longest sustained cultures in this Nation. These languages have existed, and they still function primarily within a sociocultural and a socioreligious community context. As such, the oral tradition serves as a critical vehicle by which a community such as mine maintains its internal socio-cultural organization, its oral histories, its knowledge, and its spiritual life ways. As well, the theocratic nature of our traditional governance systems is dependent on speakers who can use the language in all domains.

The implications for language loss, therefore, are especially significant given this context. Moreover, the erosion of these languages threatens the very core of spiritual belief systems that have been the foundation and the stability of Pueblo societies through countless generations. The survival of these languages in the 21st century as oral-based languages is a testimony to the resilience and the wisdom with which tribal elders and leaders have steadfastly refused to give up these languages.

As was mentioned earlier, the efforts of Cochiti Pueblo is an example of some of the more positive efforts we are seeing in our state with regard to language revitalization. Travis and Carla here represent the hope of their community as young people who will one day be leaders in their village, fluent in the native language and capable of passing the language on to yet another future generation. They represent the future of young Native Americans who, while maintaining a healthy connection to community and family, are just as capable as any youngster in America in maintaining parity in academic excellence.

The examples that I have noted today, Cochiti, as well as in the Pueblos of Acoma, Taos, and others, have not been lost on other tribes. We have seen many visitors come from within the State as well as outside to see our immersion programs. They include Ute Mountain Ute Tribes from Colorado, the San Juan Paiutes, and others. This informal network of language communities in the southwest represents a larger need for training and preparing a cadre of internal tribal expertise. As well, the unique set of considerations for language communities such as Pueblo people, who must honor the oral nature and traditions of their history, suggests that a demonstration program situated in the southwest may in fact be better able to serve their needs. Many tribes in the southwest find that close proximity to other language programs in their immediate area makes it possible to utilize tribal and limited program resources more efficiently. As well, the informal support that we draw from working with each other to develop new initiatives provides an immediate resource of first-hand information that is invaluable to training native speakers.

As I mentioned earlier, I chair an organization called the Linguistic Institute for Native Americans. Over our 20-plus year history, we have been able to help in efforts such as those that I have just previously noted. The staff and training expertise that we provide is drawn mainly from the University of New Mexico's faculty who have expertise in native language planning, language teacher training, language revitalization issues, as well as experience in working in native language communities.

In conclusion, the parameters within which many Pueblo communities function as tribes whose social structures are deeply rooted in traditional and oral forms of governance, as I have explained here, suggest a consideration of a training and demonstration program that we feel should be added into the proposed amendments to the Native Languages Act. Given our unique circumstances in the southwest, we hope this committee will entertain a recommendation that a fourth center of training be established that will serve native people of the southwest, with a particular focus on the following areas: Development and training programs for fluent speakers that will prepare them for language teaching in the community; development of administrative leadership that assists tribes and communities to undertake and sustain long-term language efforts; development of language teaching internships and mentorships that will help build the internal capacity of tribes to strengthen and sustain community-based language efforts; development of instructional language materials that will serve the needs of oral-based language traditions; language policy research that examines the long-term effect of Federal and State economic, social, and education policies on the survival of indigenous forms of governances, and the role that language plays in sustaining such systems; last, facilitating an understanding between tribes and governmental agencies about language survival issues that allows for appropriate collaborative measures of intervention and support.

This concludes my testimony, Senator Inouye, and thank you again for the opportunity to speak today.

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

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

You may have heard the bells. They are telling me I have 2 minutes left to get to the Senate floor for a vote, so I will be running out of here. We will stand in recess for just a few minutes, and when I return, Dr. Romero will testify. And when the panel is completed, I have a few questions to ask.

[Recess.]

Senator INOUYE. The hearing will please come to order.

And now may I recognize Dr. Eunice Romero.

STATEMENT OF MARY EUNICE ROMERO, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA, TUCSON, AZ

Ms. ROMERO. Honorable Chairman, vice chairman, and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and for your support and commitment to the indigenous nation's peoples and languages of this country. Today I would like to present to you some invaluable lessons we have learned in New Mexico and Arizona in regards to the native languages.

As Dr. Sims discussed, the community-based initiatives in New Mexico are reaching some successes in renewing the ancestral languages. Cochiti, like many other indigenous communities, started out with no blueprint to guide us in revitalizing our language. Although we had the Hawaiian 'Aha Punana Leo preschool, the Maori language nest and the California master-apprentice models to borrow bits and pieces from, we realized in Cochiti that creating an approach that embraced the intellectual and oral traditions of our community required something different. Therefore, with the assistance of the Linguistic Institute for Native Americans, a New Mexico-based organization that provides technical assistance and training resources for native speech communities and schools, Cochiti began its language renewal initiatives, which incorporated second language acquisition and immersion methods and techniques. Our goal was, and continues to be, the creation of new generations of Cochiti speakers. The two young Keres-speaking Cochitis here today, Travis Pecos and Carla Herrera, are from the first cohort of children who began learning Cochiti in 1996.

The community-based language renewal initiatives in New Mexico, although they are reaching some successes, and despite these advances, communities often do not have the financial or educational resources to effect any change. In this complex process of language renewal, communities need language teachers, materials, facilities, training on the teaching approaches and techniques, technical assistance in language program development, implementation, and long-term sustainment, as well as research. Therefore, while we support all of the proposed amendments, we also propose the inclusion of additional centers for language renewal for the southwest indigenous communities. The Linguistic Institute for Native Americans would be an ideal organization for this purpose. LINA is currently working with the New Mexico Tribal Nations and the New Mexico State Board of Education in the development of native language teacher licensure policies and requirements. The American Indian Language Development Institute, AILDI, is a summer institute held annually at the University of Arizona. It assists educators and community members in the teaching of indigenous languages in schools and communities. Along with LINA, AILDI will greatly contribute to the southwest indigenous language renewal efforts as university-based centers supported and funded by this legislation.

Underway in other indigenous communities are school-based language renewal efforts such as the Navajo, Yup'ik, Hawaiian immersion education programs. Research and experience in indigenous communities in this country and around the world have proven that immersion education provides opportunities for indigenous children to acquire the necessary native language and cognitive competencies, while simultaneously developing their English and academic competencies. This is why these proposed amendments are crucial. They support practices and learning pedagogy that have been proven effective in promoting the acquisition of both native and English languages.

Unfortunately, despite these advances in reversing language shift, standardization and English-only policies are exerting pressure on communities and schools to abandon the teaching of native

languages. In our current research at the University of Arizona, my colleagues, Dr. Teresa McCarty and Ofelia Zepeda, and I are presently in our third year of a national study examining the impact of native language shift and retention on American Indian students' acquisition of English and academic content. Our preliminary findings reveal that under the pressure from current State and Federal educational accountability mandates and high stakes testing, many native language teachers in schools are abandoning the teaching of native languages. For instance, one native elementary school teacher, who had once been recognized by her school and community as an "expert teacher" of the native language, reported that she no longer uses the native language with her students in her classroom because "We don't have time to teach the native language. We have been told to teach the standards." This potent example reveals that as indigenous communities are focusing on developing and implementing effective approaches and techniques for the renewal of their mother languages, these societal pressures are hindering their efforts. Clearly, legislative acts such as the Native Language Act and the proposed amendments are essential to the restoration and perpetuation of this country's indigenous languages.

Thank you.

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

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

And now may I recognize Dr. Demmert.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM DEMMERT, JR., PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, WOODRING COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, BELLINGHAM, WA

Mr. DEMMERT. Thank you, Senator Inouye, for this opportunity to testify. I have had the privilege of testifying in earlier versions of this bill, and welcome the opportunity to come back, in part because of the success that previous legislation has had.

I have had an opportunity to review over 10,000 documents that focus on the research of American Indians, and I have also looked at those documents in terms of the influence of language and cultural programs on academic performance of Indian children. And you have heard some testimony that addresses one of the main reasons, from the native community's perspective why this is an important piece of legislation. The reason is the support it gives culture and identity. Another very important reason, of course, is whether or not it influences improved academic performance. And, of course, there is a third, and that is the influence on cognition generally.

In the 10,000 documents that I have had an opportunity to review, the research has been divided into three parts: Experimental studies, quasi-experimental studies, and non-experimental studies. And out of that 10,000 we were able to identify 193 that were of high enough quality to give us some insights about the value of the language and cultural programs in the classroom. I will define each of these so we have a sense for what I am talking about.

Experimental studies include a research design that employs a random assignment of subjects to treatment. That is the highest

level of research and there are certain standards that must be met in order to be classified under this particular type.

The second is quasi-experimental studies. This is a research design that involves the assignment of intact groups to treatment conditions; that means the group already exist. Typically, the unit of analysis, or N, is not the same as the sampling unit.

The third type is non-experimental studies, which constitutes the bulk of the research that is available. Generally speaking, they are what we call causal-comparative or ex post facto designs. This may describe or explain what exists and sometimes compares them to other existing groups.

The research generally does not say *x* causes *Y*; you need an experimental or quasi-experimental design for that. But what we do find, and I will cover what we have found, is that this research helps develops hypotheses that we can use as support concerning the influences of language and cultural programs to improved academic performance. And I will briefly describe what each of these are.

Heritage language. Native American children who are taught using their heritage language will learn that language better than children who are taught in a dominant second language. Heritage language speaking children will lose competence in their native language to some degree when the language of instruction is the dominant language. That is sort of common sense. Children who are more proficient in their heritage language will also be more proficient in the dominant language. I think that is an important principle to keep in mind. There is some level of proficiency in a native language that must be achieved and maintained in order to avoid the subtractive effects of learning a second, dominant language. Last, programs that include locally-based heritage language and cultural elements will serve to strengthen the home-school relationships. And this connection may be an intervening variable explaining the increased student achievement.

These hypotheses fit very comfortably into three of the theories that we have been using as part of the literature review. The first is called cultural compatibility theory; the second is cognitive theory; and the third is a cultural-historical-activity theory, or CHAT. I won't go into what each of these mean, but generally speaking it means that there must be a high level of congruency between the culture of the school and the culture of the community in order for students to succeed.

I am also an investigator in a project with the RAND Corporation that is reviewing the research literature, incuding also looking at NAEP data, National Assessment of Educational Progress data. David Grissmer is handling the NAEP piece, and he reports that American Indian students have made gains in reading, mathematics, and geography scores from 1990 to 2000. He also assessed black and Hispanic students, and their scores in reading and math, and the longer Native Students stay in school, the closer the gap between black and Hispanics and American Indian students. In other words, the black students and Hispanic students start gaining on the Native American students. The exception to these finding is geography, where Native American students do as well as

anyone. We don't know the reason for that, but this is an interesting statistic in its own right and probably worth looking at.

The bulk of the research in the literature, as I mentioned, is nonexperimental, and one of the reasons I was interested in presenting testimony here is that we really need to take a careful look under some sort of causal comparative, quasi-experimental, or experimental design that clearly ties improved academic performance to language and cultural programs because, from the experience I have had, those programs that incorporate those components in the educational program are very successful when compared to Native American students generally across any of the national tests that take place or any of the programs that are in monolingual schools.

Thank you.

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

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much.

Am I correct to conclude, after listening to this panel, that language and culture have a very positive impact upon academic performance?

Mr. DEMMERT. That is what the research implies that I have looked at, yes.

Senator INOUYE. Are there any negative aspects of combining language and culture with studies?

Mr. DEMMERT. None that we were able to find in the 193 documents that we reviewed, or studies that we assessed.

Senator INOUYE. What about the others on the panel? Do you agree with that?

Ms. HINTON. Certainly do.

Ms. SIMS. I think the ties, and certainly we have got two individuals here that are examples of the positive effects that have come with study of language and culture, and being able to revive that and still maintain and, in fact, exceed, probably, academic performance. And I would agree that I don't see anything in terms of a negative kind of effect. The positive is what we are seeing quite a lot of when these programs are implemented and they are implemented in a way that meets not just their native language needs, but also their other academic needs.

Senator INOUYE. I also gather from your testimony that language and culture have a strong influence upon cultural identity. Is cultural identity an important factor in the establishment of self-pride? We are always talking about young people not having pride in themselves.

Ms. SIMS. Very much so. I can't say otherwise. Without that base and without that foundation, I don't know how any child would succeed other than to have that strong foundation of who they are and where they come from.

Senator INOUYE. I don't suppose you are going to let them down, are you?

Well, with that, I will have to run back again to vote, and so I thank this panel very much.

And will the second panel be prepared? Jocelyn LaPier, Geneva Navarro.

Until then, we stand in recess.

[Recess.]

Senator INOUYE. We will now resume our hearing.

May I first call upon Dr. Rosita Worl of Sealaska Heritage Institute? Because I have been told that she has an aircraft to catch. If she doesn't, she is stuck here for the next millennium.

Dr. Worl.

STATEMENT OF ROSITA WORL, SEALASKA HERITAGE INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA SOUTHEAST, JUNEAU, AK

Ms. WORL. Yes; thank you very much, Senator. Thank you for holding this hearing and also thank you for being accommodating to my schedule. And also I want to thank your very respected staff person, Patricia Zell, who is well known throughout Indian country and very highly regarded.

And if I may, Senator, I would like to introduce other people who are here from our region. Patrick Anderson, who is on our board of Sealaska, as well as on our Sealaska Heritage Board. We also have Jordan Lachler, who is our sociolinguist with Sealaska Heritage institute; Bertha Franulovich from Huna Totem; Lonnie Thomas; Bambi Kraus was here; and we also, of course, like to acknowledge Bill Demmert.

I also want to pay special tribute to the Hawaiians, for it really was the Hawaiians who stimulated our thinking and our hope in dreams that restoring the languages of southeast was a possibility. We were very fortunate in going to Hawaii and visiting the model programs over there, where we learned a lot and we tried to apply those teachings. So we are eternally grateful to the Hawaiians for their support and their teaching, but most of all I think it was their inspiration.

We have been operating language programs now for 4 years. Our languages in southeast have been characterized as moribund. And we didn't even know what that meant until we went to the dictionary and said it was death-bound. And we could not quite accept that, so our board of trustees made a determination that language restoration was going to be our highest priority. So we were trying to emulate the programs that we saw in Hawaii, and we were to some degree able to copy some of those programs. However, we came to find out that we have some differences, and so, as we were moving along, we began to change and to develop new programs.

Our languages are spoken by probably those who are in their seventies and eighties and nineties. We only have like 11 Haida speakers left. We don't know how many, maybe a couple of Tsimshian people, and less than probably 500 Tsimshian Tlingit speakers. But, yet, even with that number, we have a glimmer of hope, and our faith is even renewed, because during our last commencement at the University of Alaska Southeast, we had one of our students speak for 45 minutes in Tlingit. He spoke in Tlingit and also he spoke for 45 minutes in the true tradition of a Tlingit, but I am going to keep mine to 5 minutes, Senator. So we know that we can be successful.

Our approach has been to establish partnerships with school districts, with the University of Alaska Southeast, and also with native organizations. We have found funding in various sources, as well as we have had generous support from Sealaska Corporation, providing us our basic administrative support for all of our programs. In addition to that, we have been lucky in that we man-

aged, even despite our financial situation at Sealaska, during this last year we were able to award $1 million in scholarships, and some of that is dedicated to language.

But probably the most significant program that we have was a demonstration project that we had at the Juneau school district. And in that program we taught Tlingit language and culture. We also insisted that we have constant monitoring of our children. And what we found after three years, that our children were succeeding academically; that they were doing better than other students in the same grades in the same school, but not having the benefit of language and cultural instruction. I attribute it to that instruction, but the other important aspect is that we had parental involvement. And we had parental involvement because we were teaching things that those parents saw as critical to survival of native people: to succeed both in the western world as well as in our traditional world.

Perhaps the model program that we have had has been our Sealaska Kusteeyi Institute, which we hold in collaboration with the University of Southeast Alaska. And in that program we are moving toward certificates and degree programs. It is our hope that we are going to move towards that. But in the meantime what we are doing is we are teaching speakers how to teach, and then those teachers go back into our communities, into the multiple programs that we have in culture camps, preschool programs, we have one preschool program, and we are seeing success. I just attended a program in Hoonah where I saw the children speaking Tlingit, and then they would have to translate for their parents. So we know that it is achievable, even when we are at this point.

So, respectful Senators, it is with great humbleness that we do submit a proposal to provide for a demonstration project at the Sealaska Heritage Institute for the revitalization of critically endangered languages. We think that we offer a model that can be replicated elsewhere, not only in Alaska, but in the rest of the country. We are working in partnerships with school districts and with the university. We are bringing the resources of our State, as well as the country, together, and in this partnership we think that we can be successful.

Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much. I will have our staff work with you on your amendment. I know that you have to catch a flight, but before you do Senator Murkowski would like to say hello.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I am sorry that I had to come in in the middle of your testimony, but I am pleased that I was at least able to hear a portion of it. We recognize the great opportunities that we have within some of our native corporations, and Sealaska specifically, and I applaud you for your efforts in keeping the languages alive. And we recognize that it is a challenge for us in the State. It ought not to be so. So I appreciate your efforts, and I look forward to working with you and the chairman on this project.

Ms. WORL. Thank you very much.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you for traveling all the way back here.

Ms. WORL. Thank you, Senator. And also thank you for your work in working with Secretary Paige and coming to Alaska.

Senator MURKOWSKI. It was an eye-opening experience for him, and one that I am sure he will remember for some time. But it was a great opportunity for him to see, at least with our Yupic languages, how the immersion was working in some of the schools in western Alaska. So it was a good opportunity for all of us.

Ms. WORL. Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you.

Ms. WORL. Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much, Dr. Worl. We hope you have a safe trip.

And may I now recognize Rosalyn LaPier. She is accompanied by Joycelyn DesRosier.

Did I pronounce it correctly?

Ms. DESROSIER. Joycelyn DesRosier.

Senator INOUYE. Ms. LaPier.

STATEMENT OF ROSALYN LAPIER, PIEGAN INSTITUTE/NIZIPUHWAHSIN SCHOOL, BROWNING, MT, ACCOMPANIED BY JOYCELYN DESROSIER

Ms. LAPIER. Good afternoon, and thank you for this wonderful opportunity for us to discuss Piegan Institute and Nizipuhwahsin Schools. And we also would like to thank you very much for including us in this very important legislation. We feel very humbled and honored to be included, and we would just like to thank you for this great honor to be here.

Piegan Institute, as you know, is a grassroots organization from the Blackfeet Reservation. We were formed by a group of Blackfeet educators who came together to address the issue of Blackfeet language loss. We still have the same group of founders who still run our organization and who still form our board of trustees. We are now approaching being in existence now for almost 20 years as a native language organization, and approximately about 10 years ago we decided to open a native language school for children. One of the things that we learned from a lot of our research that we had done in native language education, and in our discussions with a lot of elders, was that if native languages were going to continue, it was going to have to be the children who continued them.

And we began our school, which is called Nizipuhwahsin, which means original language or real language in the Blackfeet language, and we have a school for children ages 5 to 13, which is approximately kindergarten through eighth grade. We have worked very closely with Aha Punana Leo in Hawaii. They were our mentors in organizing our school, and they have worked with us for the past 10 years in our efforts at our school, and we call them almost on a weekly basis, it seems like, to discuss all sorts of issues, from funding to working with public institutions to just the littlest thing, talking about our cook, you know. We work with them very closely and they really are our mentors in this effort.

One of the things that we have come here to really encourage the Senate committee to support is the work of Native American language survival schools. We are a Native American language survival school, we are not a public school; we are separate from the

public school system. We are a private, not for profit, and we do work very closely with the Blackfeet Tribe and the Blackfeet Tribe, in fact, constantly supports our efforts. We brought with us today a resolution from the tribe supporting this particular bill. So even though we are a private, not for profit, we do have a great amount of support from the tribe and from the community.

One of the reasons that we got started as a separate institution was that we saw a lot of the efforts that were being made on behalf of native languages. Our community has tried every effort. We have Head Start programs; we have got programs in the public school system; bilingual education; we have high school classes in the Blackfeet language; we have classes at the community college; we do culture camps in the summer; we have created computer programs and multimedia programs.

But the thing that we have discovered in our community is that the only thing that has created fluent speakers is our survival school. Although a lot of those efforts create some language retention, they do not create fluent speakers, and that is the bottom line for our community. Our community wants to create fluent speakers so they will continue the children, as they grow to be older and as they become adults, they will continue the language. And culture camps in the summer, language classes at high school, et cetera, do not create fluent speakers, and our school does.

That was one of the reasons why we have been working a lot with elders. We have worked with elders since the beginning of our institute. And the elders are the ones who really stand behind what we do and they work with us very closely, and they have really strongly encouraged us to continue what we are doing.

In the past 10 years of us running our school, we have had many ups and downs, and we have had many times where we have felt like there may be a point where we are going to have to stop, stop what we are doing and change to something else, and it was the elders who have really encouraged our efforts and told us of their problems that they have had with educational systems and how they were impacted by many of the educational systems, both parochial and public. And because of their encouragement, we have continued on, and this has been very difficult for us. Funding is always an issue. Because we are a private institution, we are not a public institution, we search for money every single year. And I know that there is, for us, anyway, as an institute, there is somewhat of a stereotype that we do have ongoing funding. We do not. And that is something that we would strongly encourage, not only our institution, but other institutions, that the whole movement of survival schools be recognized on a Federal level, but also be funded on a Federal level.

And with that I will complete my testimony.

And I would like to introduce Joycelyn DesRosier. Joycelyn DesRosier is a teacher at our school, and you met her son 3 years ago when he came to testify. And she has been recognized by the State of Montana. We work very closely with the State of Montana's Office of Public Instruction, and this past year she was recognized by the head of the Office of Public Instruction as being the first State-certified teacher teaching in a language immersion school in the State of Montana.

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

Senator INOUYE. Oh, congratulations.

STATEMENT OF JOYCELYN DESROSIER PIEGAN INSTITUTE/ NIZIPUHWAHSIN SCHOOL, BROWNING, MT

Ms. DESROSIER. Thank you. This was an address in my native language, and I said hello, my relatives. I am very happy to see you all here today.

This is my son, Jesse DesRosier, who came here 3 years ago to lobby for the same bill. His Blackfeet name is Ahsinapoyii.

Thank you very much, Senator Inouye, and the rest of the Senators on the committee here today, and the staff members, for allowing me to be invited to speak on this bill.

It was 3 years ago my son came to lobby on this bill, at which time he came we were burying a very important lady in our community, a holy lady and a very valuable lady to me personally, Molly Kicking Woman, who taught me a lot of my ways, and still I can carry that on, but she is no longer with us today. She was a very holy spiritual leader and a teacher, and she was very inspirational in the school when I started.

My son has been given the greatest opportunity while attending Nizipuhwahsin, the private immersion school in our town, for learning our language. He has been one that has just picked it up very fluently and speedily.

Our language school has connected my family to our ancestors, as our language is so important to our people and our sacred ways of life. My son has been given the prestigious honor as being called upon by spiritual directors to carryout ceremonial ways only because he can speak the language and understand it. He is now 14 years old today, and he is sought out by a lot of people from not only our community, but other communities that speak our language, which is Canadians, the Canadian border. And they come and ask him and they praise him highly for learning his language. He would never have been able to learn our language without attending the immersion school.

I also have another younger son that attends the immersion school and is learning our language.

I began by bringing my small son there, my youngest son there, 6 years ago to attend school. Being a mother, I could not leave my child at school alone, so I started volunteering my time. Within 1 year I was given a teacher's position there, a teacher training position, where I committed to learning my language, and so far it has been great and a great learning experience, one that I couldn't obtain at any college or university, as they do not teach my native language.

I began learning my language and then last year, through the private sector, we didn't have any funding, so I returned to college and finished my degree, because I didn't have a paid position at the school to continue out. So my learning for last year was a standstill because I could not learn the language; every day I wasn't in an immersion school setting. But I did practice a lot at home and go and sweep and clean the floors to pay my children's tuition.

Yesterday, as well, was a very sad day at my home in the Blackfeet Nation, as we buried a very precious and dear grandfather of

mine, someone who taught me and my sons our language and much of our sacred ways. We will miss him.

Another sad day will be next week when I return home. My 14-year-old son will graduate from this immersion school, where he has been protected and so immersed in the language and has become such a leader in my home and in my family. I can only hope and pray that he will be able to obtain and retain the language. It is not taught very well in the public school setting, as well as it is at the private immersion school. In our public school we have non-fluent speakers teaching our language, and some of them only know a few words and some of them don't pronounce them correctly. So they mostly focus on their skills, which may be in crafts, beading, drumming, singing, dancing, and sometimes stick game.

My children are learning their native Blackfeet language through Nizipuhwahsin, our private immersion school. What they have learned and what I have learned has opened up a whole new world for us, a world many think is gone. My children's pride and sense of self-worth is so great that the hard work and effort we all spend in learning it makes it so worthwhile. They are singled out in our community and recognized for their ability to speak Blackfeet. They are looked at as leaders by their peers and with pride by their elders.

Today I stand before you and ask for your support and thank you all very much. Without our language, we are just people among people. Our language keeps us connected to the first people of the native lands. My language gives me my identity as a Blackfeet woman. Thank you all.

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

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much.

And do you wish to submit your resolution for the record?

Ms. DESROSIER. Yes; I do.

Senator INOUYE. Without objection, that resolution will be made part of the record.

[Referenced document appears in appendix.]

Ms. DESROSIER. Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. And I can assure you that we are very serious, because if I were not serious, I would not be running back and forth, I can assure you.

Ms. DESROSIER. Thank you very much.

Senator INOUYE. Our next witness is Geneva Navarro, Comanche Language Instructor of Oklahoma, accompanied by Rita Coosewon, an instructor in the language, also from Lawton, Oklahoma.

Mrs. Navarro?

STATEMENT OF GENEVA NAVARRO, COMANCHE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR, COMANCHE NATION COLLEGE, LAWTON, OK, ACCOMPANIED BY RITA COOSEWON, COMANCHE LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR

Ms. NAVARRO. [Remarks in native tongue.]

Hello to you and all my friends and relations here. Thank you for inviting the Comanches.

The beginning of the loss of our language came from forced assimilation of our people and the Manifest Destiny policy, and it is still trying to be implemented through the English-only policies,

which will leave all Native American children behind. We are losing our languages, which was not our fault. We have been trying everything to keep it from dying. Time is running out, especially for me.

My name is Geneva Woomavoyah Navarro of the Comanche Nation from Oklahoma. I am 77 years old. Comanche was my first language. I have been teaching the language since 1990 to all who are interested. I am presently teaching Comanche at the new Comanche Nation College in Oklahoma. I am here to urge your support for the S. 575 bill to amend the Native American Languages Act that will provide support of the development of Native American language survival schools to assure the preservation and revitalization of Native American languages.

Today I want to discuss four important points. First, the importance of the development of Native American survival schools and language nests, which are of great importance. The language nests will teach the youngest, who will learn it the quickest, retain it the best, and will continue it to fluency.

The second one is the support for Native American language survival facilities and endowment. Without your support and support from the society that tried to kill our languages, we will not be able to undo the damage that may lead to the Native American language deaths. We need places, building for these nests and schools to nurture them. It takes more than physical work to develop the schools; it takes financial support that many Native American language programs do not have access to.

The third is to encourage the amendment to S. 575 that would exempt teachers of Native American languages in public schools from having to obtain certification from outside their tribe. It is urgent because our speakers are dying fast. There are only a few of us speakers who are elders that are able to teach.

And the fourth is on No Child Left Behind effects on the native languages because of its relation to English-only Act, which is a racist policy that only acknowledges English. It doesn't take into account our native languages that are endangered, and will endanger all Native American children. We need an amendment to S. 575 that the English-only Act policy does not overpower native languages, which will respect the fact that these languages helped save our country in World War I and World War II.

[Remarks in native tongue.]

The translation is: A long time ago we all spoke Comanche. Now we will all speak Comanche again. From now on we will speak Comanche forever.

Thank you.

And now I will introduce Ms. Coosewon, who is the only Comanche speaker that works in any public school in our area. But she has to work with a certified teacher above her; she cannot do it by herself.

Thank you very much.

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

Senator INOUYE. Before I call upon Mrs. Coosewon, may I thank you for your very powerful message and may I tell you that you will be around when we pass this bill. As we would say, you are a young kid yet. I am two years older than you.

Ms. COOSEWON.

Ms. COOSEWON. Thank you all for inviting us here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, for this opportunity to testify regarding this bill. There were so many things that I had written down here, but the message that Mrs. Navarro has put forth speaks for me in so many ways, and all of us in this room, and I think that I couldn't add too much more to what she has said that my testimony you have all gotten copies of. But there was a few things I would like to add.

I do work in the public school system, and I have a lot of people that have encouraged me in the school system that I work in. I have high school students that I work with, and I also work with the Comanche College students. But the day that I was getting ready to leave class, I have a senior that is graduating, and rather than go over what I was going to in my testimony, he presented me with a letter and he has asked me, he says, Mrs. Coosewon, why can't we not help you? Can we not say something in behalf of our language? And can I write something and can you take it with you and let them hear what we have to say about the language?

And so with that, I have that copy. I couldn't make any copies other than what he handed me, and if you don't mind me not saying much more on my testimony, which you have copies, can I just read his letter for you and let this be a part of my testimony?

Senator INOUYE. It will be.

Ms. COOSEWON. And we will consider Mrs. Navarro's really very well put together statement representing what we all have to say.

Senator INOUYE. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. COOSEWON. And I certainly appreciate it. Because I just turned 71 myself, and I was thinking what a turnaround. I was raised in a boarding school. I didn't even know how old I was when they put me there. My grandparents passed away, and I lived with them from when I was 2 years old, so I never knew any other language than what we speak. So I had a lot. But it is in my statement, you can read some of it. But I think what a twist for them to ask me to come and teach this language that they wanted so hard for me not to know. Our gracious heavenly father continued to help me remember. I am still me. I am myself. For this special gift that he gave me, this language that is so precious to me, that I want to help preserve all these precious languages.

So by that I am going to read this young man's testimony here.

This was dated May 12, his last day in high school, mind you. This is my senior that is leaving me. And we all kind of had tears in our eyes when he handed this to me when I was leaving class.

Dear Senate, I write to you because I am unable to attend this meeting in person. This Comanche language class has meant a lot to me and the rest of the class. I have learned to speak a new language and learn and be a part of a different culture. It has furthered my understanding of America's complex natives. Without classes like this, we as Americans will forget where we come from. I am a one-fourth Cherokee and that means I would not be here without a Cherokee man. Learning about people like me, learning about my ancestors has made me appreciate my culture more. We have learned to speak many sentences and to hold conversations. We have learned the history of these people and many of their crafts. To stop these classes is to stop a culture living on. Please keep this class and others like it going on in our schools. With this I have only one thing left to say: Soobesu Numununu sumuoyetu numu niwunu? etu. Ukitsi nunu tuasu numu niwunu hutui. Ubunitu tuasu numu niwunu hutui nuu.

Ms. Navarro, I am just repeating what she had, but he wrote it down in his statement, about the language living on and we are going to speak Comanche forever. And they really stress this in my class at school.

Tommy Lemons and the Elgin High School Comanche Language Class.

And with that I would like to thank you all for the gracious hospitality you have shown us here for our stay for the few minutes that we have been here, the few hours we were lost here, and I want to thank you so much for your consideration of this bill, and I look forward to it being passed. Thank you so much.

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

Senator INOUYE. I thank you very much, Mrs. Coosewon. And will you express the gratitude of this committee to your student? And his words will be made part of the record.

Ms. COOSEWON. Thank you so much.

Senator INOUYE. And I have just one question for the panel here. What percentage of your students go on to higher education?

Ms. DESROSIER. Our immersion school goes to the grade 8. Then after that they return to public school to grade 9 to 12.

Ms. LAPIER. And we have only been in existence now for about 10 years, so we are just beginning to graduate children from the eighth grade into the public school. So actually the students who have graduated out of our school have not actually graduated from high school yet.

Senator INOUYE. Would you say that their performance as students has improved?

Ms. DESROSIER. Oh, yes; their performance. They are all in the honor society, the highest honors in grade eight that return, nine, and ten. We have some going off reservation schools, and the principal keeps phoning and asking us what we did to these children. They are astonished because they are so brilliant.

Senator INOUYE. There must be some magic here.

And, Mrs. Navarro, do you have any dropouts? Because we hear so much about students dropping out of Indian schools.

Ms. NAVARRO. Definitely. They are dropping out like flies, I always tell the tribe. And we don't know what to do.

Senator INOUYE. But this will help?

Ms. NAVARRO. I believe it will. They are beginning to know who they are. We are interesting some younger people, and they seem eager to want to learn our language, and I am sure it will help.

Senator INOUYE. Well, ladies, I thank you very much. I will have to go to vote; I just missed one. And we will stand in recess until 1:30, because I think all of you need some nourishment. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:43 p.m., the Committee recessed, to reconvene at 1:30 p.m., the same day.]

AFTERNOON SESSION

Senator INOUYE. I presume we have all had our nourishment.

Now may I call upon the third panel, consisting of Lawrence D. Kaplan, director, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska in Fairbanks; Kalena Silva, director, Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke' elikolani College, University of Hawai'i at Hilo; and William (Pila) Wilson, Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College, University of Hawai'i

at Hilo, accompanied by Holo Ho'opai; Namaka Rawlins, Director of the 'Aha Punana Leo; Dr. Mary Hermes, Assistant Professor of Education, University of Minnesota. Oh, Mr. Keiki Kawaiaea. I am sorry.

May I first call upon Dr. Kalena Silva.

STATEMENT OF KALENA SILVA, DIRECTOR, KA HAKA 'ULA O KE' ELIKOLANI COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO, HILO, HAWAI'I' ACCOMPANIED BY KEIKI KAWAIAEA, DIRECTOR, KAHUAWAIOLA INDIGENOUS TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM, AND DIRECTOR, HALE KUAMO'O HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE CENTER, KA HAKA 'ULA O KE'ELIKOLANI [HAWAIIAN COLLEGE]

Mr. SILVA. I ola no au I ku'u kino wailua, I oui mai e ke ali'i o Kahiki, Ke ali'i nana i 'a'e ke Kai uli, Kai 'Ele'ele, Kai Melemele, Kai Popolohuamea a Kane, I ka wa i po'i ai ke Kaiakahinali'i, Kai mu, kai lewa, Ho'opua ke ao ia Lohi'au, 'O Lohi'au, i lono 'oukou, Ola e, ola la, ua ola Lohi'au e, 'O Lohi'au ho'i e!

Thank you very much, Senator Inouye, for this opportunity to allow us to express our support for S. 575. We are very, very appreciative for this opportunity.

As you know, my name is Kalena Silva. I am director of Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

And I began my testimony with a chanted declaration by Lohi'au, who was the lover of Pele, Hawai'i's volcano goddess. Pele met Lohi'au on one of her dream travels to one of our most northerly islands in the chain, Kaua'i. Living on Hawai'i island some 300 miles south, Pele sends her sister, Hi'iaka, to Kaua'i to bring Lohi'au back to her. And in this ancient epic, Pele suspects that her sister Hi'iaka has romantic intentions toward Lohi'au, and Pele, as was her wont, flew into a fit of rage and jealousy and killed Lohi'au.

Now, many in Hawai'i know that Lohi'au was killed by Pele, who was a foreigner according to Hawaiian tradition, coming to Hawai'i from Kahiki; however, few people know that the epic ends with a brother of Pele resuscitating and reviving Lohi'au. His wandering spirit flying hopelessly over a cave on Kaua'i, she snatches it and gently coaxes it back into the body of Lohi'au until once again he is alive, almost as if awakened from a deep sleep.

In the last lines of his declaration that I just chanted, Lohi'au says:

> 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 live once again!

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, Kamohoali'i, brought him back to life.

Now, there have been many Pele bills in the political history of Native American languages, bills that sought to kill our languages.

S. 575 is her brother Kamoho-li'i's bill, and through it our languages, like Lohi'au, can find new life.

Thank you again, Senator and members of the committee, for this opportunity to testify in favor of this very important bill that gives much hope for the linguistic and cultural future of Native Hawaiians and all other Native Americans. Mahalo.

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much for this very beautiful and moving presentation. I appreciate it very much.

Does Ms. Keiki Kawaiaea wish to say anything?

Ms. KAWAIAEA. Aloha kakou.

Senator INOUYE. Aloha.

Ms. KAWAIAEA. My name is Keiki Kawaiaea. I currently am the programs director for the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center, as well as the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program, and I would like to talk about our work just briefly over the last 20 years.

Our collective vision spans about 20 years of intensive, intensive work, and through these years we actually began with just a very small number of children. Our hands, our heart, and very sincere intentions to revive our language through our children.

Through the years we have been able to increase our numbers, beginning in 1983, at around 32 speakers that we knew were native speakers under the age of 18, to currently about 3,000 in the State. Our work has included the 22 schools we have across the State; elementary, some of them are intermediate or middle schools, high schools, we have a few K–12 programs, along with 12 Punana Leo preschools. That, with the other work that we have been working with the university which I am at, including our lexicon work; all our new vocabulary to be able to teach all the different subject areas through our language; all of the see and eye support, including curriculum through all the different content areas of kindergarten through 12th grade; our pre-service; our in-service professional developed training; our very advanced computer technology, which is pretty well known across the United States, including our own Hawaiian system in the OS–10 system of the Macintosh computer. We have come a long ways.

What we have learned through all of this experience is that we know that we can successfully implement programs which address the full range of academic needs, as well as cultural wellness of our students, the wholeness in all of them. And we can do this through our language and through our culture.

One of the biggest challenges, however, has been sustaining a critical mass. I should say building of our critical mass, as well as our capacity. It has been an extreme challenge for us, even with all of this growth. From preschool, we are really moving up all the way up from a P, preschool, up to a doctoral program in which we just got approval to proceed with, a P to 20 kind of format. We are really looking at the whole comprehensive model, but it has taken extreme planning and dire work among us to build that critical mass.

And I just want to give one example of what that challenge is, specifically in teacher education. It is very difficult for us with decreasing numbers of native speakers, proficient speakers and cultural practitioners, as well as new proficiency amongst our new col-

lege students that are coming up. We don't have huge numbers graduating from fourth level Hawaiian that desire to go on into teaching, so the numbers of new teachers is a very big challenge for us in ensuring the high level of oral proficiency, their language proficiency, their cultural proficiency, as well as the teacher readiness. That is already in itself a big challenge.

Then our very limited amount of resources of our Kupuna that we have that can work into the classroom. With the No Child Left Behind, it has become extremely increasingly more difficult, and I would really like to plant a little seed, if I could, that some thought be given to a waiver for those of our Kupuna that now need to have an AA degree but are at an age where their wealth of wisdom is in their life experience, and that is a value that they bring into the classroom that we cannot provide from the university level.

The other is some possible provisional exemption or alternative certification for those that are native speakers that are of younger generation that we can bring into the educational setting so that we have a full range of possibilities to increase our critical mass and help us build our capacity for immersion education.

Mahalo.

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

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much.

And may I now recognize Dr. William Wilson.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM (PILA) WILSON, KA HAKA 'ULA O KE' ELIKOLANI COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO, HILO, HI, ACCOMPANIED BY HOLO HO'OPAI, STUDENT, KE KULA 'O NAWAHIOKALANI'OPU'U, HAWAII, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO, HILO, HI

Mr. WILSON. Aloha, Senator. I want to thank you very much for having us here and all these people from throughout the United States. You have done a lot for native languages over the years, and we really appreciate it. And, in fact, some of the things that you have done in the past I believe that people have mentioned other programs that have grown because of the 1992 amendments that you made which allowed for public schools to have the languages and community groups.

This particular bill relates to a new step, which is to be able to go to school in your language. Hawaiians are fortunate that there was an example of this that existed in the past; some other tribes had that, such as the Cherokees, and I know the Choctaws had that, and others had bits of missionization through their languages. But this is the first time in the modern history of the United States that the Government is supporting this idea.

It is very, very important because people generally now, because the languages have been suppressed for so long, do not realize what you can do with a language, that you can study math and you can study science in your own language. Math and science are not unique to English. In fact, the word "algebra" comes from Arabic and geometry came from the Greeks, it wasn't from the English. So we can study math and science in Hawaiian, but many people doubted this.

They also doubted that we could have children learning English if they went to school in Hawaiian. And we go to school in Hawai-

ian quite seriously. Totally in Hawaiian from preschool, totally in Hawaiian all the way through fourth grade. Fifth grade they begin to study English. Now, these children can already speak English; they learn it in the community. They even begin reading and writing English on their own because they can read Hawaiian and they can read big books in Hawaiian. So in fifth grade they begin English with what is the book about the pig and the spider? Charlotte's Web. I know because my wife is such a great teacher. So they do that book and they continue on.

They have English all the way through 12th grade as a language arts class just as they do in the English school, and they have the same things that they study. But they also have a Hawaiian language arts class, so they study Hawaiian epics such as Kalena did a bit of an expert quotation from, they do short Hawaiian stories, and then in English they so Aesop's Fables from the Greeks, they do even Chaucer and Shakespeare in the upper years. But they can compare that to the Hawaiian tradition. Their viewpoint of those things is from the Hawaiian viewpoint rather than saying, oh, Hawaiian this is like Shakespeare or Hawaiian this is like Chaucer. So we are very proud of that. They can do science. So I think it is important that people realize that if you are going to do this, you have to be very serious.

And I am going on a little bit, but one thing that I read recently that really struck home was they have done studies of children who have been adopted from Korea and Russia at seven, six years of age, and they have completely forgotten the language. So we need to continue at least to grade six, seven, eight, at the very least, if they are going to remember.

So with that I would like to introduce one of our graduates. We have had about 100 immersion graduates now. No dropouts so far. Over 80 percent have been accepted to college, and this is one of them who is going on to Stanford.

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

Mr. HO'OPAI. [Remarks in native tongue.]

Greetings, Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. My name is Hololapaka'ena'enao Kona Ho'opai, and I am a senior attending Ke Kula 'O Nawahiokalani'opu'u, one of a few Hawaiian immersion schools or programs in the State of Hawai'i, and I am very happy and thankful to be here today to testify in favor of this bill.

I began my education in the first grade at six years of age, and I graduate on the 24th of this month. I can honestly say that if it was not for this program, I would not have become fluent in my native tongue, nor would I have gained a great awareness of my culture and an understanding of who I am, where I am from, where I fit in my community, and what my roots are.

The education I received is truly unique and innovative. The immersion education provides a holistic learning environment that not only instills cultural values upon students, but also provides quality academic courses. I have no doubt in my mind that I have the ability to succeed in a non-Hawaiian language setting, with my recent acceptance to Stanford University. I can honestly say and genuinely say that I, along with other immersion students, not only in Hawai'i but also outside, can succeed in all settings. The immer-

sion program really taught me how to grow up and how to live not only in that program, but also outside, and how to gain knowledge not only within, but also outside, and come back and try to use what knowledge you have gained to improve your home and your setting.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to support this bill, and I would also like to thank all of the people in support of this bill, because even though we are sitting in different canoes, we are all on the same stream paddling in unison towards the same direction.

Mahalo nui loa. Thank you very much.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Ho'opai appears in appendix.]

Senator INOUYE. Thank you very much. One of these days I hope you will take me to a performance of Shakespeare in Hawaiian.

Mr. HO'OPAI. Sure. Sure.

Senator INOUYE. How would you say "to be or not to be"?

Mr. HO'OPAI. [Remarks in native tongue.]

Senator INOUYE. That sounds pretty good.

And now may I call upon the director of 'Aha Punana Leo, Namaka Rawlins.

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

Ms. RAWLINS. [Remarks in native tongue.]

Thank you, Senator Inouye, and aloha to you, Senator Murkowski. I just met you last night at our shindig over at the reception; it was very nice. And thank you, Senator and the staff and everyone here that have come to show support for this bill that you introduced again this year, Senators, S. 575. The years that we have worked together with you, it is just, I guess just awesome and overwhelming that you continue to support us at home and to hear how everyone just loves you, you know, from all the other States, from Indian country. It gives us much pride. And to see how you want to recognize us, the Punana Leo, with our consortium, Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani, at the Federal level to honor the work that we have done all of these years. It has been 20 years. It has been a beautiful ride, and it is an experience that, you know, we want to share.

In fact, we have been sharing all of these years with those that want to come and see our model in Hawaii. A couple of years ago the Ford Foundation gave us a grant because we needed the human resource to help us take people around and coordinate and come and see our Punana Leo babies, then into the kindergarten classroom, up into the college, and developing curriculum, and doing everything, you know, spinning all of our plates all at once.

And he [Holo] is in the fifth graduating class. We have had four other graduating classes that have come through the program, and it is just wonderful to have our own student from Hilo, from Nawahiokalani'opu'u, come here today and testify and to verify and validate the work that we have done all of these years. And we are more than ready to charge some more with what you propose for us to do in our consortium as demonstration sites, along with the Blackfeet and all of the other indigenous peoples that want to, that

have the desire to carry this kind of work forward for [remarks in native language] language survival.

[Remarks in native language.] Aloha.

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

Senator INOUYE. Aloha and mahalo.

I am glad our recording secretary understands native languages.

Ms. RAWLINS. Only 13 letters.

Senator MURKOWSKI. You make it sound so simple, so beautiful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to introduce the next panelist, and I appreciate the favor that you have accorded me in welcoming Dr. Lawrence Kaplan, the director for the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

Dr. Kaplan, welcome. Thank you for being here.

STATEMENT OF LAWRENCE D. KAPLAN, DIRECTOR, ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS, FAIRBANKS, AK

Mr. KAPLAN. Thank you, Senator Murkowski, and thank you both for taking time out of your busy schedules and for inviting us here to testify on this important bill.

It is an honor for me to sit here with my Hawaiian colleagues, who have given us so much inspiration in the area of language immersion schools and Hawaiian language programs at all levels, so I am very happy to be here with them.

Dr. Michael Krauss had hoped to be here today, but his personal situation has meant that he can't attend, and so he sends his regrets.

The core of my testimony today will concern the vital need for documentation of languages and the urgency of this documentation in the case of languages whose survival is threatened.

The documentation of languages makes an important contribution to human knowledge and is essential to the production of sound dictionaries, grammars, and educational materials for native languages. Even the relatively few Native American languages still spoken by children are endangered. This is the case of Navajo, for example, our largest language in the United States. Without documentation, this fundamental aspect of a nation's culture will be irretrievably lost. If an undocumented language ceases to be spoken, it is condemned to oblivion. The loss of any American language is a loss to all Americans.

Linguists have the expertise to determine what language data must be recorded in order to enable future revitalization efforts and in order to make language teaching possible. Languages are enormously complicated systems. Native languages are very different from European languages, native languages are very different from each other, and there is a great deal of study and research that is needed to backup a sound education program. Experienced linguists are required to understand grammatical systems accurately and to formulate rules which describe them.

At the Alaska Native Language Center, we feel a scholarly responsibility to find, procure, and account for all previous documentation of native languages. And in the case of Alaska, this goes back to the year 1732. Concentrating on Alaskan languages, we strive nevertheless to provide a full perspective on whole language

communities and language families, bringing to bear material from related languages outside of Alaska. For instance, Canadian, Greenlandic and Siberian Eskimo, or Navajo and Apache in the case of Athabascan, representing our two major language families in Alaska.

Resources from related languages must be considered for the information they contain and for the model they provide. These resources are sometimes written in French or Danish or even Russian, and they may be 200 years old, and all of this requires a scholarly approach. Further, contact among communities of speakers of related languages and dialects, whether this is within the United States or international, must be encouraged so that language work is cooperative. We cannot afford duplication of effort. Traditional efforts cannot normally be expected to have access to far-flung archives or contacts; whereas academics can and should be in the best position to provide and interpret research results to the communities.

The staff at the Alaska Native Language Center and Dr. Krauss have compiled an archive of some 10,000 items documenting the State's languages and serving as a model for other States and groups interested in undertaking their own language documentation so that there is an accessible collection of material. ANLC is involved in working with communities on conducting their own language documentation by training students and native speakers in techniques of applied language research. We are experienced in native language work and prepared to assist native groups and communities in learning to meet their own needs for language documentation and collection and archiving of language materials.

A special aspect of the Center involves the strong voice of native people in Alaska, who are over 15 percent of the State's population. They have given the Center an important service orientation which is not found in the same way in academic linguistics and anthropology departments with their theoretical orientation. We have developed a strong focus on documenting languages and we have hired expert native personnel and native speakers.

The Alaska Native Language Center is prepared to fulfill the role of demonstration center specified in S. 575, and we believe we would work in good complementation with the other two centers. We would be pleased to be of service to Native American groups interested in language analysis, documentation, and archiving. We are also in a position to advise on some of the complex issues that No Child Left Behind poses for native languages.

That concludes my testimony. Thank you all very much.

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

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

And may I now recognize Dr. Mary Hermes.

STATEMENT OF MARY HERMES, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, DULUTH, MN, ACCOMPANIED BY LISA LARONGE, OJIBWE LANGUAGE IMMERSION SCHOOL, HAYWARD, WI

Ms. HERMES. Thank you, Senators, for the opportunity to be here today. The first thing I would like to do is introduce Lisa LaRonge,

who is accompanying me today, and she would like to greet us in Ojibwe.

Ms. LARONGE. [Remarks in native tongue.]

Ms. HERMES. [Remarks in native tongue.]

I am Mary Hermes. I am a professor of education at the University of Minnesota Duluth. I am very happy to be here today, and honored to sit among people I consider my heroes.

I would like to make three main points. I think the main reason I am here, actually, is because I am a parent of two children in the Waadookodaading Ojibwe language immersion school, which has been started in Hayward, Wisconsin, and running for two years now. We are at the beginning of a long journey. We are at the beginning of our first hill.

My professional expertise is in educational research and in teacher education. The three points I want to make today are, first of all, about the need for more language immersion schools in our area; second, I would like to mention my research, which points to language immersion as a potential key for Indian education for academic success; and last I would like to make recommendation for alternative teacher certification programs for our language immersion teachers.

I have been very fortunate in being invited into this movement through the research work of two language activists. Through the work of research conducted through an ANA grant at the Lac Courte Reservation, Keller Paap and Lisa LaRonge really came to see clearly the need for an immersion school because our language resources are so sparse. In 1999 they surveyed the reservation of about 1500 residents and found only 15 speakers alive, 15 people whose first language was Ojibwe, all of them above 60 years old. There is less today, I think there is about 10. The other 13 reservations in the three-State area, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, are in similar situations. Some reservations have no speakers they can identify from their area; some reservations have more. We are the first immersion school and everyone is talking about it now. It is a light.

Through the research work that they did, they recognized, Keller often put it that the resources we have are like a pat of butter, and we are trying to spread it on a football field. And that is what led them to go to the Blackfeet school and see what they were doing. It led me to go to the Hawaiian school, to the Mauris, and study the immersion model and then start. So we had a pilot and then we have two years as a charter school in the border town of Hayward, Wisconsin, that borders the reservation, where people said don't go to that school, we walked out of that school 20 years ago to start our own school because that school was so racist, don't go there. But this movement is bringing people together. It is powerful, it is healing. It is bringing people across boundaries together, and that is how we started.

The second point I want to make is about my research in culture-based education. I have been doing that for about 10 years. My Ph.D. is in curriculum instruction from the University of Wisconsin Madison. And through researching, I was very interested in the culture-based movement, and I will just briefly summarize 10 years of research and say that my question was why doesn't culture-

based curriculum, which is like a mantra for us in Indian education, why hasn't it produced more academic success. Why do we still have such very high dropout rates? Why do we still score 30 percentile points below non-native students on all our proficiency tests?

And what I found in the two–State area was that it has really grown up as an add-on curriculum: Culture, academics. In the tribal schools, the culture classes are added on. We are forced to have certified teachers in our tribal schools. The certified teachers, 80 percent of them are non-native. Even in our tribal schools they are mostly non-native teachers. They come in at a higher pay rate and a different curriculum than our culture teachers who are native people from the reservation areas. So you can see there is two competing curriculums in the same schools.

Further, when I talk to students, many of them read this as an identity choice. So they would read academic success as assimilation. They read that as becoming white if I get good grades. They read in succeeding in the culture-based curriculum, I am being Indian. So it becomes a choice: be Indian or be smart; be assimilated or be native. And this work echoes other work by Cygnithia Fordham and John Ogboon from the African–American communities. They find that students see academic success as tantamount to assimilation.

This concerned me very much, as a person who believes very deeply in the power of education. As I was doing this research, I was talking with Lisa about them seeing the need for an immersion school, and I felt like it fell out of the sky. Language is an answer to the problem of bringing the academic and the culture curriculum together. So much research shows us that second language research has many benefits, metacognitive benefits, academic benefits, and yet you can see the world still through that indigenous lens so that the affective benefits of identity, intergenerational connectedness, self-esteem are also there as well. Language brings the two together.

The third point I want to make is about teacher education. As I mentioned, one of the main reasons I think that the two curriculums have been competing and so differentiated is because of the strict need for teacher certification. I have been professionally making teachers for 7 years. I believe in it deeply. I think there is so much to it, so much to be learned. I don't think, and the Mauris also advised us this way, we don't need to just slide our language teachers through and say, well, you are not certified, but you can teach. They need to have training, they need to be ready to teach. It is a license to drive our children.

And yet the two speakers that we have at our school, they are both in their thirties and they have learned as a second language. It has taken them 10 years to get to the level of proficiency they need in order to be able to teach in immersion. We cannot pull them out of teaching for a 4-year degree program; they need some kind of alternative certification.

So we support very much the Hawaiian's effort and their desire to be a demonstration school. We don't really know what that means, but we do know that in our area we need to pull together the 13 bands. We have already started talking about the need for

a curriculum center or an administrative center because our schools are so small. So we are also interested in that idea.

And I think I will stop there.

[Remarks in native tongue.]

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

Senator INOUYE. Well, I thank you very much, doctor, but Senator Murkowski and I will have to dash off to vote. So can you stick around for a while?

Ms. HERMES. Yes.

Senator INOUYE. We will be right back.

[Recess.]

Senator INOUYE. I am sorry to tell you that the voting will continue on until about 8 o'clock tonight, so we are getting a good exercise.

I would like to begin by saying how proud I am to hear all of the witnesses say that Hawaii has been a model, Punana Leo has been an icon, a leader. It makes me feel good. It makes me very proud.

In your studies, have you found that culture and language studies help to attack the dropout rate among Native Hawaiian students?

Mr. WILSON. Yes, Senator; in our immersion program now, as Keiki said, we have about 3,000 kids now, and so far, to my knowledge, there has not been a dropout. We have had children go to other schools, but we haven't had any dropout of education.

Senator INOUYE. Not one?

Mr. WILSON. Not that I know of. And we kind of talk about each other quite a bit, you know, what is happening over there and all that. So there may have been, but I haven't heard of any. I know about those who go to other schools and things, they move. Each one is very precious to us.

Senator INOUYE. This is the system that has the greatest number of years of experience in this area, so you may be able to respond to this. All of the witnesses have been speaking of the positive impact, the favorable side of language immersion. Is there any negative impact of this program that we should address?

Ms. KAWAIAEA. I think I am going to address that from my experience as being an immersion teacher as well as being somebody that trains teachers up at the university. I think experience in the long-run has been more positive than negative.

The negative that I could count has to do with attitudes of the surrounding community, you know, the old attitudes that you must learn English, that you can succeed better in English. So even within the children's own families, grandparents that were native speakers, that were beaten and scolded for speaking their native language, those kinds of attitudes seem to continue down the generations, and so we have seen this attitude shift about attitudes toward language, the community in the general that there could be more success in regular English medium, so how is it possible that Hawaiian could have a greater success. But the fact is we have between an 80 to 85 percent college acceptance rate, and as Pila said, we don't know of any of our students that have dropped out, and we currently have about 3,000 students in our schools and five classes that have graduated already. So it is pretty amazing.

Senator INOUYE. Now, when you speak of community acceptance, what community are you speaking of?

Ms. KAWAIAEA. Communities across the State where there are immersion children attending.

Senator INOUYE. So you are not speaking of the Native Hawaiian community.

Ms. KAWAIAEA. Yes; many of our schools are within homestead areas, as well as non-homestead areas.

Senator INOUYE. And the people there are not too keen about your program?

Ms. KAWAIAEA. I think that is the original, the very first impression that they get because of their historic experience in education and the failure of their students within the community. So how can you succeed adding on, this is what they are thinking, adding on, and perhaps we are not teaching through, we are teaching the language. So the concept of what we are trying to do isn't quite connecting; that we are in fact not teaching to speak Hawaiian, we are teaching through Hawaiian. That concept is really still a new concept in the islands.

Mr. WILSON. Could I say something about this? I think what we need to do is get the word out about our successes, because the language has been considered like Hawaiian language and culture have been considered a bit of a baggage that holds people back in the past, and so many people have aloha for the children, they worry that we are harming the children. And then you get rumors going around here and there, those children at this school don't speak English, they can't speak English, they are not doing well academically; it is just the opposite of the truth. So what we have to also address getting the word out in the community, and this year Namaka did have some ads during the Merrie Monarch, which were very good on TV, to let people know of the success.

Ms. RAWLINS. I think the other thing that is going to help with letting people know is what was discussed in the first panel, about the kind of research that needs to be done that is going to get that message out, because in order to change attitudes, it is baggage and baggage kind of hung on into our Native Hawaiian community, once we get the word out that you don't have to give up one to do the other.

Senator INOUYE. Several witnesses have suggested that the No Child Left Behind Act has had some negative impact upon language immersion.

Mr. WILSON. For example, on the State of Hawaii in compliance with No Child Left Behind is giving tests to children throughout the public schools, and because our immersion programs are connected to the public schools, they are required to have a test at third grade, and it is a standardized test in English, but our children do not start reading and writing in English until fifth grade, so it is very difficult to pass a test that you don't study. I mean, it is completely unrelated to their studies. And then the rule is that if you don't pass for a number of years, that your school will be closed down. So I know in some of the immersion schools the parents have had a blanket refusal to take the test, but something needs to be done about that.

Ms. RAWLINS. The other thing we need to do, I want to add one more thing about the No Child Left Behind, and I think it came up throughout the whole testimony, and we don't know and maybe that is something that we can be discussing, is to find a way that we can utilize the traditional language and culture experts in our schools, much like the Comanche women had said earlier. We don't know, we need to find a way to use them, to be able to use them, and that not only No Child Left Behind, but any other legislation that comes up that would hinder the movement of language survival schools or use and promotion of the Native American languages, that it doesn't hamper the forward momentum, but that there are roadways that we can make through. And I might not have the answer right now, but I think with others working we can come up with something really good.

Senator INOUYE. Senator Murkowski wanted to be here, but she has many conflicting schedules. But she has asked that I call upon Dr. Demmert.

The question is does the No Child Left Behind Act present problems for the native language programs.

Mr. DEMMERT. I think that to a large extent Pila and Namaka have responded to that very well. In the first instance, Pila points out that when you require testing in English and your students have been going to school in the native language, you have got a problem. They should really be tested in the native language. That doesn't mean they are not going to learn English or they won't catch up and surpass the monolingual students who are going to school in English at some point. I think the research that I testified about earlier implies that there is a good chance that bilingual children when properly supported, will do as well or better than monolingual students.

The second piece that Namaka addressed is the importance of continuing to use the traditional language and cultural experts of the different communities, who probably have not had an opportunity to go to school, and the need for some kind of waiver to ensure that those skills are utilized. I think that is true in Alaska, it is true in Hawaii, it is true in any part of the Continental United States, and I know it is true in the circumpolar north. I do a lot of work with Greenland, and they, of course, are Inuit Eskimo that have migrated across from Alaska. I mention to them periodically that we waved to them as they went by about five or 6,000 years ago. I also work with the Sammis in the nordic countries, and the same thing is true there. In both of those international communities the countries have given a high priority for traditional speakers and for the native languages.

Senator INOUYE. I am sorry she was not here to listen to that, but she wanted that on the record.

Mr. DEMMERT. Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. Dr. Kaplan, you suggested that a center be established in Alaska. Where would you envision the center being established?

Mr. KAPLAN. Based in Fairbanks at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, related to the Alaska Native Language Center. We would be the demonstration center, and from there we would co-

ordinate efforts to provide training to groups in the rest of the country and have them travel to Fairbanks for——

Senator INOUYE. Not to cause any problem, but is Fairbanks better than Anchorage?

Mr. KAPLAN. Oh, that is just where the Alaska Native Language Center is located.

Senator INOUYE. Oh, oh.

Mr. KAPLAN. It is better than Anchorage, but that is not the reason.

Senator INOUYE. You should not have said that.

Mr. KAPLAN. Now it is on the record.

Senator INOUYE. Dr. Hermes, you have had some personal experience in this with two of your children in school.

Ms. HERMES. That is right.

Senator INOUYE. Now, as a mother, have you seen improvement?

Ms. HERMES. Improvement? I have seen an awareness and a consciousness and a love of the language that blossom in both of them. They knew I was coming out here, and I have had a lot of traveling this spring, and they hate it when I go. They are seven and nine. They said, mom, you do whatever you have to for our language. And they will stick with school. They love school because of the language.

Senator INOUYE. Does it provide better cultural identity and self-pride?

Ms. HERMES. I believe it does because they are able to think and create in the language; they are not just carrying out activities. You know, we do all the traditional activities. They are not just doing the activities, but they can do anything. They can go to St. Louis, they can study anything and think about it in the language.

Senator INOUYE. Obviously I am not a scientist, I am a politician, but does this language immersion program do something to exercise the brain cells?

Ms. HERMES. There is research, brain research that shows that there is cognitive benefits. I used the term and Bill used it before, metacognitive gains. So when a young child up to, I think, the age of four or five, they have four lobes of their brain devoted to learning language. They are like a sponge for language. So to engage them in different languages, in more than one language, creates connections in their brains that will be there for life, that are not there if they are only in a monolingual environment.

Senator INOUYE. Well, I can assure the panel that we are going to do everything to report this measure out of the committee before the end of July. I thank you all very much.

Believe it or not, this is our last panel. Our last panel, the Director of the Bishop Museum of Honolulu, Dr. William Y. Brown, accompanied by the Director of Program Planning and Development, Ms. Jennifer Chock; Dr. David Dinwoodie, Department of Anthropology, University of New Mexico in Albuquerque; the Director of National Indian Education Association of Alexandria, Mr. John Cheek, accompanied by Ms. Cindy La Maar, President-Elect, National Indian Education Association.

I expect all of you to wrap it up nicely now.

May I call upon Distinguished Director of the Bishop Museum, Dr. Brown.

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM Y. BROWN, DIRECTOR, BISHOP MUSEUM, HONOLULU, HI, ACCOMPANIED BY JENNIFER CHOCK, DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I understand your message. And accompanying me, as was noted, is Jenny Chock.

I would like to thank you and Senator Akaka for sponsoring this bill. We appreciate the chance to be here and we fully support the bill and look forward to its passage.

As you know, the Bishop Museum is now 114 years old, established in the memory of Princess Pauahi Bishop by her husband to honor her and to be the house of the treasures of the Kamehameha family, and we have over 2 million cultural objects and then many other things that the Senator is familiar with, some with six legs. Over 400,000 people come to the Bishop Museum annually, and over the last 3 years we have had various organizations, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, the Alaska Native Heritage Center, the Peabody Essex Museum, the Inupiat Heritage Center, New Bedford Whaling Museum, for all of which we have programs for cooperation and joint cultural development.

You know, Mr. Chairman, if I may, I know time is short. I don't think I really need to read the rest of the details of my testimony.

Senator INOUYE. Before you proceed, may I assure all witnesses that your full text of your prepared statement will be made part of the record.

Mr. BROWN. Let me just, then, summarize relatively brief remarks.

We have an enormous collection of documents and tape recordings and photographs, hundreds of thousands of them that represent much, maybe most, of what is left that is documented of the language of old Hawai'i, and we have individuals like Pat Namaka Bacon, she is my Namaka, who began work at the Bishop Museum in 1939 and works there today, and spends everyday listening to tapes, many 50 years old, that were recorded of Hawaiians, and transcribes them in Hawaiian. So we have this enormous capability and commitment in the Bishop Museum to keeping that language intact.

We have another program that we are investing in to scan the old 19th century Hawaiian newspapers. You know, it turns out there were just a few sources, Malo, Kamakau, John Papa Ii, a few others, but very few, who lived before the Kapu system fell in 1819 that are published now. Those newspapers have words of many people that no one has ever read since probably the day they were published—words of people that lived before the kapu system fell—people that have that old knowledge.

And then we are very interested in trying to make sure that we keep all of the nuances alive, the different dialects. So for the Bishop Museum, this enterprise of language preservation is central to our purpose, and we thank you for moving forward with this legislation to help on that.

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

Senator INOUYE. I think this might be an appropriate time to bring this up. Several months ago Senator Stevens of Alaska and I were discussing some of the employment problems in the reservations and among native peoples of the United States. He is the

chairman, I am the vice chairman of the Defense Appropriations Committee, and we noted that there are tons of operational manuals used by the U.S. Army, the Navy, et cetera, and we are running out of space. There is a manual for tires, there is a manual for gas tanks, there is a manual for rifles, and so we decided that they should be digitized. And the program has started with the U.S. Army and it is now being established in several Indian reservations, and in Anahola Kavai, the Hawaiian homesteaders of Anahola Kavai have just set up a center for digitizing. And I know that in Alaska and in many other places there is great potential and capacity to conduct digitization work.

I suppose you would not mind if we have Indian country and Alaskan natives and Hawaiian natives participate in digitizing your documents? Any opposition to that?

Mr. BROWN. No, Mr. Chairman.

Senator INOUYE. You are for it, Dr. Hermes?

Ms. HERMES. Yes.

Senator INOUYE. Well, with your smile, I cannot say no.

So I thought the Bishop Museum might be a logical place in Polynesia for that purpose.

Mr. BROWN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator INOUYE. You must have tons of things to be digitized.

Mr. BROWN. We have literally tons of things that need to be digitalized. And I think you have touched on what may be the top priority for museums now, because, when you think about it, what is a higher purpose than to protect and provide access to that history? And the only way to provide access effectively to the public now is to digitalize it and put it on the Internet. And I would add that, you know, all of the great institutions of the world that date back many centuries have at some point been destroyed. And I hope this never happens to the Bishop Museum, but it happened to the Library of Alexandria, it happened to the Library at Pergamon. So we need to do two things: Protect what we have, but try to make sure that that information is out there in another way for all the world to have, we hope, forever.

Senator INOUYE. You have just given the marching orders to Dr. Zell here. Right?

Ms. Chock, do you have anything to add to us?

Ms. Chock used to be on my staff.

Ms. CHOCK. Thank you very much, Senator. It is a tremendous honor to be on the other side of the table. And I just want to thank you because you have been such a crusader on behalf of not only Native Hawaiians, but for native people generally. And you just have this ability, I am sure partly because of your great staff, to understand all the different ways that language, culture is all interconnected to how we understand ourselves. And that kind of guidance, that kind of leadership has just been tremendous, and we cannot begin to thank you enough for your continued support for this. And anything that we can do at the Bishop Museum to help with the passage of this bill, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

Thank you.

Senator INOUYE. See, if you were on my staff, you would get a pay raise.

Dr. Brown, you heard that, did you not?

Mr. BROWN. Yes, sir.

Senator INOUYE. And now may I call upon Dr. David Dinwoodie of the Department of Anthropology, University of New Mexico.

Doctor.

STATEMENT OF DAVID DINWOODIE, DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Mr. DINWOODIE. Greetings. It is a distinct honor to have the opportunity to testify and contribute to this discussion.

My professional interest is in language use among Native Americans and First Nations people of Canada. Presently, I am participating in an effort initiated by the leadership of the Nizipuhwahsin school and Piegan Institute to begin a second phase in their work, and it is a distinct pleasure to be involved in that work. And it is on the basis of that work and my previous experience that I have been asked to testify.

In summarizing my testimony, it is my experience that what Dr. Sims earlier described as community-based efforts are underway in virtually all Native American communities, that is, community-based efforts to support indigenous languages and also to address the linguistic situation more generally. There are efforts to increase proficiency in English, and in many cases those are compatible, very much compatible with efforts to preserve indigenous languages.

And it is my belief that these movements should be taken very seriously. The leaders of these movements, some of which are very small and consist of families, are in the best position to resolve some of the difficulties in supporting these languages, and we heard a little bit about that in the last panel. It is my belief that anthropologists in particular are not able to sort out those difficulties. In other words, we are in a position to learn from what is going on in these communities, but the people, the community members themselves are in the best position to organize and implement these programs. And I think that the Piegan Institute serves as a model. In my view, it is exactly the way it presents itself, it is a grassroots movement and should be taken very seriously.

That is the gist of what I have to contribute.

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

Senator INOUYE. What you are saying has been said in different ways by other witnesses, that in order to succeed, an important factor is community involvement or support. Now, how do we achieve that? How would you suggest? What do we do?

Mr. DINWOODIE. Well, I think the simplest way in the case that I know best here, which is the Piegan Institute, is to support the leaders of that institution. In other words, they have already addressed many of these extraordinarily complex issues, and they are in a position to really proceed and do great things. And I think that is true of the other programs, it is just that I am not an expert in the other programs. But I think the key is to move beyond generic participation toward leadership and support that puts them in a position to implement these programs.

Senator INOUYE. I will let you in on a little secret here. This Committee was all prepared to report this bill out immediately, be-

cause we believe in this measure; however, we felt that our Nation should be made aware of why we are doing this, that native language immersion and instruction conducted in native languages do cut down on dropout rates, it does involve improvement and performance, scholastic performance, all the things that we have been seeking. It somehow instills better discipline among the students; it brings about better cultural identity and pride. And so that is why we are having this hearing. And I am glad that all of you have assisted us in this.

And now may I have the wrap-up witness, Dr. Cheek.

STATEMENT OF JOHN CHEEK, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, ALEXANDRIA, VA

Mr. CHEEK. Good afternoon, Mr. Senator. It is good to be here.

Again, my name is John Cheek. I am executive director of the National Indian Education Association. Our president-elect, Cindy La Maar, had to catch a flight, so I am just going solo on this part of it. I think it is very appropriate that you saved the longest testimony for the end of the hearing today, so I appreciate that.

During various periods in the history of this country, there have been efforts to eliminate native languages. Rarely has the use of these languages been supported or even encouraged by the Federal Government. Since native languages are closely related to the cultural identity of tribal groups that speak them, the failure to support retention of these languages also means a lack of support for the cultural identity of numerous indigenous populations. The ill-conceived efforts to eliminate the language and culture of all of America's indigenous populations is one of the darkest periods in this Nation's history.

Native languages are one of the treasures of this country's heritage, as well as the treasures of tribal groups themselves. During World War II, several Indian nations utilized their native language to help America win the war. Even as World War II came to an end, Indian languages here at home were under attack in the Indian schools as termination advocates sought to remove language and culture from Indian students. Recently, proponents of the English-only movement have sought to mainstream the English language in America, even though today's minorities will become tomorrow's majority.

To American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, our languages are synonymous with cultural identity. Without language, there is no effective way to communicate and pass on the values and teachings from one generation to the next. Sadly, many tribal groups have already lost their languages. In 1992, when the Native Languages Act was first considered by Congress, only 150 Indian languages were still being used, out of an estimated several hundred.

Today I am speaking on behalf of the advocates of the survival school movement and amendments to the Native American Languages Act. The amendments would include the addition of survival schools, and I won't really go into that since we have had adequate testimony on that and it is in my record. But, in short, S. 575 is a modest step in the process of supporting the revitalization of native languages in America. It would put existing language im-

mersion programs on firmer financial footing and provide some encouragement for others to begin. It plans a seed that hopefully can grow into a larger effort to slow down and perhaps, in some cases, reverse the march toward the loss of the American Indian language and culture. Specifically, the bill would support the development of survival schools and language nests, which NIA fully supports and endorses.

We did have a couple of comments that we wanted to at least bring to your attention, and I won't read them all, but they are in my written statement.

The certification issue definitely needs to be dealt with. One of the problems is that the No Child Left Behind Act is totally achievement driven and doesn't really consider any other language validity, I think, and reliability, so we need to make sure that somehow whatever language programs are created and the money that is there for them also includes some way to certify those programs so that they at least will maintain some sort of status under No Child Left Behind.

The act also didn't recommend an authorization amount, even though I believe the previous survival school bill that didn't make it through recommended about $8 million, I believe. I think our recommendation is to provide about $8 million for existing programs and to create new programs in order to keep the momentum going that we have seen here today.

I would also want to include an additional $1 million for research to back up what we know is happening in these local schools and in these survival schools. Without research, you can't really back up and support the work that is going on that is actually working for Indian communities, so we need to have that in with it.

I believe there is one provision that it looked like they had omitted Alaska Natives, it was under section 103. So if it needed a technical amendment or not, I would make sure that Alaska Natives are included in that section.

The rest of my comments I will just include in my record.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee on Indian Affairs for its unwavering support for the concerns of all native people and for holding today's hearing on S. 575. Tribal languages, as with tribal sovereignty, can only be maintained when committed native peoples work in concert with the Congress to ensure their existence. To this end, we ask the committee to recommend support for this legislation and its potential impact on the future of Indian generations.

I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

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

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

I am very pleased that we did have this hearing for another reason, a very important one, because many witnesses suggested that this measure, like most legislative measures, has some imperfections and that we should amend it to address the problems associated with the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, for example. And, therefore, may I suggest that all of you who have interest in suggesting amendments to this bill assemble in room 836 of the Hart Office Building, which is two buildings down. That is one of

the offices of the Committee on Indian Affairs. So if you will meet with the staff of the committee and discuss the changes that you would like to suggest to the bill, amendments to the bill, I would personally appreciate that.

So, with that, I thank all of you and I thank Dr. Navarro for the books. Thank you very much. And Dr. Hinton.

One of these days I am going to learn the language. I do speak Navajo.

So, with that, thank you all very much. It has been very helpful. And I can assure you that this measure will be reported out with your changes by the end of July. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 3:25 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. DANIEL K. INOUYE, U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs meets this morning to receive testimony on S. 575, a bill to amend the Native American Languages Act to provide authority for the establishment of Native American Language Survival Schools and Native American Language Nests and for other purposes.

Historians and linguists estimate that there were between 1,000 and 2,000 distinct Native languages at the time that Europeans first set foot on this continent.

Since that time, there have been many influences brought to bear on Native people and their cultures, and few of them have been positive as they affect the preservation and ongoing vitality of Native languages For instance, there was a time in our history when Federal policy strongly encouraged the assimilation of Indian people. In carrying out this policy, Indian children were taken from their homes and forced to attend boarding schools, where against most Native religious beliefs, the children's hair was cut, and they were forbidden from speaking in their Native languages, or practicing any aspect of their traditions and culture, including dancing, singing, and ceremonial rites.

In contemporary times, we have seen the effects of the "English-only" movement on the speaking of other languages in this country—and on school curricula which at one time placed a premium on the learning of other languages by American students.

In my home State of Hawaii, fortunately we have a different set of circumstances.

The Native Hawaiian language is recognized as one of two official languages of the State.

Native Hawaiian language immersion programs are part of the public school curriculum, and private schools using the Native Hawaiian language as the exclusive language in which instruction in all academic subjects is carried out have more applicants than they can accommodate.

In Hawaii, we have not only kindergarten through twelfth grade Native Hawaiian language instructed curriculum in the private schools administered by Aha Punana Leo, we have a masters' degree program at the University of Hawaii at Hilo where teachers are trained to provide instruction in the Native Hawaiian language.

Many of our streets bear the names of Native Hawaiian leaders or are simply Native Hawaiian words, and ancient and traditional practices, such as hula, ho'o'ponopono, and lomi lomi are not only widely accepted but enthusiastically embraced.

Native Hawaiian traditional healers play an integral role in the provision of health care to Native Hawaiian patients.

So in Hawaii, while there was a time when the influence of the missionaries and their efforts to discourage the Native Hawaiian people from expressing their culture and their traditions and from speaking their language, we are no longer fighting those influences.

But there is a new threat to Native languages and I don't suppose that any of our well-intentioned legislators would have predicted this—but the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act are having a significant effect on the inclusion of Native languages in school curricula, on teacher certification, and in many other areas that we will hear about today.

Some have suggested that the only solution is to take Native languages out of the public schools and to provide Native language instruction in another venue.

There are a number of programs already operating in this manner, and they have demonstrated that students can not only become proficient in their Native language, but that their academic performance is improved.

Other scientific tests of human brain development instruct us that when children become proficient in more than one language, they actually generate more brain cells and their life-long capacity for learning is enhanced.

But we also know that there are only about 155 Native languages remaining and that 87 percent of these languages have been classified as either deteriorating or nearing extinction.

Native languages are losing their vitality as those who speak the Native language pass on, and with the loss of language comes the loss of the means to convey the history, the culture, the traditions that are unique to each group of people.

We are speaking of the very survival of Native languages, and we must do our part to assure that they do survive.

(We are told that Senator Murkowski will be at the hearing—so you may want to call on her next).

Before we begin the hearing today, I want to advise the witnesses that your full statements will be made part of the hearing record, and the committee would appreciate it if you would summarize your thoughts so that there will be sufficient time for all of the presentations.

Because of other meetings that will be taking place in the Senate, we have to complete this hearing before noon today, so I would ask all of the witnesses if they will please respect the Committee's desire that all witnesses have time to make their presentations before the hearing must be adjourned, by keeping their statements within the 5-minute timeframe that has been designated. Thank you.

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

Mr. Chairman. The preservation of our Native languages was very important to my father, former Senator Frank Murkowski, who joined with Senator Inouye and others in this room to craft the early Native American language legislation in the early 1990's.

Senator Frank Murkowski was particularly supportive of the work of Dr. Michael Krauss and his colleagues at the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He would be very pleased to know that S. 575 designates the center as a demonstration site, in recognition of its pioneering work in language preservation, as I am.

But the challenges facing those who educate in Native languages are perhaps greater today than they ever have been. Although the United States has long abandoned the practice of terminating Native languages by discouraging educators from teaching in any language other than English, the recent "No Child Left Behind" legislation poses particular challenges to the advancement of Native language education. The written testimony submitted today suggests that these challenges will be felt throughout Indian America.

For months, school districts throughout rural Alaska have been working with the Department of Education in hopes of finding some flexibility to assure that "No Child Left Behind" does not undo all of the good work that the Native language survival community has done for more than one-quarter century. I need to point out that while the Native American Languages Act dates back to the early 1990's, the Alaska Native Language Center was established by state legislation in 1972.

I was proud to host Education Secretary Rod Paige's recent visit to Alaska, so that he and his senior staff could have a first hand view of all the good learning that is occurring in our rural school districts and why the implementation of "No Child Left Behind" must be accommodated to our special circumstances.

While we opened the Secretary's eyes to how education works in rural Alaska, there is much left to be done in reconciling Native language education with "No Child Left Behind." Mr. Chairman, you have brought together many of the brightest minds in Native language survival for this hearing. I will be most interested in hearing how we can continue our progress in Native language education, without compromising the essential objective of "No Child Left Behind," which is that every

child must be educated in away that he or she can effectively participate in the American economy. I would like our witnesses, and their colleagues, to carefully consider how their talents can be brought to bear in resolving this dilemma.

I am encouraged by the written testimony which indicates that intensive education in Native languages does not inhibit educational achievement, but enhances it, and I would ask the witnesses to help us fully understand this point during the course of this hearing or in the supplemental information they might submit for the record. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this important hearing. It could not have come at a more critical time.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOYCELYN DAVIS-DESROSIER, TEACHER, NIZIPUHWAHSIN, SCHOOL, PIEGAN INSTITUTE BLACKFEET INDIAN RESERVATION, BROWNING, MT

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of S. 575, the "Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003." Today I would like to tell you how important Native American language survival schools are for educating our Native children.

Three years ago my son Ahsinapoyii (Jesse DesRosier), along with Darrell Kipp the Executive Director of Piegan Institute and fellow student Terrance Guardipee came to testified on behalf of this bill. (Here is their picture with Senator Inouye) I am here today on behalf of my son and on behalf of all the children at Nizipuhwahsin to tell you how important Native American language survival schools are at developing fluent speakers, returning status to Native languages and at educating our children. Nizipuhwahsin is a K–8 school on the Blackfeet Indian reservation where core academic subjects are taught in the Blackfeet language.

When I first enrolled my two boys at Nizipuhwahsin a lot of people told me not to send them there, even my own family. They said that my boys would never learn to read and write English, that my boys would have lower academic achievement and would never make the transition to public school and that the Blackfeet language the children were learning was "incorrect." At times even I began to question, am I making the right decision for my children?

I was born and raised on the Blackfeet reservation and I have lived here all of my life. Growing up the Blackfeet language was spoken in our house but we were never encouraged to speak the language. As I grew up I took classes in high school and I took all the Blackfeet language classes at the community college but I never learned more than one word a week. It was not until my sons started school at Nizipuhwahsin that my family returned to speaking the Blackfeet language.

I began volunteering at Nizipuhwahsin 5 years ago and then entered a 3-year Kellogg Foundation funded Blackfeet language teacher training program at Piegan Institute. I completed the 3-year program and a B.A. in Elementary Education. I became a state certified teacher and for the past year I have worked full-time as a teacher at Nizipuhwahsin.

As a teacher I see the value of Native American language survival schools not only for my children but for all the children and for the community as a whole. When children begin to learn the language the first thing they do is to go visit their grandparents—and speak to them in Blackfeet. The children visit with each other at the grocery store and people in the community listen. What was once thought of as taboo or old fashioned has become a symbol of high status. Elders seek out children from Nizipuhwahsin to visit with because they know they can have a conversation with each other. It is bringing about a healing between the generations.

Unlike educators and academics the elders do not argue about whether or not the children speak the "correct" type of Blackfeet. The elders acknowledge the children's abilities. The elders reflect on their experiences, mostly when they were young and with their parents. The elders share the socializing of long visits, singing, and dancing. The Blackfeet language is the bond because everyone spoke only the language in the old days. Elders today face and experience the most change of any generation of people. The fast pace of living has caught up to the Blackfeet and the elders are worried about it. The spirituality in the families and community used to be strong.

Nizipuhwahsin has an open door policy and elders are welcome at all times of the day. When Nizipuhwahsin school was first designed and built, it was built with a grandmother's house in mind. The classrooms were designed to be open, airy and welcoming. The kitchen is always open for the children and visitors. Our school is accessible to all the community. Our school has evolved from being not only a school but the center of community life. Many community cultural events are held at the Nizipuhwahsin because it is made comfortable and people want to hear and speak the language.

But most of all I am happy for the children who are thriving in a safe, nurturing environment and learning their language. Many children who go to Nizipuhwahsin have gone on to public school and they move directly into taking honors classes in high school, becoming members of the National Honor Society and scoring above average on the ITBS. Learning academic subjects in the Blackfeet language has not diminished their academic ability but enhanced it.

Pitohkiiyo (Michael John DesRosier) is now completing his 6th year and Ahsinapoyii (Jesse DesRosier) is completing his 4th year at Nizipuhwahsin and they are speakers of the Blackfeet language. Elders now come to my sons and ask them to lead prayers at our religious ceremonies. The elders hold this knowledge sacred. This knowledge can only be obtained through the Blackfoot language. Ceremonial rites and rituals have been handed down by Creator since the beginning of time and must continue to remain so. The time is coming when many ceremonial rites need to be transferred to younger people. Therefore, the need for reviving the teachings through the Blackfoot language is urgent. Ceremonies must continue on to provide protection to the people. My sons are beginning to participate in the ancient ceremonial ways of our people. My sons now have opportunities that they never would have had without our Native American language survival school.

Did I make the right decision? Yes, our lives have been forever changed by Nizipuhwahsin.

HEARING
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE
BILL 575 - A BILL TO AMEND THE NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT
MAY 15, 2003

Written Testimony of William Y. Brown, President & CEO
Bishop Museum

Honorable Chair Nighthorse Campbell, Vice-Chair Inouye, Members of the Committee, my name is Bill Brown and I am the President and CEO of Bishop Museum located in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Accompanying me today is the Museum's Director of Program Planning & Development, Jennifer Chock.

I would like to begin by thanking Senator Inouye and Senator Akaka for sponsoring this bill that will assist Native Peoples to preserve and revitalize their languages. I also extend our thanks to Senator Campbell for holding a hearing on this matter. The Bishop Museum appreciates the opportunity to testify today and strongly supports the passage and full funding of Senate Bill 575, *A Bill to Amend the Native American Languages Act to provide support of Native American Language Survival Schools, and for Other Purposes.*

Bishop Museum Background

Bishop Museum is a research and educational institution that focuses on the cultural and natural history of Hawai'i and the Pacific. Charles Reed Bishop founded the Museum in 1889 as a memorial to his late wife, Hawaiian Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop. Although private, Hawai'i legislation designates the Museum as the State of Hawai'i Museum of Natural and Cultural History. Our mission is to provide world leadership in understanding, conserving, and telling the stories of the cultures and natural environments of Hawai'i and the Pacific, and to serve Hawai'i residents with programs that expand educational experiences. One of our primary purposes has been to serve and represent the interests of Native Hawaiians by preserving their artifacts, documents, and other materials, and by offering educational programs that perpetuate their cultural vitality. Over the last 114 years, the Museum's centerpiece has been the preservation and continued life of the Native Hawaiian culture.

Today, the Museum's cultural collection has expanded to more than 2.4 million items, 60% of which represent the Native Hawaiian culture. The Hawaiian Collection includes over 1 million cultural objects and archaeological specimens, more than 125,000 historical publications - many in the Hawaiian language, plus 1 million historical photographs, films, works of art, audio recordings, and manuscripts in

Hawaiian. Our recent collaborative programs with the Alaska Native Heritage Center, Peabody Essex Museum, the Iñupiat Heritage Center, the New Bedford Whaling Museum, and Native Hawaiian organizations such as the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement have resulted in more research and therefore much greater exposure of Native Hawaiian culture and language nationwide. We are grateful to Senator Inouye for his support of these collaborative programs.

Rebirth of the Hawaiian Language

As with many other Native Peoples, governmental policies of western assimilation repressed the use of the Hawaiian language and discouraged the practice of Hawaiian culture. Children were punished for speaking Hawaiian in the classroom and Hawaiian families were encouraged to downplay their ancestry by adopting western names and customs.

However, in the 1960s and 1970s, Hawai'i experienced a great resurgence of interest in all things Hawaiian. This Hawaiian cultural renaissance helped to revive the study and practice of Hawaiian culture, art, and language that has continued to the present. In the area of Hawaiian language, public and private schools began offering Hawaiian language classes, and in 1978 Hawai'i declared Hawaiian as one of the two official languages of the State. Probably the most influential change occurred with the creation of language immersion schools.

In 1983 a grassroots organization called 'Aha Pūnana Leo was formed. This group of visionaries created a Hawaiian language immersion program where all classes were taught in Hawaiian. Today the State's Department of Education offers Hawaiian language immersion programs in the public school system. Before these programs, most Native speakers were over the age of 70 and some would argue that Hawaiian was a dying language. Twenty years after the start of Hawaiian language immersion schools, the number of fluent Native speakers from pre-school to graduate school continues to increase in leaps and bounds.

The importance of having a vibrant Hawaiian language is summed up in an ancient Hawaiian proverb: I ka 'ōlelo nō ke ola, i ka 'ōlelo nō ka make. Translated into English, it means "In the language there is life, in the language there is death." By recapturing the Hawaiian language, we are recapturing Hawaiian culture.

By all accounts, we in Hawai'i have been incredibly fortunate in reversing the damage caused by assimilationist attitudes that threatened to extinguish Hawaiian culture. The Hawaiian immersion schools have created a new generation of fluent bi-lingual Hawaiian speakers who are comfortable conversing in both English and Hawaiian. The people of Hawai'i, both Native and non-Native, have embraced a vibrant and living Hawaiian culture as evidenced by listeners of Hawaiian music, people attending hālau hula (schools), and those adopting traditional Hawaiian values.

Today both the federal government and the State of Hawai'i support the perpetuation of the Hawaiian language.

Despite all of these blessings, preserving and perpetuating a Native language remains a constant challenge.

Bishop Museum's Hawaiian Language Resources

The Museum's Hawaiian cultural collection contains a vast array of Hawaiian language materials poised to enhance the ongoing revival of the Hawaiian language. Our collection includes 125,000 pages of Hawaiian language newspapers, as well as out-of-print books, handwritten letters, stories, chants, legends, genealogies, research notes, and unpublished manuscripts – all in Hawaiian – that date back to the 1800s and early 1900s. We possess over a million photographs from this time period, many with captions written in Hawaiian. Early documentation of Hawaiian artifacts in our collections is written in Hawaiian. The Museum also has over 1,200 audio tape recordings from the 1950s, '60s and early '70s of Hawaiian elders speaking in their Native tongue, recounting history, events, chants, legends, and personal stories. These language resources undoubtedly contain invaluable insights about Hawai'i's history as well as information that will deepen our understanding of Hawaiian culture, and most especially Hawaiian language. All of these incredible materials are a precious resource, a direct link to the Hawai'i of Old.

Bishop Museum has the awesome responsibility to care for and preserve these precious, one-of-a-kind treasures, and make them as widely accessible as possible. Many of these materials are over a century old, and protecting these resources from degradation has unfortunately meant restricting access. However, with ever advancing technology, we now have the ability to meet the challenge of preserving Native language treasures while simultaneously enhancing access to this information.

Depending on the object or item, providing access may cover the spectrum from scanning a document to full-fledged research. For example, handwritten correspondence between two Hawaiian chiefs could be scanned so that it would be digitally preserved in its original form. Its text could be digitized and added to a searchable database. The contents could be translated into English so that non-Native speakers could access the information. The document might require interpretation so that the message is placed into the appropriate context, both historically and culturally.

Bishop Museum also hopes to republish out-of-print Hawaiian volumes, as well as to publish – electronically and on paper – manuscripts and research notes written in Hawaiian but never before translated. As for the oral history tapes of Hawaiian elders, Bishop Museum envisions digitally preserving these voices from our past and eventually transcribing and translating their words. Future products would include

CDs of these early recordings that would be available through libraries, bookstores, and internet-accessible databases.

At its most basic level, Bishop Museum hopes to share these vast language resources and make them relevant to our users today and in the future, for people in Hawai'i and the throughout world.

Another challenge – one probably common to all Native Peoples – is the concern that linguistic oppression may have resulted in the irretrievable loss of the language. In Hawai'i, such a loss was noted in the introductory remarks of an 1865 Hawaiian-English dictionary. The editor commented that Hawaiian language speaking styles varied to suit a situation, and he observed that the practice of this speaking style was dying off:

> Besides the language of every day life, there was a style appropriate to oratory, and another to religion and poetry. This latter is known to but a few natives of the present generation, and is fast disappearing.
>
> [Andrews, Lorrin. 1865. *A Dictionary of the Hawaiian Language*, p. xvi (Honolulu: Henry M. Whitney)]

Today, despite the Museum's vast Hawaiian language collection, and despite the emergence of a new generation of Hawaiian speakers, we are discovering that we too have not fully recaptured all aspects and nuances of the Hawaiian language. Bishop Museum's project to digitize its Hawaiian language newspapers has uncovered words that are not defined in any Hawaiian language dictionary. Sometimes these words can be understood based on the context. Other times project staff need to do additional research. Oftentimes we consult with Hawaiian elders who may remember a time when their grandparents used such words. Hopefully, this collaboration between linguistic practitioners, historical scholars, and Hawaiian-speaking elders will assist in preventing the further erosion of the Hawaiian language and result in a comprehensive understanding of regional and contextual styles, vocabulary, and grammar.

Bishop Museum recognizes that the strongest link to the past is through these elders who grew up hearing and speaking Hawaiian. They are an invaluable language resource that will enhance the translation and understanding of the Museum's Hawaiian language materials. This challenge is one of time and is common to us all. As Native-speaking elders pass into the next world, so too passes their knowledge. It is imperative, then, to tap these living treasures as quickly as possible to stem any further loss of Native languages.

In closing, Bishop Museum wishes to thank the Committee for recognizing the importance of reviving, preserving, and perpetuating Native languages. By recapturing Native language, we recapture Native culture. This legislation empowers Native Peoples for whom language builds a bridge of understanding that connects the wisdom of the past, the experiences of the present, and the hopes of the future.

WRITTEN STATEMENT
ON
S.575, A BILL TO AMEND THE NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT
BEFORE THE
SENATE INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Submitted By
John W. Cheek

May 15, 2003

During various periods in the history of this country, there have been efforts to eliminate Native languages. Rarely has the use of these languages been supported or even encouraged by the Federal government. Since Native languages are closely related to the cultural identity of the tribal groups that speak them, the failure to support retention of these languages also means a lack of support for the cultural identity of numerous indigenous populations. The ill-conceived efforts to eliminate the language and culture of all of America's indigenous populations is one of the darkest periods in the history of this country.

Native languages are one of the treasures of this country's heritage, as well as treasures of the tribal groups themselves. During World War II, several Indian Nations utilized their native language to help America win the war. Even as World War II came to an end, Indian languages here at home were under attack in Indian schools as termination advocates sought to remove language and culture from Indian students. Fifty years later, however, the Navajo Code Talkers were honored for their skilled and courageous use of the their language in WWII. This was one of the few times when the value of Native languages was acknowledged and honored. Recently, proponents of the "English only" movement have sought to mainstream the English language in America even though today's minorities will become tomorrow's majority.

To American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, our languages are synonymous with cultural identity. Without language there is no effective way to communicate and pass on the values and teachings from elders to tribal youth. Sadly, many tribal groups have already lost their languages. In 1992 when the Native

Languages Act was first considered by Congress, only 150 Indian languages were still being used out of an estimated several hundred.
Native American communities are acutely aware that their languages, and hence generations of cultural knowledge, are quickly disappearing. According to the 2000 U.S. census, out of a population of 4.1 million American Indians and Native Alaskans, only 32.3% report speaking a language other than English at home. Until recently, indigenous languages were small islands in danger of being swamped by economic and social pressures to speak English. Now a national and international movement is underway to revitalize these languages. It is understood by linguists, educators, politicians, and indigenous peoples worldwide that language preservation is not only key to preserving cultures but also to preserving biodiversity, ecosystems, and societal health and well being.

There is a wide disparity in educational achievement between American Indian students and their non-Indian peers. Indian students have the highest dropout rate of any racial or ethnic group and the lowest high school completion and college attendance rates of any minority group. Between forty and sixty percent of American Indian students are leaving high school between their freshman and senior years. For example, between 1995-1996 and 1998-1999, Montana Indian students had a graduation rate of only fifty percent (NIEA, 1999). The 1990 census shows that only 11.5% of the total American Indian population had four or more years of college, compared with twenty eight percent of the total U.S. population. Most tribes have between twenty five and seventy percent unemployment rates. In 2000, 25.9% of American Indians fell below the poverty line and 26.8% did not have health insurance.

The Native American Languages Act of 1990 recognizes that "there is convincing evidence that student achievement and performance, community and school pride, and educational opportunity is clearly and directly tied to respect for, and support of, the first language of the child or student." Research has shown that Native American children fare better academically when taught their native language. For instance, three studies have concluded that language and culture programs improve academic performance and arrest American Indian student dropout rates (Vadas 1995, Stiles 1997, Yagi 1985). Studies also show that schools nurturing bilingual and bicultural perspectives have shown improvements in learning environments and academic success (McLaughlin, 1992). Also, by learning how to provide place- and community-based curriculum and instruction, teachers can provide students with a relevant, practical, and motivating education where indigenous learners can actively participate in shaping their own education (Corson, 1998). Improved academic performance leads to increased graduation rates, better employment opportunities for students, and increased tribal self-sufficiency. With greater access to language programs, tribal communities will be able to build stronger cultural foundations.

It is not known how many Native American language programs exist or how many language teachers are currently involved in language programs. Studies such as the Indigenous Language Institute's Field Survey Project will provide valuable data on the

numbers, ages, and language proficiency levels of students and teachers in the fifty four communities currently participating in the survey. However, this study represents only a small segment of Native learners and educators. A consistent theme raised in conferences around the country is the need for more information on language program resources and training opportunities for language speakers. Up to eighty five percent of Native students are enrolled in the public school system. The issue becomes exasperated since few public schools offer any form of language program at all for these students.

In New Mexico, for example, in the 2001-2002 school year there were 33,365 Indian students enrolled in the public schools that received Title VII funds (formerly Title IX) in twenty three school districts. According to the Language & Cultural Equity Department of the Albuquerque Public School system (4,000 Indian students), there are language programs offered in only one native language (Navajo) and every year fewer state funds are allocated to bilingual education programs due to lack of certified teachers. There is an eleven percent dropout rate for American Indian students in Albuquerque public schools and thirty nine percent statewide. To address these problems, the state New Mexico State Legislature passed an Indian Education Act that would allocate $2.1 million for teacher training and $500,000 for development of language and culture curriculum. Similar needs for greater funding and training exist in every state.

It has been determined that many grassroots language initiatives exist, however, language advocates and community language practitioners lack sufficient means to communicate with other communities and linguists and to access academic research pertinent to language acquisition methods. Additional barriers to compiling data and implementing language initiatives include federal teaching standard requirements that are inconsistent with Native teaching methods and language skill recognition. Federally mandated yearly student academic assessments deny educators' ability to develop linguistically and culturally appropriate assessment standards for Native students. Additionally, requirements to comply with bilingual education standards divert human and material resources away from direct and authentic use and teaching of Native American languages in schools. *(Please see the attached NIEA Resolution 02-010)*

Today's hearing focuses on S.575, Native American Languages Amendments Act of 2003, which amends Public Law 102-524, the Native American Languages Act of 1992. Currently, the Native American Languages Act, is administered through the Department of Health and Human Services by the Administration for Native Americans. The annual budget allocation for the program is a mere $2 million per year.

For American Indian tribes and Native Hawaiians, S.575 has the potential to fill in a gap that the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) fails to address. While NCLB addresses the academic failings being experienced in today's schools, it fails to place any value in languages other than English. This is even more remarkable as the country finds itself involved in foreign and domestic ventures for which its lack of knowledge of other languages and cultures leaves it vulnerable. In 2001, when the NCLB was first being implemented, the Department of Education's Office of Indian Education (OIE) began

changing the direction of its programs. This caused great concern among OIE grantees because it changed the focus of the program from meeting the unique cultural needs of Indian students to strictly increasing student achievement. While non-Indians may see value in becoming proficient in reading and math, Native populations tend to also place a higher priority on tradition and culture.

S.575 is a modest step in the process of supporting revitalization of the Native languages of America. It would put existing language immersion programs on a firmer financial footing and provide some encouragement for others to begin. It plants a seed that hopefully can grow into a larger effort to slow down, and perhaps in some cases, reverse the march toward the loss of American Indian languages and culture. The concept of language survival schools is not new to Native Hawaiians who are making great strides in their Aha Punana Leo school system where total language immersion programs are operated. Several American Indian tribes are creating their own language programs as well; including the Blackfeet, the Cherokee, the Navajo and many others are at varying stages of development.

Specifically, the bill would support the development of Native American Language Survival Schools to educate students in both American Indian languages and English. It would also authorize the creation of Native American Language Nests, which are language immersion programs for children aged six and under. The bill would authorize the following activities: curriculum development; teacher, staff, and community resource development; rental, lease, purchase, construction, and repair of facilities. Additionally, the bill would authorize the establishment of Native American Language School support centers. One is located at the Native Language College at the University of Hawaii and the Peigon Institute in Browning, MT; and the another is located at the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska.

This concept is being implemented in other countries as well where the need to revitalize the primary language becomes important. A language survival school requires that the language be used regularly the whole school year long with efforts to include it at all other levels of the community. This approach makes it different than other programs and becomes even more critical in the case of American Indian tribes and Native Hawaiians as their traditional speakers become fewer with each passing year.

We have identified changes and/or refinements that we recommend be made to the bill:

1. The NCLB certification requirements of teachers for Native American language and culture courses in regular non-Native Language Survival Schools are also incompatible with NALA. Many Native communities depend on elders to teach their languages in local high schools and elementary schools. These individuals frequently lack State certification and may even lack a high school diploma. Allowances or waivers need to made to accommodate this situation as the pool of traditional speakers grows smaller. Perhaps a provision could be added to create a

national Native language certification that would apply to any Indigenous group in the U.S.

2. We recommend that the Secretary of Education develop a plan for approving Native American Language Survival School evaluation and teacher education plans. In the event the Secretary is unable or unwilling to carry out such an initiative we recommend that selected tribal colleges and Native Hawaiian universities be allowed to develop an alternative certification route. Ideally, Native groups should indeed develop their own certification plans, but an endorsement by the Secretary of Education is needed to garner the status required under NCLB.

3. Under Title III of NCLB there are provisions that recognize the use of Native American languages in schools (Sec. 3125, 3128, 3216), but this use is limited to a student's first three years in school. The use of language other than English are not included elsewhere and thus schools taught through the medium of tribal languages are subject to exclusion from financial support from NCLB if they are not taught in English. Due to a lack of clarity on this issue a provision is needed to allow such schools to participate under NCLB and obtain other support through their own state.

4. Section 103(6) has omitted "Alaskan Natives" from the definition of Native American. This seems to be an oversight since the Alaskans are one of the possible recipients of a demonstration project.

5. Sections 108 and 109 Eligibility for the Native American Language Nests and Native American Survival Schools seems confusing. For example:

A. It is required that Language Nests must provide "compulsory" classes for parents and "compulsory" monthly meetings for parents. This suggests that all parents will somehow be coerced into attending these classes and meetings. The language may need to be changed from "compulsory" to "encouraged to participate."

B. Eligibility for "survival schools" include 3 years of operating a survival school, language nest, or "any other educational program in which instruction is conducted in a native American language." This last category would seem to open the program to schools or programs within a school that were not implementing a rigorous Native language program.

6. We recommend an authorization of an actual dollar amount based on the funding for the three demonstration projects and an estimated number of Native American Language Nests and Survival Schools.

Conclusion: In closing, I would like to thank the Indian Affairs Committee for its unwavering support for the concerns of all Native People and for holding today's hearing. Tribal languages, as with tribal sovereignty, can only be maintained when committed Native peoples work in concert with the Congress to ensure their existence. To this end, we ask the committee to recommend support for this legislation and its potential impact on future Indian generations. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Statement of

Rita Coosewoon
Language Instructor, Comanche Nation College
and Elgin High School

Testimony before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

Hearing on S. 575 to Amend the Native American n Languages Act

Thursday , May 15, 2003
10:00 a.m.
485 Russell Senate Office Building

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for the opportunity to testify regarding S 575, a bill introduced by Vice Chairman Inouye, to amend the Native American Languages Act to provide for the support of Native American language survival schools.

When I was old enough to begin my formal education I was taken to Fort Sill Indian Boarding School. Because I was reared by my grandparents, the only language I was exposed to was Comanche. There at the school we were forbidden to speak our language. We were severely punished if we were caught speaking anything other than English. So, at an early age I was being taught that my language was a hindrance to me. Consequently, I didn't teach my own children to speak the language. As I grew older I realized the mistake, I along with others had made. We robbed them of their culture and now we are struggling to teach them what we can.

I am currently teaching the Comanche language at Elgin High School and at the Comanche Nation College. I have been employed by Elgin Public Schools for two years. Mrs. Rita Gaddy, a Kiowa tribal member who is a certified History teacher with twenty-five years experience was influential in starting a native language program in the school system where she teaches the Kiowa language class. After ten years of relentlessly pursuing a placement within the Elgin School curriculum, classes began in Native American studies with emphasis in the Kiowa and

Comanche language - with students obtaining credit toward graduation. After seven years, the program is seeing results of former students teaching language in tribal child development programs and two students graduating from the University of Oklahoma with degrees in Native American Studies. We have a significant number of students in college programs who actively participate in cultural programs. This program has had a positive influence in building our students self esteem to achieve higher educational goals. We are currently in the process of implementing computer technology methods for software program that will assist our students in utilizing, as well as teaching the native language through stories and production. This approach will encourage them to learn and share the language while gaining beneficial computer skills.

Salaries for the Elgin High School language teachers is paid by the Title VII Indian Education Program. In Oklahoma, tribal language instructors can teach in the school system under the supervision of a certified teacher and a certificate from the tribes verifying the instructors' fluency in the native language. These guidelines are set forth in the **Oklahoma Standards for World Languages** - Priority Academic Students Skills which contains content standards for language learning.

I have observed and been moved by native speakers, who are few and mostly elders, who gather in small community buildings, church dining halls, or anywhere they can meet - to speak their native languages and teach all ages. These teachers of the language realize and feel as strong as I do about our native languages and know that if we wait or are inactive in our pursuit of language survival - it will be too late, as many of our fluent speakers who are able to conduct our ceremonials are elderly.

As an elder, I have come to realize the urgency of language preservation - without our native language we stand to lose our culture because our ceremonials, songs, and stories are all contained within the language. To lose our languages is to lose who we are as a people. Many times our native people have adapted in order to survive. We are still adapting - but now we could lose a vital part of our history and tradition if we continue to put off for tomorrow - what needs to be done today. I am reminded of my Grandfather and uncles who were Comanche Code Talkers. These Native American soldiers helped to save our troops, as well as our nation with the knowledge they still possessed in their native language. Today, this same language, as well as all native languages is in danger. It is imperative that the bill to amend the Native American Language Act to provide that needed support of Native American language survival schools is taken seriously, as our native peoples lives are in the balance.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I thank you again for the opportunity to share with you. Your considerations in this matter are greatly appreciated. Subetu ma (that is all)

From: Mrs. Rita Coosewoon's Comanche Language Class, Elgin H.S. at Elgin, Oklahoma

May 12, 2003

Dear Senate,

I write to you because I am unable to attend this meeting in person. This Comanche class has meant a lot to me and the rest of the class. I have learned to speak a new language and learn and be a part of a different culture. It has furthered my understanding of America's complex natives. Without classes like this, we as Americans will forget where we come from. I am a 4th Cherokee and that means I would not be here without a Cherokee man. Learning about people like me, learning about my ancestors has made me appreciate my culture more.

We have learned to speak many sentences and to hold conversations. We have learned the history of these people and many of their crafts. To stop these classes is to stop a culture living on. Please keep this class and others like it going on in our schools. With this I have only one thing left to say:
Soobes~~u~~ N~~umunuu~~ s~~umuoyetu~~ n~~umu~~ niw~~unu~~? et~~u~~. Ukitsi ~~nunu~~ t~~uasu~~ n~~umu~~ niw~~unu~~ hut~~ui~~.
Ubunit~~u~~ t~~uasu~~ n~~umu~~ niw~~unu~~ hutui n~~uu~~.

Tommy Lemons & the Elgin High School Comanche Language Class.

Senate Bill 575
Demmert 5/11/03

A REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE ON THE EDUCATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS

I would like to thank the Chairman (Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell), the Vice Chairman (Daniel K. Inouye) and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for this opportunity to present a review and analysis of the research literature on the education of Native American students.

In an electronic review of over 10,000 documents listed in the ERIC Clearinghouse, Sociological Abstracts, Psychological Abstracts, Anthropological Abstracts, Social Sciences Index, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts Doctoral and Masters Theses, and other sources, a list of 117 research documents on the education of Native American students were identified and selected.[1]

These documents were divided into seven areas of concentration and give us an excellent record of the research on American Indians, Alaska Natives, Hawaiian Natives, and limited information on Indigenous peoples of Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

The seven categories used to divide the research included the following:

1. Early childhood environment and experiences
2. Native language and cultural programs in schools
3. Teachers, instruction, and curriculum
4. Community influences and school control
5. Student characteristics
6. Factors leading to success in college
7. Native American students leaving school before graduation

Early Childhood environment and experiences: Though limited, the literature on young Native children reminds us that providing opportunities for early development of language and other skills can have significant influence on how well these children do academically in their later life as students.

Native language and cultural programs in schools: The influences of Native language and cultural programs in schools show significant influences on student motivation; sense of identity and self; positive attitudes; and supporting improved academic performance.

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[1] Demmert, William G. Jr., & Towner, John C. (2002) Improving Academic Performance Among Native American Students, A Review and Analysis of the Research Literature, Woodring College of Education, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington (unpublished).

Teachers, instruction, and curriculum: Competent teachers in their subject area with a variety of instructional approaches and a challenging curriculum can motivate students to do well in school.

Community and parental influences on academic performance: Local attitudes, use of traditional knowledge, support from parents can all have positive influences on a young student's academic performance.

Student characteristics: Language use and knowledge, motivation, positive life experiences, early goal setting, basic skill knowledge, and the ability to balance conflicts between home, community, and school all contribute to a student's ability to succeed in school.

Factors leading to success in college: Academic skills, support from community and family, mentors, and levels of social and cultural maturity all have an influence on whether a student succeeds or fails academically.

Native American Students Leaving School Before Graduation: Absenteeism, pregnancy, grade point averages, poor quality of teacher-students relationships, lack of parental participation and support, levels of academic skills (including level of English skills), acculturation, boredom with school life and curriculum, irrelevance of school curriculum and what they wanted to do in life, moving from one school to another, transportation difficulties, substance abuse are all reasons identified for leaving school early. [2]

International comparisons: International studies of other Native people support the findings on Native Americans regarding family support, development of language and other academic skills, levels of congruency between the school and community regarding language and culture, students' motivation and sense of identity.

An analysis of the research literature that focuses on the influences of Native Language and Cultural programs (generally referred to as Curriculum Bases Education <CBE>) presents a very limited number of experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental research.

A second review of the literature was conduced that focused on Native language and cultural programs. This review listed 193 research studies and is an up-date of the first review.[3] Definition of the different kinds of research used in this review is described as follows:

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[2] See http://www.ael.org/eric/demmert.pdf for a published review and summary of the research literature (2001).

[3] Demmert, William G., Jr., & Towner, John C. (2003) A Review of the Research Literature on the Influences of Culturally Based Education on the Academic Performance of Native American Studies, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, Oregon.

Experimental Studies: Research designs that employ the random assignment of subjects to treatments.

Quasi-Experimental Studies: Research designs that involve the assignment of intact groups to treatment conditions. Typically, the unit of analysis (N) is not the same as the sampling unit.

Non-Experimental: Studies characterized by the use of existing comparison groups formed outside the context of the research. No researcher control over who gets what and when. Often referred to as *causal-comparative* or *ex post facto* designs. These designs do not provide strong evidence in support of causal assertions.

There were four (4) experimental studies found and a quick summary tells us the following:

The two studies by Omizo, et al. (1989 and 1998) are well-designed and executed experimental studies. However, the experimental treatment (in-school counseling) is not specifically designed to be culturally relevant. The outcome variable in both these studies is self-concept. There is no attempt to link self-concept to achievement.

The study by Kratochwill et al. (2001) examines a previously researched and explicitly defined Home-school program (FAST). The design (randomized matched pairs) and outcome measures (CBM's) for behavior and achievement are promising alternatives for future research.

The studies by Tharp (1982), are well designed and executed. Of special interest is the exportation of a lab school program to the public schools. The treatment condition involved a number of key elements, one of which was culturally relevant curricula. It is difficult to sort the impact of these different treatment elements.

There were only two quasi-experimental studies, one of which was still unpublished but promising. These include the following:

The Clark (1996) study tells us that the use of specific computer-assisted instruction program does not appear promising so far as achievement in writing is concerned with Native American students.

Lipka and Adams (2002) present some evidence that culturally based education may be effective in teaching some aspects of mathematics. Limitations include the unknown technical adequacy of the outcome measure and the confounding of schools and intact classes with the treatment.

There were eight non-experimental studies that as a group do not provide strong evidence in support of causal assertions; in this case, the effectiveness of culturally-based education programs.

However, by and large, the findings of these studies are interpreted by the researchers to be in favor of the culturally based (bilingual/bicultural) education programs examined.

These non-experimental studies include the following:

- Murtagh, 1982 *
- Alaska Systemic Initiative, 1998
- Bacon, et al., 1982 *
- Franks, 1988
- Rosier and Holm, 1980
- Wright, et al., 2000
- Brenner, 1998 *
- Cotrell, 1971

No evidence was found that indicated that culturally based education would be contra-indicated so far as student achievement is concerned. The findings of these studies generate working hypotheses.

Heritage language Native American children who are taught using their heritage language will learn that language better than children who are taught in a dominant second language.

Heritage language-speaking children will lose competence in their Native language to some degree when the language of instruction is the dominant language.

Children who are more proficient with their heritage language will also be more proficient with the dominant language.

There is some level of proficiency in a Native language that must be achieved and maintained in order to avoid the "subtractive effects" of learning a second, dominant, language (Wright et al. 2000).

Programs that include locally-based heritage language and cultural elements will serve to strengthen home-school relationships. This connection may be an intervening variable explaining increased student achievement.

These five working hypotheses are consistent with three relatively well established research theories that include the following:

1) Cultural Compatibility Theory
2) Cognitive Theory
3) Cultural-Historical-Activity Theory (CHAT)

Cultural Compatibility Theory. The more closely aligned the human interactions in the school and in the classroom, are aligned with those of the community, the more likely the goals of the school will be reached.

Cognitive Theory. Introducing new knowledge through an association with prior knowledge - for learning to occur, relevant prior knowledge, in a person's long term memory, must be stimulated or utilized, with this new information undergoing some form of processing that focuses on conceptual characteristics of the new information (such as its meaning, personal and social relevance, or relationships to prior knowledge and experience) as a means of improving learning and recall.

Cultural-Historical-Activity Theory (CHAT). Issues of culture, language, cognition, community and socialization are central to learning. The primary socialization of infants and young children (as well as all later socialization into new communities of practice) is accomplished through joint, meaningful activity with guidance by more accomplished participants, principally through language exchanges or other semiotic processes.

Language vocabularies and routines acquired by learners through these processes are the elements that account for community, linguistic, and cultural continuity, and are the primary cognitive tools for individual and group problem solving and adaptations (e.g., culturally-based secondary socialization processes like schooling can be facilitated by activating the learners' cognitive and linguistic tools laid down by community socialization). Primary to this hypothesis is that activity (primarily joint activity) is the setting in which language and cognition are developed, and that patterns of activity have a cultural basis.[4]

In summary "What have I presented today?"

First, the driving question in which we are interested, both for research answers and for legislative purposes, is "What are the effects of Native language and culturally-based education programs on school achievement for Native American students?"

Second, no evidence was found that indicated that culturally based education would be contra-indicated so far as student achievement is concerned. The findings of these studies generate working hypotheses that support a number of theories generally recognized by researchers looking at Native American education.

Third, the review of the research literature which includes experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental studies, tell us that the literature supports program activities in each of the following areas:

1. Early childhood environment and experiences
2. Native language and cultural programs in schools
3. Teachers, instruction, and curriculum
4. Community influences and school control
5. Student characteristics
6. Factors leading to success in college
7. Native American students leaving school before graduation

[4] See Demmert, William G. & Towner John. (2003),

Fourth, it is necessary that we continue working on an expanded, and an improved, research data base that will help continue moving forward as we continue to identify characteristics of programs that lead to improving language development, academic performance, social and cultural maturity, and other priorities of Native America. The current level or research information, though limited, consistently supports current efforts to strengthen Native language and cultural priorities as a way to improve academic performance.

In a systematic effort to continue learning from existing programs like Punana Leo, the Piagan Institute, and others, a number of highly qualified contemporary researchers that have a high interest and strong record in this area have formed a partnership to continue the research that is absolutely critical if we are to continue isolating characteristics of successful educational programs serving Native American children.

There are several reasons for the interest in indigenous language and cultural programs, especially for the early years of a youngster's life. First, there is a continuing interest in promoting continued development and preservation of Native languages found in no other part of the world; second, there appears to be a distinct connection between improved academic performance and the levels of congruence between the culture of the school and the culture of the community served; and third there appears to be important cognitive opportunities for individuals that strengthen this intelligence.

Finally, David Grissmer of the RAND Corporation, reports that American Indian students have made gains in reading, mathematics, and geography scores from 1990 – 2000 according to National Assessment of Educational Progress records. [5] This information also tells us that the longer the Indian student is in school the better other students do in comparison (the exception is in geography where Indian students do as well as other students that score well in this area of academics). The limited research on Native language and culturally based education tells us that there is growing evidence that Native students will do as well as all other students when programs start early in a youngsters life, when teachers and communities support what they are doing, when environments are challenging with mentors that are truly interested in their well being and when there is a high level of congruency between the language and cultural base of the school and the community.[6]

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[5] Personal discussion with Grissmer, David. (2003), regarding a review and analysis of American Indian reading, mathematics, and geography scores, RAND Corporation.
[6] Each of the reports listed above, summarizing the research literature, support these hypotheses.

Native American Responses to Language Obsolescence

David Dinwoodie, University of New Mexico

Native Americans use Native American languages for their most highly valued activities, they use them as symbols of ideologies, or systems of belief, and they are responding locally to their decline. Efforts to support Native American languages would do well to recognize these areas and build upon the local responses.

Native American languages are of importance to Native American people first and foremost because Native American people use them as an integral part of their community life. In some contemporary Native American communities the Native language is still widely used for virtually all purposes and indeed has been extended into such new settings such as radio broadcast. Even in communities where the Native language is no longer the primary vehicle for communication, however, the Native language is typically still used conscientiously for important purposes. In many Native American communities Native languages are used regularly as a part of the intimate workings of family life. Even in communities in which English, Spanish, or French now prevail, it is typical for the senior-most family members to use their Native language freely if not exclusively within the family sphere for such purposes as identifying cultural objects, greeting, asking questions, and giving directives. In this context, the Native language, if there happens to be only one, is more than a medium for conveying information. It is a symbol of family integrity and cohesion.

In many Native American communities, even in communities in which English is prevalent, elders prefer to use Native American languages when presenting personal, family, and tribal histories, tales, and myths. In addition to conveying information about the past, scholars have shown that such narrative sessions typically convey the culturally distinct values children draw upon when finding their own way in the world (Basso 1979, Hymes 1981, Jacobs 1959, Urban 1991). Even when English is used extensively in such narrative, Native American

languages are still employed for key parts of narratives (Moore 1993). Thus in this context Native American languages, in addition to conveying information are symbolic of the values associated with the cultural heritage.

In many communities, including the Blackfeet, the Navajo, and many others, Native people continue to use the Native language as an integral part of religious or ceremonial life. For those adhering to traditional religious practices the Native language is the language of liturgy and prayer. In addition to serving as the vehicle of communication in the narrow sense, in this context the language is symbolic of spirituality.

And even in communities where Native languages have been largely displaced by English or Spanish the Native languages are typically ubiquitous in the forms of personal names, place names, names for traditional ceremonials and ceremonial items, foods, plants, animals, and so on. In short, one should not underestimate the value Native Americans place on Native languages. Even where those languages are moribund from a linguistic point of view, that is to say, even when they are no longer the primary vehicle for conveying information per se, they generally maintain a profound presence in the community.

Native American languages are present in Native American communities in another sense that goes well beyond their actual use and this secondary presence is a another important indicator of their significance to Native American people. Native Americans have ideas, beliefs, rationalizations, or what academics call "ideologies" regarding their languages (Boas 1911, Kroskrity 2000, Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity 1998, Silverstein 1979, Whorf 1956). Typically these ideas reinforce patterns of language use. For example, an individual might believe that the use of their Native language is integral to the well being of their family. In view of this belief they might encourage the use of the language within the family.

Generally these beliefs center on the possibility that using Native American languages accomplishes more than communication per se. Examples include the following: the use of the Native language a) promotes cognitive development, b) activates a traditional worldview, c) sustains appropriate relations between human and other persons, d) promotes morality, and e)

promotes progress. Due to the realities of Native American history ideologies surrounding Native languages are not always positive. One also encounters such ideas as using the Native language a) promotes cultural parochialism, b) promotes immorality, c) discourages education, and d) retards economic progress. Though they have observed such ideologies for many years, and have become increasingly interested in them as centrally important subjects of research, academics do not understand them well. The key point here is that the well substantiated presence of such language beliefs or linguistic ideologies, whether positive or negative, further attests to the significance Native Americans grant to Native American languages by using them.

A third key point to be made about the importance Native Americans place on their Native languages is that while it has gone largely without notice in the academic literature, Native American individuals, families, and other sorts of groups, have in many cases taken it upon themselves to respond to the decline in the use of their Native languages. In the First Nations community I have studied in Canada, for example (The Xeni Gwet'in First Nations, formerly, The Nemiah Valley Indian Band), one family became concerned in roughly the 1970s when they observed that the Band was no longer conducting their politics or business in the Native language, which happens to be Chilcotin, a language related to Navajo and Apache. Family members began to address the matter publicly whenever an opportunity presented itself. As a result of their efforts the Band eventually returned to using the native language in public discussions, including political speeches and debates. Another family in an adjacent community has appointed themselves tribal historians. They attend events like weddings and funerals not only in the capacity of family members and participants but also as observers. Everywhere they go they bring state of the art recording equipment and have compiled an enormous library of audio and video records in hopes of preserving their language and culture.

These are not isolated cases. While as academics we have not systematically studied this phenomenon it seems to take two main forms (Silverstein 2002). Either the emphasis is on establishing the use of the language within central institutional spheres or it is on documenting, preserving, and displaying the cultural and historical significance of the language.

Anthropologists have observed a worldwide phenomenon of relatively marginal peoples beginning to preserve and protect aspects of their cultural heritage as they enter the realms of national and international politics and economics (Sahlins 2000). Some see this as the diffusion of the modern Western European emphasis on the *volk* and their native language and culture. Others believe that heritage in this sense an is integral component of the corporate identity of complex modern societies whether they be German, Scottish, Hispanic or Iroquois. While most are not yet prepared to explain the phenomenon, few deny its significance.

The heritage movement is widely apparent in contemporary Native American communities in the form of new societies, new museums, and new schools, new list-serves, all devoted to supporting traditional practices and documenting them while this is still possible. A prominent characteristic of heritage in this sense is that it is not readily classified as being conservative or progressive, traditional or modern. For example, interest in heritage is often greatest among the most educated and most economically successful community members. In many cases it is people that have been away to school who become most enthusiastic about reanimating their heritage. This suggests that heritage in this sense is an aspect of modernization. On the other hand, traditional community members are often also meaningfully involved. Moreover, participation often crosscuts the lines of what one might expect in terms of the received clines of conservative to progressive. Risking an absurdly academic characterization, it appears to generally represent something like a progressive neo-traditionalism.

In any case, almost everywhere that heritage movements are underway in Native American communities, the Native language (or, in some cases, languages) serves as an integral if not the central component of the heritage program. Sometimes this means that the central concern is with documenting the testimony of elders using state of the art technology like digital video recorders, other times it means developing a language curriculum, and yet other times it means displaying important terms like names for historically significant personages and sites.

Some of these movements represent no more than the actions of a family or two. In other cases the movement may eventually coalesce as a formal institution. It is important to remember that the movements I am describing here, whether consisting of individuals or families or institutes all originate locally. They are to be distinguished from programs established outside of Native American communities which at some point are tailored to serve Native American interests. While these latter programs can be very helpful, it is the former movements that are representative of the strength of feeling Native American people have for their languages and of the response of Native Americans to language obsolescence.

Native American efforts to come to terms with their linguistic heritage, to preserve the use of the language and to document its role in their cultures and histories is a new subject for academics. *Anthropological Linguistics*, an academic journal, initiated an ongoing series on Native American linguists beginning in roughly 1994. For the most part the featured individuals worked with linguists or anthropologists as a part of academic efforts to document Native languages and cultures. In some cases the Native American scholars moved well beyond their initial involvement and initiated projects of their own. These portraits are fascinating and vitally important but the kinds of language movements I am discussing here go well beyond these cases. Some have encouraged research in this area (Silverstein 1998) but no systematic ethnographies have been completed to date. While I am only familiar with two or three situations, and the one I am most familiar with happens to be located in Canada, they suggest that in all Native American communities there are people are very consciously addressing their linguistic heritage in one way or another. For some this might mean using the language with renewed purpose. For others it might mean avoiding the language due to painful associations. For yet others it might mean documenting the remaining speakers and beginning to learn the language for the first time. For yet others it may mean teaching the language to interested youth or even to linguists or anthropologists. The Peigan Institute represents the culmination of onesuch movement. Blackfeet individuals started the Institute to reactivate the language in their own lives. Later they began to address the obsolescence of the language in the community more generally. It

represents a case of a movement generating an institution of broad purpose and of considerable longevity. Thus such movements are to be taken very seriously. They represent not so much echoes of the past as they do a leading edge of language-centered culture in the United States. They represent not only how Native Americans feel about their Native languages; they represent the Native American goal of participating more effectively within contemporary American society. And they promise to play a larger and larger role in this country in the future.

To summarize, Native American languages are important to Native Americans in three ways: 1) as vehicles for conducting their most valued activities, 2) as objects of ideologies, and 3) as components of heritage movements. Native Americans are responding to language obsolescence and their efforts warrant the attention of scholars. The better organized among them should be centrally involved in any effort to support Native American languages or Native American education.

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Testimony for Senate 575
Native American Languages Act Amendment 2003
Prepared for the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

Submitted by Mary Hermes, Ph.D.
May 11,2003

Boozhoo Anishinaabedog, nindinawemaganidog!
(Hello everyone, my relatives.) Thank you Senator Inouye for the opportunity to testify on behave of Senate 575.

My name is Mary Hermes, I am an assistant professor of education at the University of Minnesota Duluth. My expertise is in educational research and teacher education. I am a founding board member and proud parent at the Waadookodaading Ojibwe language immersion charter school in Hayward Wisconsin. I will make three main points today: 1) the need for language immersion schools in the upper Great Lakes area 2) Research which suggests language immersion as the key to academic success in schools 3) The need for alternative teacher training and certification programs for our immersion teachers.

I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with two language activists in the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojbiwe community who realized the urgent need for an immersion school. Through research funded by the ANA (Administration for Native Americans), Lisa LaRonge and Keller Paap came to the conclusion that language immersion was the only viable strategy to revitalize Ojibwe in this community.

Ojibwe Language in the Great Lakes Area

In the 1990 census there were an estimated 4,000 speakers of Ojibwe in the United States (we believe there may be only half today.) In Wisconsin, there were only 458. For most reservations, less than 1% are first speakers. In 1999 at Lac Courte Oreilles Keller Paap found

there were only 15 native speakers of Ojibwe, today there are less. Further, there are only two speakers in the area who have attained native-like proficiency as a second langauge, both of these individuals are employed at Waadookoodaading as teachers. To put it mildly, our language resources are sparse. Keller once describe it as having a pad of butter to speard on a football field - this is why immersion is the really the only option. Many of the 13 Ojibwe reservations in the Great Lakes region are in a similar position - some have more speakers, some have none. Many would like to start immersion schools, but lack the funding.

Culture-Based Research

In 1999, I was also conducting research. Sponsored by the National Academy of Education and the Spencer Foundation, I was asking of tribal and public schools in the area, "why hasn't culture based curriculum produced more academic success?" What I found was that cultural curriculum tends to be "added-on" (to the academic curriculum) and taught through English (Hermes, 1999). The result is two, often competing academic streams: one cultural and one academic. Students can read this as a choice: academic success means assimilating and cutlure-based success means being Indian. Students can choose: Being smart *or* being Indian. Teaching rigorous academic content ***through*** our indigenous languages poses no such a dilemma. Ample evidence shows the many academic benefits of learning a second language. Learning an indigenous language also has the affective benefits of positive self-esteem and identity, intergenerational connectedness and appreciation of different world views. In my opinion, language immersion should be the next evolution of culture-based curriculum.
It would be a real break-through for all of American Indian education.

Teacher Education

One of the main reasons for two different curriculum tracks in tribal school is the teacher certification requirement. An estimated 80% of the teachers in tribal schools in our area are non-Native. Only 38% of teachers in BIA/tribal schools and 15% of the teachers iin high Inidan

enrollemnt public schools are American Indian (Pavel, 1999).The culture teachers, non-certified are Native.

I take the job of making teachers very seriously. I have been doing it professionally for 7 years. We have visited and consulted with teachers and administrators in New Zealand, Hawaii, Akwasaasnee and Montana in order to reseach what the very best immersion strategy is. While in New Zealand this spring I was advised by administrators there not to let our speakers slide into teaching un-trained. I strongly agree with this, and yet we cannot afford the time of a traditional 4 year program - especially not when it takes between 5-10 years to learn the Ojibwe language as a second language. Until we can make our own teacher training programs available through the language, we must develop alternative means for training teachers on-site. On-site, hands on teacher training is a more ideal model of training teachers than in a removed University setting. With our small numbers, I am sure we can provide this kind of training.

In conclusion, Waadookodaading means the place where we help each other. We have excellent dedicated teachers, committed parents, enthusiastic learners and the support of many non-native allies. We work with the public school, tribal government and tribal school, the community college and the University. All we really need is secure funding.
Miigwech biizindawiyeg, mii sa I'iw,
(That is all, thank you for listening.)

Hermes, M. (1999) *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, Special Issue, 2000 "The Scientific Method, Nintendo, and Eagle Feathers: Rethinking Culture-Based Curriculum at an Ojibwe Tribal School."

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
May 15, 2003

My name is Leanne Hinton. I am a professor and chair of the Dept. of Linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley, and a founding member of the board of the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival. I have spent my career working with Native American languages, and especially on issues and methods relating to language revitalization. I am speaking to you today in support of S. 575, the bill which allows the development and funding of "language nests" and "language survival schools" for Native American languages.

The indigenous languages of our country are fast disappearing. In my state of California alone, where at least 85 different indigenous languages were once spoken, 35 have no speakers left, and the other 50 are spoken only by a handful of elders each. Language loss is a world-wide phenomenon; indigenous peoples have been incorporated without any choice in the matter into nations whose dominant language is swamping them. It was once the policy of this government to attempt to eradicate the indigenous languages of our land, through a broad network of federally-funded boarding schools. During the first half of the 20th century, many Native Americans were taught to despise their own languages, as teachers promulgated the falsehood that indigenous languages are inherently inferior to English. Many in the general public still believe this. Yet the truth is that all languages on earth are equally capable of expressing any concept, however complex, however profound. All that may be lacking is the vocabulary for a new concept that a language has not had to speak of before; and adding new vocabulary is an easy process that is done by all languages all the time. Indeed, the English language takes on hundreds or even thousands of new words every year, through borrowing or through coinage, as science and technology come up with new inventions, or as merchants come up with new products, or as we find an intriguing new idea from another culture. (For example, English has borrowed many words from Native American languages!)

Not only are Native American languages as capable of all kinds of expression as any other language, but they are also full of rich vocabulary, grammar, idioms and metaphors, with fascinating grammatical complexities that have kept linguists engaged for many generations of research. Native American languages are also exceedingly diverse, representing many different language families -- far more than the languages of Europe. Along with their languages are being lost eloquent speech-making and story-telling skills, powerful oral literature, philosophical frameworks, environmental knowledge, and diverse world views.

Over the past several decades, however, there has been a strengthening movement on the part of indigenous peoples in America and around the world to make sure that their own original identity is not lost, even as they adapt perforce to the dominant society. Language is the center of these efforts. Governments range from severe repression of minority languages to strong support. As an example of the latter, I recently went to Finland to meet with the Saami people, whose languages are also endangered. They have created Language Nests to ensure that the children learn Saami at an early age, but once

past their preschool years, the state-funded public schools in Saami areas all have a Saami track. Families can take their choice of Finnish or Saami as the primary language of instruction. It is good to see that American language policy toward Native Americans has started to change as well, to begin to view Native American languages as a resource rather than a problem. And bills such as S. 575 shows that our government, having once tried to eradicate these languages, is now taking some of the responsibility to help Native communities revive them.

At this point our indigenous languages cannot survive without strong measures of intervention, which the indigenous communities are capable of doing themselves, but they need the support of funding and other resources, and dissemination of best practices for language revitalization. The Native American Languages Act of 1990 and 1992 have been very helpful in encouraging the revitalization of endangered languages, and many tribes can thank Congress for the support that has helped them progress in recovering their languages. Yet at the same time, other Acts, such as No Child Left Behind, can be very damaging to the survival of Native American languages, albeit by oversight. The supporters of indigenous language survival must be constantly active and proactive to keep their languages from being overlooked and severely damaged by Acts that might for other populations have postive outcomes. S. 575 is evidence of this vigilance, and of Congress's determination to correct mistakes and fully carry out U.S. Native American language policy as expressed in the 1990 Native American Languages Act.

It is demonstrably true that the fastest and most effective way to get a critical mass of new fluent speakers of an endangered language is through the schools -- the same institution that was used to try to destroy those very languages in the past. Only in the schools are there enough children spending enough of their day for the language to be effectively taught. But it is not enough to teach the language in the schools as we would teach a foreign language, with perhaps 3 hours per week of class time (if not less) in the midst of an otherwise English-speaking environment. No-one has ever become fluent that way. When we teach a foreign language, that approach can function to give a student a certain knowledge base of a language to help him function if he ever goes to a country where that language is spoken. But the development to fluency is a result of being in that country - being in the environment where he hears and uses that language all day every day. For endangered languages, such an environment does not exist. The languages are silent at home and in the community. And so the only path to fluency at this time is in immersion schools -- "language nests", and "language survival schools" as they are labelled in S. 575, where the main language of instruction is the indigenous language itself.

There are many people who earnestly fear that having a language other than English as the medium of instruction at school means that the children will not learn English. But this is not so. For these endangered indigenous languages, the children come to school already knowing English -- they have learned it at home from their parents, from television, from their peers, and from virtually every experience in their lives involving speech. The survival schools level the playing field and have the goal of producing

balanced bilinguals -- children who are fluent and literate in both English and their own Native American language.

Having an endangered language as the medium of instruction in a school presents many challenges, but these challenges can be and have been met successfully when they arise. For example, many indigenous languages have no writing systems, but writing systems are relatively easy to develop. Some languages such as Navajo, Hawaiian and Lakota have had writing systems for over a century now; others, such as Havasupai and Hualapai, developed their writing systems during the 1970's when they founded bilingual education programs -- and still others, such as the Tolowas and Yuroks in California, have decided on their official writing systems only within the last couple of years. Any language can be written easily -- the only difficulty is to decide among the various alternatives of which symbols and spelling rules to use.

Another easy-to-solve problem is the development of vocabulary for the various subjects that must be taught in the school. If a community has never used its language to portray chemistry or higher mathematics, new words must be developed. This too is not difficult. There is sometimes debate among the community activists for endangered languages as to whether it is appropriate to introduce into the ancestral tongue these new realms of vocabulary, new genres of language that develop in written form such as essays and poetry, and western realms of knowledge -- this changes the language, certainly; and other kinds of change are also observable in the speech of children in these immersion schools, such as certain phonological changes, and new metaphors and idioms. But language change is a natural process, and it happens in all languages. If endangered languages are to survive and revive, they must be able to be used in the context of modern life and modern activities. At the same time, the schools and the indigenous communities of which they are part have the additional task of helping the students learn traditional genres of speech, cultural patterns and value systems. In the best of worlds, language change is language expansion and growth, that can still encompass the traditional culture as well as the new one.

The Hawaiians and the Blackfeet, both named in the bill, have done an admirable job of developing highly successful language nests and language survival schools, and have served as models to many other tribes. They have also been extremely generous as hosts and advisors to groups trying to develop their own language survival schools. We know through their intense hard work and leadership that these systems work successfully to educate students to be literate and fluent in their ancestral language and accustomed to using it in daily communication, and also are literate and fluent in English, and fully prepared to go on to higher education in English-speaking institutions if they so choose.

Other language nests and survival schools have also developed or are currently being developed around the country, such as those of the Cochitis and Acomas in New Mexico, the Yuroks in California, the Washos in Nevada, the Mohawks in New York, and the Lakotas in South Dakota, among others. ANA funding, granted by congress through the 1992 Native American Languages Act, has been vital to the development of these programs, along with other public and private funding from diverse sources. The

problem has been how to keep the schools going over the long run. ANA funding for a given project is usually only for 3 or 4 years, and other funding sources are generally no lengthier. The challenge is to find long-term funding for these schools, and that is the major issue that S. 575 addresses.

Passage of this bill is an essential step for the continuation of present and future language nests and language survival schools. While it may seem to some to be over-specific in how to run a language survival school, the program as defined in the bill spells out several components of success, including the necessity of having the indigenous language as the language of instruction for at least 700 hours per year, a strong program for teacher training and on-going professional development, and most interestingly, the very important component of parent participation.

I must say that from the vantage point of my home state, very few of the many tribes of California will be able to benefit from it. There is a sentence in this bill that says that small communities whose languages have few or no speakers can also be assisted by language colleges or language survival schools, but this is quite vague. The way the bill is structured makes it impossible for such communities to be assisted in any concrete way. The small endangered languages of California and elsewhere with only a handful of elderly speakers cannot yet develop immersion schools, for there are no speakers of professional age to teach the language. And because the groups who name these as their ancestral languages are so small, even if the younger adults do learn their language, it may be impossible to develop a language nest with as many as 10 students, much less a school of that size at the elementary or highschool level. The Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival runs several programs -- in particular the "Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program" for languages where professional-age tribal members who didn't learn their language can begin to do so, and the "Breath of Life" program for tribes who have no speakers at all, where they can learn their languages from linguistic documentation. It is especially difficult for the latter category to find funding, since the ANA granting policy has always been to not fund groups who have no native speakers left. Yet there are some important success stories of people who have learned their language from documentation when there are no speakers , such as Daryl Baldwin of the Miami tribe in Oklahoma, who has not only learned his language but has made it the language of his home and of daily communication with his children. I can easily imagine some of these small groups developing successful language nests, but perhaps not with as many as 10 children. While this bill cannot be everything to all people, I might suggest just one change that might make it easier for small groups to bootstrap their way into eligibility for funding -- allow the possibility of a waiver for small tribes of the rule that an immersion school must have a minimum of 10 students.

Another issue I see with this bill as it stands is that of the "demonstration programs." Hawai'i and the Piegan Institute are both extremely worthy of being demonstration sites, and have already shown their usefulness to indigenous peoples in pursuit of language reclamation. The University of Alaska has a long history of superb documentation of the native languages of that state, and has also developed state-of-the-art indigenous language teaching programs on campus. But there are other tribes with excellent

programs and other universities with strong credentials in language documentation and revitalization. I have already heard some protests from members of programs who also want to be recognized and funded as models, and I could imagine this fine bill foundering as groups in state after state want their own model program appended to it. I would hope that this could be averted by adding a paragraph to the bill that says that a restricted number of survival schools and language colleges who have demonstrated excellence may also apply to become model programs in the future.

Beyond these tiny suggestions, I see this as an excellent bill, which must be passed if this great experiment in language revitalization is to continue on. This is a sad time for Native American languages, many of which are disappearing before our eyes. But it is also an exciting time, when pioneering experiments in language revitalization are taking place, and we are seeing the wonderful result of a new generation of children who are fluent in their Native American language -- and fully bilingual in English as well. Long ago, previous congressional acts devoted enormous efforts to the schools who were charged with the eradication of Native American languages and cultural traditions. Now in this hopefully wiser time, it behooves this Congress to devote an equivalent amount of funds to help indigenous peoples regain the languages that were erased from their lives.

Respectfully submitted by Leanne Hinton
Professor, Department of Linguistics at the University of California
Founding member of the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival

Hearing
Committee on Indian Affairs
May 15, 2003
Testimony on S 575
Mr. Holo Ho'opai

Welina me ke aloha ia kakou a pau (Greetings of great affection to us all) Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. My name is Hololapaka'ena'enaoKona Ho'opai and I am a senior attending Ke Kula 'O Nawahiokalani'opu'u, one of few Hawaiian language immersion schools in the state of Hawai'i. I would like to extend my appreciation, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me the opportunity to share my thoughts and experiences regarding my Hawaiian language immersion education.

I entered the Hawaiian language immersion program in the first grade at six years of age and will soon graduate from Ke Kula 'O Nawahiokalani'opu'u on the 24th of this month. I have been in the Hawaiian language program for 12 years and I can honestly say that if it was not for this program, I would not have become fluent in my native tongue. I also gained a great awareness of my Hawaiian culture and an understanding of who I am.

The education that I have received is truly unique and innovative. The Hawaiian immersion program provides a holistic learning environment that offers quality academic courses and instills cultural awareness through the beauty of the Hawaiian language. This is an added benefit to the standardized education that is received by students of Ke Kula 'O Nawahiokalani'opu'u. We gain a sense of grounding and identity of who we are as a people and how we can help perpetuate not only our Hawaiian language but also our Hawaiian beliefs. Standard courses are taught in Hawaiian language that is in a cultural context. For example, one of the numerous cultural undertakings is the construction of a "kauhale" (traditional Hawaiian hut) done by the underclassmen with the guidance of a kupuna (elder). The assembly of the kauhale was the result of careful mathematical calculations. The kauhale that is a replica of what existed in the past will provide historical details regarding the ingenuity of the Hawaiian people. Therefore, both the culture and academics calmly co-exist.

In my experiences, learning through the medium of Hawaiian language did not impair my ability to exist in a non-Hawaiian language setting. During my high school years, I had the opportunity to study outside of my Hawaiian language immersion school. In the summer of 2000, I attended a science and math program at San Diego State University. That following summer, I participated in an enrichment program at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Arizona. At these programs, I had no difficulty socializing with my peers who came from across the country, nor did I have a problem

understanding and completing subject material. In fact, I passed my courses that included biology, creative writing, medical mathematics, electrical engineering, and Latin with A's.

In addition, with my recent acceptance to Stanford University I genuinely feel that even though my education is very different, I am still capable of competing with my peers on a national level.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairman, and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for the opportunity to testify greatly in favor of this bill, that is to fund programs taught through the medium of Native American Languages. Mahalo.

Mr. Holo Ho'opai

TESTIMONY ON S.575 -- COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Dr. Lawrence D. Kaplan, Director with
Dr. Michael E. Krauss, Founding Director
Alaska Native Language Center

Since its founding in 1972 by Michael Krauss, the Alaska Native Language Center has been committed to the study and documentation of Alaska's twenty Native languages and is also involved in efforts to revitalize and perpetuate them. It is an accepted fact of linguistic science that every language on earth has an intricate grammatical system, worthy of study and analysis and which reveals relationships to other languages.

The documentation of languages makes an important contribution to human knowledge and is essential to the production of sound dictionaries, grammars, and educational materials for Native languages. Even the relatively few Native American languages still spoken by children are endangered (e.g. Navajo). Without documentation, this fundamental aspect of a nation's culture will be irretrievably lost. If an undocumented language ceases to be spoken, it is condemned to oblivion. Michael Krauss, founding director of the Alaska Native Language Center, has published extensively on language endangerment, the status of Native American languages, and the perils of language loss to the world''s peoples. The loss of any American language is a loss to all Americans.

Documentation is essential for language revitalization, which is a goal for most Native American groups, given the endangered state of most Native languages. Linguists have the expertise to determine what language data must be recorded to enable future revitalization efforts. For example, in English, one can shoot a gun, a bullet, or a target, but in Inupiaq Eskimo one can shoot (supi-) only a target ('shoot a seal') but not a gun or bullet. So although a verb in one language may sometimes translate another, the sort of detail just explained may vary, so that the two verbs are not entirely equivalent. Such facts, and many much more complicated ones, must be documented, and linguistic expertise is required to identify and describe these aspects of grammar. Further, linguists understand how changes in pronunciation can change meaning, so that the phrase "record a record" includes a verb and a noun which differ essentially in terms of which syllable carries the stress or accent. Native languages often have sound systems that are very different from what is found in European languages and far more different from English -- and each other -- than are languages like French, for example. Experienced linguists are required to understand grammatical systems accurately and formulate rules which describe them.

Krauss, as director of Alaska Native Language Center for nearly three decades, has always insisted on the scholarly responsibility to find, procure, and account for all previous documentation of Native languages, which in the case of Alaska goes back to 1732. Concentrating on Alaskan languages, we strive nonetheless to provide a full perspective on "whole" language communities and language families, bringing to bear material from related languages, such as Canadian, Greenlandic, and Siberian Eskimo or Navajo and Apache in the case of Athabaskan. Resources from related languages must be considered for the information they contain and for the model they provide, whether this model is appropriate or not to the needs of the project at hand. These resources may be written in French, Danish, or even Russian and

may be 200 years old, requiring a scholarly approach. Further, contact among communities of speakers of related languages and dialects, whether domestic or international, must be encouraged so that language work is cooperative . We cannot afford duplication of effort. Traditional communities cannot normally be expected to have access to far-flung archives or contacts, whereas academics can and should be in the best position to provide and interpret research results to the communities, helping them find and use old vocabularies, dictionaries, and other materials written elsewhere that can contribute to the development of usable formats. Krauss has insisted on coordination of this sort which is essential to language work, and the Alaska Native Language Center has significant experience working with communities of speakers to address their language needs. Needs include language planning, so that writing systems for related languages and dialects are optimally coordinated, likewise lexical development or expansion (coining vocabulary for new items and concepts).

All Alaskan languages by now have practical writing systems. Generally, few Native languages have a long tradition of literacy but are primarily oral. Culture and information was always passed along through oral communication, but now this oral tradition must be documented as well, and video and audiotape provide a better means than ever. This documentation will be more productive with the expertise accumulated by academe that
can assist groups in making sure that all vital information is recorded and identifying gaps in coverage.

Krauss and the staff at the Alaska Native Language Center have compiled an archive of some 10,000 items which document the state's languages and serve as a model for other states and groups interested in undertaking their own language documentation, so that there is an accessible collection of material. We have regular requests from Native groups interested in setting up their own archives, relying on ANLC's expertise and its collection to provide copies of materials. ANLC is involved in working within communities on conducting their own language documentation by training students and Native speakers in techniques of applied language research. We are experienced in Native language work and prepared to assist Native groups and communities in learning to meet their own needs for language documentation and collection and archiving of language materials.

A special aspect of the Alaska Native Language Center involves the strong voice of Native people in Alaska, who are over 15% of the state's population. They have given the Center much of its distinct service orientation that is not found to nearly the same extent in academic linguistics and anthropology departments that are more theoretically oriented. Under Krauss's direction, ANLC developed a strong focus on documenting languages and hired expert Native personnel, giving us a higher percentage of fluent native speakers working on our staff than is typical elsewhere. Nationally, we are known for the exceptionally high level of detail in our dictionaries and grammars, which provide a means for us to integrate the Center's research with college credit courses in the languages offered at our campus and in other parts of the state through workshops and distance-delivered education. We are a member of the Consortium for Alaska Native Higher Education, an association of tribal colleges around the state and serve as a resource for them, and tribal colleges are named as eligible applicants in this grant.

The Alaska Native Language Center is prepared to fulfill the role of demonstration center specified in S. 575, and we believe we would work in good complementation with the other two centers. We are especially pleased to work with the Hawaiian language consortium named in the bill. Alaska also has a number of Native language immersion programs, which will benefit from the Hawaii relationship. Individuals from Alaskan and Hawaiian programs have already visited back and forth, and I believe they will continue to work well together. Dr. Krauss from our center joined their center last summer for a special program for Hawaiian immersion students in college. While we have not yet had the opportunity to work closely with the Piegan Institute, although we have been in contact and are aware of their fine reputation in developing Native American language survival school programs; we look forward to working closely with them in the future.

Hearing
Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate
May 17, 2003
Russell Senate Bldg. Room 485
S. 575 - A Bill to Amend the Native American Languages Act
Testimony of Keiki Kawaiaea
Director, Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program
Director, Hale Kuamoo Hawaiian Language Center
Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani
(Hawaiian College)

Aloha e na Kenekoa Hanohano o ke Komike Kuleana Ilikini o ka Ahaolelo Pekelala o Amelika Hui Pu Ia. Mahalo keia manawa i haawi ia mai i mea e hoopuka ia ai na manao kakoo i ka pila S. 575.

Aloha Senators, my name is Keiki Kawaiaea. I am Director of the Hale Kuamoo Center that provides community and outreach support for Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College in our language revitalization work. We develop curriculum, new lexicon, provide technological services, archive tapes, maintain centralized internet and web based communications in Hawaiian for the entire state, provide courses through the internet, serve as the secretariat general for the 14 nation Polynesian languages forum, provide teacher inservice immersion training, and maintain three preschool to grade 12 Hawaiian language survival laboratory schools on three different islands.

I am also Director of the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program. I would like to focus my testimony on teacher education and student evaluation, but before that, I believe it is important to make some broader points. My perspective on language revitalization is that -- you do not choose the work -- the work chooses you. And you can't refuse! It is a duty sent to us by our ancestors.

Today, in looking back to when I first became involved, it is hard to see how we succeeded. Our language was illegal. We had no teaching materials and people like my grandparents who knew the language fluently were passing on. We -- the younger people then -- had to do something and the first thing was to learn the language from whatever source we could. We have learned it well and have become very proficient at what we do.

My children were born into this effort. My eldest daughter was in the very first graduating class of the Pünana Leo. She, her brother and younger sister moved with me and my husband as I left O'ahu to help open the first Hawaiian medium school on Maui. Then we moved again to Hilo where I came to serve as the sole employee in the center that I now direct. It has been very hard and challenging. We have not always been supported by our own people, much less the public school system. But we have succeeded. And we continue to succeed and grow.

My eldest daughter was the first Hawaiian language survival school student to graduate from college. She completed her studies in three and a half years. She will begin training to become a teacher for our Hawaiian language survival schools this summer. In the meantime she has a job at the Bishop Museum helping them with their collection of Hawaiian language newspaper materials, a skill which she developed as a Hawaiian languagae survival school student.

I also want to acknowledge that what we have done was built on the work of others who went before us. Hawaiians who braved the criticism of others when they showed interest in keeping our old stories, language and chants alive. Hawaiians who were called names when they wrote down our chants and stories. Hawaiians such as Mrs. Mary Pukui who provide many anthropologists and linguists with a wealth of data while being paid at a tiny fraction of the salaries of those who published the results of her research.

But I know that we honor those who suffered on behalf of our language before by bringing our language and culture back to life today. And I am proud to say that our generation has been able to give back to the descendants of those who paved the way for us. For example, Mrs. Pukui's great granddaughter, Pele Suganuma, came to Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani to strengthen her Hawaiian language and culture. Now she is a teacher at one of our Hawaiian laboratory schools using her ancestral language in her daily teaching. Today after a break in the transmission of Hawaiian between the time of her great grandmother and her own generation, Pele and her husband Kekoa are raising their first born - Kalamanamana - as a Hawaiian speaker in their home. This is what our effort is about.

I also want to acknowledge the Aha Punana Leo. It has been the fact that we have this steadfast non-profit working ceaselessly on the behalf of the Hawaiian language that our language has been able to get into the public schools and our Hawaiian College has been created. And the model has worked to help other indigenous people as well.

Now regarding education. Hawaiian language survival schools are about language - yes - - but as a vehicle, a way of living -- rather than as a subject. This is a way of learning IN the language, not learning ABOUT the language. As such, developing a way of education specific to our indigenous language and culture is key to our language survival schools.

Developing a distinctive Hawaiian way of education does not mean planning everything out from the very beginning. No -- what is most important is the collective vision that drives the work in a purposeful and effective manner. To see that vision of a living language and culture at the base -- and seek it out. The way is already there -- our ancestors have laid it before us -- we simply have to open our eyes, see it, and apply it to our contemporary lives. Interpreting that way in detail comes later -- for us a decade and a half later.

When we started twenty years ago, we began with developing a Punana Leo - a language nest. We tried to follow the Hawaiian way of education by doing what we knew our grandparents did in their homes and communities such as the teaching of our dance and

music, the practices in our Hawaiian churches, and what our stories, wise sayings and elders taught us. We integrated Hawaiian knowledge with what we learned from the outside -- always remembering that the outside knowledge was supplementary to the Hawaiian core knowledge and values we used on a daily basis. Using the language for everything increases your abilities and comfort zone to see the world more globally.

We have built from a base where we fought to allow our teachers in the language nests to have credentials waived. Now we are at a point where we have developed our own teacher certificate program, have three kinds of state Hawaiian teacher licences, and are helping to build the much needed critical mass of qualified and proficent teachers - the only one in the U.S. for indigenous immersion. Our program currently services some twenty-two DOE Hawaiian immersion sites statewide.

We have also developed our own Native Hawaiian education philosophy statement - written in our own language called the Kumu Honua Mauli Ola. This document serves as the conceptual framework for program development in all of our pre-school thru higher education, P-20 initiatives. Most recently we have published through collaboration with the Native Hawaiian Education Council a set of cultural guidelines called Hawaii Guidelines for Culturally Healthy and Responsive Learning Environments. These guidelines are part of a collective effort to improve the educational success and cultural wellness of Hawaiian students, and are highly applicable to our local children statewide. These guidelines are also imbedded in our teacher education program and practices.

Our latest effort is to integrate our teacher certification program into an M.A. This expanded M.A. program provides teachers entering Hawaiian medium education with a good background in language revitalization, the unique features of childhood development in indigenous communities, and applied research skills.

We have also been approved for the delivery of a doctorate in Hawaiian language and culture revitalization. This doctorate will integrate high level study of Hawaiian with our focus on indigenous language and culture education. It will also provide tracks focusing on indigenous languages in society and indigenous language planning. Helping us develop these programs has been Dr. Suzanne Romaine, a renowned scholar from Oxford University who has been an indigenous language policies consultant for governments in Europe and the Pacific.

In order to help move this doctoral program forward, I myself am working on my doctorate. My late entry into seeking Western credentials is somewhat typical of those of us in Hawaiian language revitalization. We have focused first on strengthening our own Hawaiian language and culture knowledge to a high level, then applying that to the education of our children, and only later seeking out the Western credentials. It has been a path for success for us. We begin small and slowly build toward a fully integrated and comprehensive education system. The work has guided and directed our growth both programmatically and personallly.

Today, because of the strengths that we have built in Hawaiian language survival education, we are increasingly involved in joint efforts with other indigenous educators

throughout the world. We are working to allow a means for other indigenous people to participate in our M.A. and Ph.D. programs relative to indigenous language revitalization and education - allowing them to focus on improving their skills in their own languages and cultures while sharing with us in learning from international experts such as Dr. Romaine.

One of the things that I have learned in working with others is that those who have focused on language survival who are among the very strongest in this international movement. And they are also the ones who reach out the most because they know what a great struggle language revitalization truly is. They have become community, national and international contributors benefitting the local and greater society. By working together we all get stronger!

Part of my work and interest within Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College is educational outreach. I represent our College in WINHEC - The World Indigenous Higher Education Consortium. WINHEC includes tribal colleges in Alaska, the 48 contiguous states, and Canada, aboriginal university programs in Australia as well indigenous language medium colleges in Hawaii, New Zealand, and Europe.

I also represent our College's Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program in a national study of the federal Office of Educational Research and Improvement and Office of Indian Education to focus research on issues of Native language and culture in the classroom. I believe our state is the only one in the U.S. which provides a licensure specific to teaching through a Native American language. Working on the national study has broadened my perspective on the barriers and challenges that other Native American groups face in preparing teachers for language revitalization. And I have gained fresh insights into how we can work better together on a national basis to address those problems.

I am also the point person in national studies on the effectiveness of Native American language and culture based education for our College. Dr. William Demmert who is testifying on S 575 today, has chosen our laboratory school Nawahiokalaniopuu as one of the select number of sites to do high quality testing of schools taught with a strong Native American language and cultural base. One of the reasons that we have been chosen as a site for this study is because of the relative stability and level of development that we have reached over the past twenty years by focusing so strongly on revitalizing Hawaiian through language survival schools.

We are also doing research in literacy development in Hawaiian and how skills in Hawaiian literacy transfer to literacy and academics in English. While this is currently of internal use, I can see the results being disseminated to other indigenous groups as well.

Our college has also been very closely involved in the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education since the conference was held in Hilo in the late 1990s with over 5,000 delegates in attendance and language revitalization being the most sought after topic of discussion.

Especially strong ties outside the United States have been developed by our College and the Aha Punana Leo with the Maori of New Zealand who have an extensive government sponsored system of language nests, language survival schools, and community language use support. The Hawaiian and Maori languages and cultures are closely related as part of the large Polynesian seafaring peoples. We also remain closely organizationally connected to each other and 13 other Polynesian governments through the Polynesian Languages Forum, whose head office is located on our campus.

Besides these contacts at a high planning level, we also work at the more personal level with indigenous peoples throughout the world. For example, we do joint publishing in which stories and illustrations done originally in the indigenous language and from an indigenous perspective are then translated into other indigenous languages and printed so that children in language survival schools can learn about each other directly.

We also host groups of indigenous people who visit our complex of schools and support centers. We very much feel that we must give back and help others who are experiencing the same vision in insuring the survival of their language and culture through education. It is an overwhelming task and a life consuming committment. Many marvel at what we have done in the past twenty years in terms of technology, teacher training and curriculum material production. While we now have children graduating from college and even having Hawaiian speaking babies of their own, we still remember what it was like when we began. The language illegal. No materials, no computers -- just us - our few remaining elders and a few pieces of construction paper with homemade pictures strung together with yarn. And seven children. That was the first language nest for me and my family.

But we were speaking the language -- and only the language with the children. Our vision was clear then and remains so till today. S. 575 will finally provide funds to that focus on language nests and language survival schools. This support is sorely needed. Our Aha Punana Leo/Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College Consortium is ready to help others make their vision come true with your help.

Thank you for supporting S 575.

NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
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Written Testimony of
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before the
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
On the
Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003, S. 575
May 15, 2003

Chairman Campbell and Vice Chairman Inouye and Members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the National Indian Education Association with regard to the Native American Languages Act Amendments of 2003, S. 575.

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) is the oldest and largest national Indian organization dedicated to education issues. The NIEA has a membership of over 4,000 American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian educators, tribal leaders, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Founded in 1969, the NIEA actively advocates for and supports tribal and federal initiatives that seek to meet the language, culture, and spirituality needs of Native students in order to ensure their school achievement for a successful future. A key component of these initiatives must be the creation and support of language opportunities for Native communities.

The preservation of indigenous languages is of paramount importance to Native communities, as witnessed by the creation of many grassroots programs designed to revitalize Native languages throughout tribal schools, communities, and families. However these efforts are fragmented and inadequately funded. We are now in a desperate battle to ensure our endangered languages do not disappear, as many already have been lost forever. Language is *essential* to the continuance of our cultural and spiritual traditions and is an acknowledgement of our gift from the Creator.

We thank the members of this Committee for their assistance in this commendable effort and we welcome the opportunity to unconditionally support S.575 and other federal initiatives that work to promote and support the protection and continuance of tribal languages and cultures.

A Race to Save Native Languages. The loss of indigenous languages among American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians is a very compelling and catastrophic threat to these communities. Statistics predict that over 80% of the existing 175 Native languages will disappear by our next generation if nothing is done. Other studies show that in 50 years, only 20 of the 300 languages originally spoken by Native tribes will survive. Of the remaining languages, some have fewer than one or two fluent speakers, typically tribal Elders or adults who were forced to feel shame when speaking their language. Few children have the opportunity to learn their Native languages in their homes or in a school environment. The most severely endangered languages have no children learning. In California, there are no Indian languages spoken by Indian children.

Within indigenous communities, Native language is inextricably linked with culture, traditions and a profound respect for the natural world. Languages were taught as oral traditions with no written orthography. Therefore songs, stories and the spoken word all carry the weight of the accumulated knowledge of the cultural and spiritual traditions, values and history of tribes. There are many words in tribal languages that exist but are not translatable into English. In one California Indian language, there are 20 ways to convey the word "carry" reflecting the basic hunter-gatherer nature of early cultures. To preserve our languages is to preserve our identity—the urgency of which cannot be denied.

The Importance of Education in Cultural Preservation. The impending loss of Native languages should surprise no one. Many Indians associate their ancestral languages with the other epic losses they suffered. In the 19th century, the United States' official policy was to stop American Indians from using their language. An 1868 government report said Indians' "barbarous dialect should be blotted out". By the late 1800s, American Indian children were forced into boarding schools and punished for speaking their Native tongues.

My own parents were taken from their homes at the age of four and five years of age. My father, a Pit River Indian, upon leaving the Sherman Institute in Riverside, California, at the age of 13, could no longer communicate with his father. My mother, a Paiute Indian was often beaten if caught speaking her language while at the Stewart Indian School and Reformatory in Carson City, Nevada. Because of homesickness, she and other little Paiute girls would volunteer to clean the bathrooms where they could talk about their experiences of being taken from their homes and sing their ancestral songs.

Decades of these oppressive policies marginalized Native identity and effectively inhibited the transmission of language and cultural practices, ultimately giving rise to growing generations of Native Americans who did not speak the language of their Elders. Native children who did not conform to Western goals of education frequently

demonstrated poor academic performances, high dropout rates, low self-esteem and high rates of suicide.

In 1990, Congress reversed the longtime government policy with the Native American Languages Act, entitling American Indians to use their own languages, principally in their schools, and allocating money for language renewal projects. This has given many Native people hope for restoring their cultures.

There is hope. Today, just as education served to weaken Native linguistic and cultural traditions, so too, we believe, education can restore them. Passage of such bills as the Indian Education Act of 1972, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, and more recently the Native American Languages Preservation Acts of 1990 and 1992 all served as a marked departure from the reprehensible policies of the past and reflect a new era in Indian education and cultural preservation. More and more tribal groups are mobilizing to support language revival through coordinated, multi-disciplinary school programs, as well as through active parental and community involvement. Emerging studies highlight the benefits of a bilingual education, and Native languages are now taught at a variety of academic levels, including early education programs such as Head Start, as well as in university disciplines. Curricula often times integrate language instruction with cultural knowledge not only to provide context and relevance to the languages learned, but also to strengthen the student's sense of identity and self-worth through knowledge of their Native tongue.

Of the growing number of developing language programs, several have emerged reporting successful results and may provide models that can be replicated and cultivated in other communities. An example is the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS). They have developed a master/apprentice model that matches a fluent Elder speaker with an adult or student who is willing to spend time one-on-one to master their language. However, funding for these types of projects is inadequate and inconsistent.

Other components of these flourishing language maintenance initiatives include immersion schools and languages nests that place students, usually at a very early age, in intensive learning environments away from English-dominant media. Literacy programs are being developed to provide and transmit written records of the vocabulary and grammar of spoken languages. Mentor/apprentice approaches, video-taping Elders and language classes where children are taught their ancient tongues in immersion programs all serve as interactive approaches that involve members of communities in the process of language and cultural preservation.

Continued research and analysis is necessary in order to accurately measure and fully comprehend the potential benefits or determine ways to improve these measures. However, early indications of achievement with several of these programs provide us with hope. When people lose a language, they lose—we all lose—a body of

knowledge and a way of looking at the world that signifies our identity, and thus, a symbol of survival against all odds. A California Indian at the beginning stages of learning her language stated, "I would just like to speak to my Creator in my language—just one small prayer." Others have said they want to be able to greet their ancestors when they pass on to the spirit world. How can they do this when all they know is a foreign language?

The membership of the National Indian Education Association fully supports S.575 and endorses the continued efforts by the federal government to uphold its trust responsibilities to American Indians, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians. Specifically, we encourage the United States Government to continue and expand its support by helping to ensure Native people are given the opportunity to recognize these losses and to strive to save their languages from extinction. We are urging the development of Native American Survival Schools and additional funding resources. On behalf of Native children, we thank you for your assistance in this effort.

Statement of
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Dr. Dorothy Still Smoking, Board of Trustees, Piegan Institute
Blackfeet Nation, Browning, Montana
before the
United States Senate
Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs
May 15, 2003

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S. 575, the "Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003." I wish to commend Senator Inouye and the other members of the Committee for their vision in supporting Native American languages and Native American language survival schools. I would also like to thank Senator Inouye for recognizing our school as a national demonstration program. We feel very humbled and honored to be included in this important bill.

Piegan Institute was founded in 1987 as a private 501(c)(3) not-for-profit on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in northwest Montana by a group of Blackfeet educators. Piegan Institute was founded to counteract the dramatic loss of Blackfeet language usage. Initially, Piegan Institute studied the issue of Native American languages and developed a resource center of language studies and language materials. We provided seminars for other Native communities around the nation. One thing we learned in our research and in the many discussions with elders is that at the foundation of any revitalization effort would be the children. The elders emphasized that it is through the children where hope lies.

But talking about these issues did not solve them. To make an enduring impact on the lives of Blackfeet children we decided it was time to take action and actually *do* something. After much contemplation and research we opened Nizipuhwahsin, a school for children ages 5-13 where core academic subjects are taught in the Blackfeet language. We developed our school on scientifically-based research and after carefully searching for effective models. Our search lead us to Aha Punana Leo in Hawaii. Punana Leo has an outstanding academic program taught in a Native language. Under the mentorship and guidance of Punana Leo, in a little less than ten years Nizipuhwahsin has also become recognized as a model for educating children and developing Native speakers.

Our purpose here today is to urge the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs to support the work of Native American language survival schools and to support the spirit and intent of S. 575 as it has been proposed. Native American language survival schools are methodologically and pedagogically different from public educational systems. But what is important is not the differences but the outcomes. The academic outcomes of Native American language survival schools are as strong or stronger than public education systems and students become speakers of their Native language.

Before Nizipuhwahsin the Blackfeet community tried many approaches to revitalize the Blackfeet language. We have Head Start language programs, bilingual education programs in the public schools, language classes in high school, adult language programs at the community college and summer culture camps – but *none* of these approaches created any speakers of the Blackfeet language – the Native American language survival school approach at Nizipuhwahsin does.

The Native American language survival school method is seen by many Native communities as an innovative approach that will develop fluent speakers in their communities. Similar to Punana Leo, Nizipuhwahsin is sought out by numerous Native communities for program development and training. Native leaders and educators visit our school every month from communities all over the U.S., from southeast Alaska to southern California. Some then go back home and either modify pre-existing programs or establish new ones based on the Nizipuhwahsin model. Just this Sunday *The Missoulian*, one of Montana's largest newspapers, published a feature story on Nkwusm, the Salish Native American language survival school. Piegan Institute met with the founders of Nkwusm several times before they opened their school. They believe that after a decade of failed attempts within the public school system, the survival school approach will bring them success.

Native American language survival school will bring fluent speakers back to Native communities. At Piegan Institute we believe the loss of Native languages diminishes the truth of Native ways, and dishonors the lifetimes of our ancestors. True Native history is identified by the stories extending back (and forward) thousands of years, and retold out loud in our Native languages. The archeologist can recount thousands of years of Native existence, but only our languages remain the accurate recorder of our true history. Learn the oldest word in a Native language and you will realize how it speaks the truth.

The elders believe that the Blackfeet language is a gift from the Creator to our people and should be treated with respect. The elders also state that our ancient language is the foundation of our cultural and spiritual heritage without which we could not exist in the manner that our Creator intended. Native languages contain the genesis, cosmology, history, and secrets within. Without our language our world will become permanently lost, or irrevocably changed.

The elders say that cultural identity can be learned through the names people originally gave – in their own, original language. Language and names are the key. *Here is power*. Today, the Blackfeet language is threatened and so are the names, songs, and stories – those elements that give direction and render Blackfeet life distinct and intelligible to its members. Names, like songs and dreams, are guide posts and with their steady erosion comes cultural loss and the loss of community identity.

Elders carefully choose and transfer Blackfeet names to family members. These names have significant meaning and power to an individual throughout their lifetime. People's names guide them through their journey in life. It is very important, say the elders, that every individual have

in their possession their own unique name.

Many Blackfeet elders experienced most of the major federal policies affecting Indian people. The re-naming of individuals at school was one of the first policies to dramatically change Blackfeet society. The elders talked about their concerns of public education and their experiences when they attended school. The public education system provided hardships on Native children that made it difficult to learn. Their Blackfoot language was never accepted within the walls of the school and was not accepted on the school grounds. Nevertheless, Blackfeet elders as children still tried hard to succeed in school.

But the elders value western education and strongly encourage their children and grandchildren to become educated. All the elders want their children to become educated and recognize that education is a crucial part of our lives today. At times education is compared to survival by the elders. But true education to the elders also entails being able to speak the Blackfeet language. The true knowledge of the Blackfeet people rests in the language.

Consequently, the elders are currently worried that many of these federal policies and especially those affecting public education do not support the tribes in their efforts to restore Native knowledge and transfer knowledge to younger generations. Their faith in the public school system is diminishing, and many of the elders are recommending community-based programs to teach Blackfeet knowledge.

Piegan Institute developed out of that concern and desire. The Blackfeet community learned that the Native American language survival school concept is an excellent approach for learning a language. The elders highly support this method of teaching the Blackfeet language as it is being implemented at Nizipuhwahsin. The elders have witnessed the capabilities of the children in mastering the language as well as their success in conventional academic terms.

The Blackfeet tribe (Resolution #146-2003) believes that Native American language survival school approach succeeds at developing fluent speakers and educating children. Success for other Native communities will occur when those communities develop similar programs. Piegan Institute strongly urges the Committee to support Native American language survival schools.

We are often asked about the success of Piegan Institute and Nizipuhwahsin School. We can only tell you this – you do not need permission to study or learn your language. Make your prayers to the Creator for strength, and trust in what is provided. Do not debate with people who question your journey. Linguistic anthropologist Ives Goodard, when asked the question, how do you revive a language, jokingly answered, just open your mouth and start talking. On the Blackfeet Indian reservation in Montana because of Nizipuhwahsin, the children have opened their mouths and started talking, and the world is listening.

Testimony to the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

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S. 575, Proposed Amendments to the Native American Languages Act of 1990/1992

May 15, 2003

Honorable Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony related to S. 575. As co-director of the American Indian Language Development Institute, I have had the privilege of working with many of the teachers, parents, and students in programs authorized by the Native American Languages Act. Over the past 20 years, I also have conducted research with Native American colleagues on the social and educational impacts of Indigenous language education programs. My purpose in this statement is to convey what we know from research and practice in this area, and the implications for the proposed Native American Language Act Amendments of 2003. Specifically, I will address 2 questions:

1. How effective are Indigenous language revitalization programs in promoting children's language and literacy development and their academic success?
2. What have been the impacts of Indigenous language revitalization programs on reversing the loss of Indigenous languages?

Unique Status of Native American Languages

According to Michael Krauss's (1998) estimates, 175 Indigenous languages are still spoken in the United states. Although fewer and fewer are spoken by the young, at least 20 languages are still being naturally acquired by children. In many cases, however, children have only a passive understanding of the heritage language, with some children hearing the language "as so much 'static'" (Holm, in press). In other cases, the ancestral language is no longer part of children's social environment at all.

Unlike immigrants and speakers of "world" languages, Indigenous people have no other homeland to turn to for replenishing the pool of heritage language speakers. "The loss of the indigenous language is terminal," Warner (1999, p. 2) observes. Given this and the history of

colonization and oppression that has led to language loss, Indigenous language education takes on heightened importance in Native American communities. Education in the Native language is both a force for equality of educational opportunity and a means of self-determination and cultural survival.

Even as more Indigenous students come to school knowing English, they are likely to speak a variety of English influenced by the structures, sounds, and use patterns of the ancestral language. Often these children are labeled "limited English proficient." They are educationally vulnerable in several ways. First, their experiences are discredited and marginalized in mainstream texts and tests. Second, Indigenous students also are under severe pressure to abandon their cultural identities. Third, they are heavily over-represented in compensatory and special education programs, and they experience the highest 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 very real threat of "terminal" language loss, have motivated bold new approaches such as the Indigenous/heritage language immersion programs supported by the Native American Languages Act.

Research on Indigenous/Heritage Language Immersion

Research is unequivocal in demonstrating that it takes 4-7 years for learners to achieve *academic proficiency* in a second language (see, e.g., Thomas & Collier, 1997; Cummins, 1989, 200; Lessow-Hurley, 2000). Academic proficiency is interdependent with, but not identical to, *conversational proficiency,* which involves everyday, face-to-face communication about familiar subject matter in context-rich environments. Academic proficiency involves more cognitively demanding, abstract, and context-reduced language tasks. Learners need both types of proficiencies to be successful in school and in life.

Hence, Indigenous/heritage language immersion must provide sustained instruction in the target language over a period of several years. For example, in French Canadian immersion programs developed for native English-speaking children, all instruction during the first years of school is provided in the target language, with English language arts introduced in the 2nd or 3rd grade (Cummins & Swain, 1986). Based on research showing that abilities developed in one language transfer readily to another (Krashen, 1985), these and other immersion programs use the second/heritage language to develop students' critical thinking abilities, English fluency and literacy, as well as proficiency in the second/heritage language. This type of immersion incorporates the local culture into the curriculum in academically challenging ways, and requires the co-participation of children's

families—something research shows enhances learning for students regardless of race, ethnicity, or social class.

Hawaiian immersion is perhaps the most dramatic language revitalization story in the U.S. From a long and rich tradition in which Hawaiian served as the language of government, religion, business, education, and the media, Hawaiian by the mid-20th century had become displaced and restricted to a few hundred speakers of one island enclave. This began to change in the late 1970s when Hawaiian was made a co-official language, and in 1983, with the founding of the 'Aha Punana Leo ("language nest gathering") preschools. 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 (Warner, 1999; Wilson & Kamana, 2001; see Figure 1). Immersion students have garnered prestigious scholarships, enrolled in college courses while still in high school, and passed the state university's English composition assessments, despite receiving the majority of their English, science, and mathematics instruction in Hawaiian. Further, student achievement on standardized tests has equaled or surpassed that of Native Hawaiian children in English-medium schools, even in English language arts (Kamana & Wilson, 1996; Wilson & Kamana, 2001).

Figure 1.
Hawaiian Immersion Programs, 2000*

Pre-K Immersion
- 11 private, community-based *'Aha Punana Leo* preschools

Hawaiian-medium Public Schools
Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i (Hawaiian Environment Schools),
with Hawaiian immersion and English-in-Hawaiian:
- 10 elementary sites
- 3 intermediate sites
- 1 intermediate/high school site
- 1 comprehensive pre-K-12 site

Institutions of Higher Education
- Language Center for teacher preparation, outreach, and curriculum development
- College of Hawaiian language
- Hawaiian Studies departments

**Source:* Wilson, 1998, 1999; Wilson & Kamana, 2001. Cited in McCarty 2003.

The Navajo immersion program at Fort Defiance, Arizona, has demonstrated similar results. When the program began in 1986, less than a tenth of the school's 5-year-olds were reasonably proficient speakers of Navajo (Holm & Holm, 1995). At the same time, many English monolinguals were labeled "limited English proficient." After the first 7 years of program operation, Navajo immersion 4th graders performed as well on local tests of English as comparable non-immersion students at the school. Immersion students performed better on local assessments of English writing, and were well ahead on standardized tests of mathematics. On standardized tests of English reading, immersion students were slightly behind, but closing the gap. In short, immersion students were well on their way to accomplishing exactly what research indicates: They were acquiring Navajo as a second/heritage language without cost to their English proficiency or academic achievement (Holm & Holm, 1995). In addition, they had the benefit of becoming bilingual and biliterate (see Table 1).

Table 1.
Comparison of Fort Defiance Navajo Immersion (NI) and Monolingual English (ME) Student Performance*

Assessment	NI Students	ME Students
Local evaluations of English	Same as ME students	Same as NI students
Local assessments of Navajo	Better than ME students	Worse than NI students and worse than their own kindergarten performance
Local assessments of English writing	Better than ME students	Worse than NI students
Standardized tests of mathematics	Substantially better than ME students	Worse than NI students
Standardized tests English reading	Slightly behind, but catching up with ME students	Slightly ahead of ME students

**Source:* Arviso & Holm, 2001, pp. 211-212; Holm & Holm, 1995, p. 150. Cited in McCarty, 2003.

An additional finding from the Fort Defiance study is worth noting. Not only did Navajo immersion 4th graders outperform comparable non-immersion students on assessments of Navajo, non-immersion students actually performed *lower* on these assessments than they had in kindergarten. There is a great deal of debate about what schools can and cannot do to reverse language loss (see, e.g., Fishman, 1991, 2001; Krauss, 1998; McCarty, 1998, 2001, 2002). Here we see the powerful *negative* effect of the absence of immersion schooling, and, conversely, its positive effects in promoting students' linguistic and cognitive abilities and maintaining the heritage language.

The Hawaiian and Fort Defiance programs show that school-based efforts must be joined by family- and community-based initiatives. Immersion programs among the Keresan-speaking Pueblos of New Mexico serve as exemplars of community-based language education. Begun in the 1990s, the Keres language immersion programs at Acoma and Cochiti Pueblos involve parents learning language "right along with their children" (Sims, 2001a, 2001b). Preliminary program data are encouraging. On national assessments of English language arts, immersion students performed significantly better than non-immersion students (Sims, 2001a). Most important to community members are the facts that children have gained conversational ability in Keres, and that there is growing evidence of community-wide Native language use (Pecos & Blum-Martínez, 2001; Romero, 2003).

In California, Hinton (1998, 2001) reports that many young people, working as language apprentices to elderly master-teachers over a period of years, have gained conversational proficiency and even fluency in the heritage language. Master-apprentice teams bring together young and old in positive, identify-affirming ways. These programs have the added benefit of reinforcing intra- and inter-familial ties, and of providing positive adult role models for children.

Finally, I and my colleagues Drs. Ofelia Zepeda and Mary Eunice Romero at the University of Arizona are currently engaged in a national study of the impacts of Indigenous language loss and revitalization on students' academic achievement. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (formerly Office of Educational Research and Improvement), the Native Language Shift and Retention Project is developing in-depth case studies of Indigenous language education programs and their effects on student identity, achievement, and self-efficacy at 5 representative American Indian school-community sites. The project responds directly to a 1998 Executive Order calling for a comprehensive national research agenda in American Indian education (*Federal Register,* 63, August 11, 1998, p. 42682). This is the only comparative, multivariate study of Indigenous language ability and educational program quality to date (Boesel, 1999). Preliminary findings indicate that the present

standardization and English-only policies are both detrimental to students' school performance and accelerate the rate of Indigenous/heritage language loss.

What Have We Learned? Guidance for Federal Policy and Educational Practice

I conclude by returning to the questions with which I began. To what extent have Indigenous language immersion programs succeeded in promoting indigenous students' academic achievement? To what extent have they helped revitalize threatened Indigenous languages?

When we consider language programs for which there is good public documentation, we see students doing exactly what the research predicts. After 4 to 7 years, they are on a par with students in monolingual English classrooms, and they are ahead in some areas, including math and heritage language development. Moreover, there is evidence of substantial affective benefits: Indigenous students in immersion and maintenance bilingual/bicultural programs know they have succeeded because of, not despite who they are (Holm & Holm 1990, 1995). "I understand who I am," a graduate of pre-K–12 Hawaiian immersion states, "and where Hawaiians stood, and where they want to go" (Infante, 1999, p. e3). Most important, students such as these are developing fluency and often literacy in the second/heritage language.

The question now remains: Through what language will *these* language learners raise their own children? "They are like the first roots growing out of the vine," a Hawaiian educator states. "Hopefully, the rest of the plant will follow" (Infante, 1999).

We wait and watch with hope.

Let me summarize what we now know from recent research on Indigenous language immersion:[1]

1. *Time spent learning the Indigenous language does not hinder students' academic achievement or their acquisition of English.* We have new research evidence demonstrating that time spent learning the Indigenous/heritage language is not time lost in developing English. We also have evidence that Indigenous/heritage language immersion students perform as well or better in mathematics and English language arts than their peers in non-immersion classes. Equally important is evidence that the absence of sustained

[1] Adapted from T.L. McCarty (2002), Bilingual/Bicultural Schooling and Indigenous Students: A Response to Eugene Garcia. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 155/156, 161-174.

Indigenous/heritage language instruction contributes substantially to Indigenous language loss. This is an area for future research as well as language education policy and planning.

2. *Bi/multilingualism promotes cognitive flexibility and positive cultural identity.* Data from Indigenous immersion programs support research findings from around the world, which show that bi/multilingualism enhances cognitive flexibility and the development of critical thinking (see, e.g., Cummins & Corson, 1997; García & Baker, 1995). There also is strong evidence of culturally specific affective benefits. According to Kipp (2000), children in the Blackfeet immersion program have "higher levels of mental flexibility [and] higher levels of sharing and caring. These are the values embedded in our language, and children learn and use these values." Future NALA-funded programs, particularly the proposed Native language survival schools, should examine these patterns in other tribal community-school contexts.

3. *How long does it take to acquire second-language proficiency?* Studies of Indigenous language immersion support a 4- to 7-year timeframe for developing age-appropriate levels of academic proficiency in a second language. This is further evidence for "late-exit" immersion and bilingual education models (see, e.g., Ramírez, 1992; Thomas & Collier, 1997), and for consistent, long-term program funding. Given the current English-only climate in the United States, these findings need much greater public visibility.

4. *Child-adult language learning helps unify families and communities.* Indigenous language immersion programs offer a unique opportunity to compare younger and older second language learners. In addition, there is evidence that Indigenous immersion serves a unifying function within Indigenous families and communities, and strengthens language learning at home.

5. *The transfer of literacy from one language to another is more complicated than we thought.* Studies of Indigenous immersion indicate that the development of children's biliteracy is more complex than the simple transfer of mother-tongue abilities to a second language. Fort Defiance Navajo students, whose primary language was English, learned to read first in Navajo, then transferred those abilities to English. What these findings suggest is that validation of students' natal culture and use of the Indigenous/heritage language for cognitively demanding tasks are essential elements of an effective and culturally responsive pedagogy.

The results and implications of research on Indigenous language immersion/revitalization are abundantly clear. Yet Native American communities still face the challenge of maintaining their languages,

cultures, and lifeways in the context of mounting pressures for standardization, high-sakes testing, and English-only policies. Can Indigenous languages and cultures survive these homogenizing forces? I believe the answer is a qualified but optimistic "yes." Achieving this will require greater public awareness of, and respect for, tribal sovereignty; sustained federal support for Indigenous language immersion programs; and ongoing tribal-community commitment to reversing language shift.

The language choices Native American children and their families make need not be either-or ones. Community initiatives such as Native language survival and demonstration schools, and other programs promoted by the Native American Languages Act, *can* help children develop their command of the Indigenous language while acquiring English and the other abilities they need to succeed in school and in life. These programs promise to restore integrity and wholeness to Native American communities, and to yield a more democratic, linguistically and culturally rich, society for us all.

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(Written Testimony for the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on S.575, a bill to amend the Native American Languages Act to provide support of Native American language survival schools and for other purposes.)

Maruawe Ka Nanumunuu! Hello to you, my friends and relations! Thank you for inviting the Comanches here. We support bill S.575 to amend the Native American Language Act because it will affect all tribal languages for the better.

My name is Geneva Woomavoyah Navarro from the Comanche Nation. I am 77 years old. Presently I am teaching the Comanche Language at the new Comanche Nation College in Lawton, Oklahoma. It opened in the Fall of 2002. Along with college courses, the Comanche Language was offered. I mainly teach the reading and writing of the language, as we have developed an alphabet of sounds for that purpose.

We are trying all types of teaching methods for the purpose of preserving the language. We also taught the language in full immersion programs, master apprentice programs, story and history telling, and the singing of songs that we can gather and remember, thank goodness! We are beginning to attract the interest of more younger people.

I have also taught full immersion in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, New Mexico, since 1993. I have now moved back to Oklahoma to help save our language. I have taken full interest in all community language activities. I have belonged to the Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee since it began in 1993, the Indigenous Language Institution, Oklahoma Native Language Association, and am on the board for the Native Language Elders Advisory Committee of Oklahoma.

The Comanches only have a few of us elders that speak our language. We are desperately trying to save, teach, and preserve our language and culture, because very few of our people under age 60 speak or understand. Even less people below the age of 50 speak the language. The majority of our young people do not speak or understand, and absolutely none of our youngest children know our language.

An updated survey taken this year, by a Native American research historian of the Oklahoma Historical Society, found that Oklahoma's thirty-nine tribes are in the most critical stage of language loss in history. This generation is experiencing an unprecedented loss of fluent tribal language speakers. To date eight Oklahoma tribes have no fluent language speakers left in their tribal membership. The criteria for language loss is: being an individual who can say a full spontaneous prayer or speak sentences without forgetting how to say certain words. The tribes with that criteria are: Delaware Tribe; Fort Sill Apache Tribe; the Kaw Nation; Miami Nation; Modoc Tribe; the Ottawa Tribe; Peoria Tribe of Oklahoma; and the Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma. Twelve additional Tribes are one generation away from language extinction: the Apache Tribe; Citizen Potawatomi Nation; Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma; Osage Tribe; Otoe-Missouri Tribe; Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma; Quapaw Nation; Sac and Fox Nation; Wichita and Affiliated Tribes; and the Wyandotte Nation.

The efforts by the Oklahoma Tribes will not produce another fluent speaker. The exception is the Cherokee and their tribal pre-school total immersion language program. These efforts will only produce individuals who will understand much of the language, be able to sing tribal hymns and ceremonial songs, say functional words to elders who are fluent language speakers, and recite prepared prayers.

Our language is so important because it is unique and lets us know who we are. Without our language we would be lost. It's important to speak it at home again. We have little or no support for teaching the language, both financially and in the greater society.

The generation of my parent's age had the language literally beaten out of them. So you can understand why they let their children only speak English. Luckily, those of us that had grandparents living learned from them, or those that were reared by their grandparents learned the language as I did. I had to stay with my grandparents as their interpreter because all their children were away at boarding school or working for a living. Being the eldest grandchild I had to stay with my grandparents because they could not, and would not, speak English. I was about seven years of age (after the first grade). I remember going to the BIA office to assist my grandfather with his business of making leases. I assisted my grandmother in buying groceries at the store. I had to take my grandmother to the "correct" restroom because she could not read or speak English. That was the time when we learned to become prejudice -- when there were two separate bathrooms for the white and colored people. We used the white bathroom.

We only spoke Comanche at home. My grandmother would be sad because I tried to teach her what I learned in school, but it was too hard for her to learn to speak English.

Now, when I am trying to teach my students who are having a hard time learning our language, I hold tears back, telling my students this is how hard it was for our people to learn the English language, as it is hard for you to learn the Comanche language.

I have heard so many horrible stories from my aunts and uncles of how they were punished for speaking our language. They were very afraid to speak Comanche in school. For this very reason my grandmother did not go to school. She was the youngest and her sisters told her how they were punished. So when her parents mentioned the government agent was coming the next day to take children away to school, she said she would run down to the creek and woods to hide all day until dark, to wait until the Indian agent was surely gone. She would tell me, "I am so sorry I did not go and take my punishment and learn to speak English...now I can't understand what the people are saying in town, and I can't read or use a pencil like you."

So the things that assimilation taught us was to forget our language, learn racism, prejudice actions, segregation, and all the glory of the Manifest Destiny. Was this the will of God for us to learn the white man's way and lose our language and everything we had?

For assimilating into the white society we were promised good lives. Instead we have been given alcoholism, disease, malnutrition, poverty, drug addiction and suicide. Was this the will of God from the Manifest Destiny policy?

I have experienced poverty, hunger, malnutrition, and much racism against me personally, most of my life. I grew up in one of the most racist southern states, Oklahoma (Indian Territory).

It is ironic that the different Native American languages of the Code Talkers helped saved our country in World War I and World War II after they tried to beat it out of our people and get rid of it, including the Comanche language.

My cousin was with the Comanche Code Talkers in the Normandy, Germany, invasion during World War II. That should tell people how important our language was then and still is. We will do all we can to help save our language but we also need help saving it because it wasn't all our fault that we are losing it.

We were blessed with our language because "the One that made us, that we cannot see" gave it to us. That is what we called God or Holy Spirit before any Christians talked to us. That is the way we prayed and gave thanks before any white people taught us. That is the way I learned to pray to the "One that lives behind the sun." We were thankful for everything on this earth. I did not become a Christian until I was eighteen years old and had to have a religious preference at boarding school other than the Native American church. That is another thing that was forced on us at boarding school, but that did not change my religious belief in the first way I learned and was taught in my first language. We pray to the "One we can not see" and believe that we will see all our loved ones that have gone before us in another happier world. That is still our belief and we will all speak our own language when we see one another again. At times I can hardly wait for that time. But now, I hopefully want to wait until we can teach our language to our children and grandchildren, so they can pass it on.

Assimilation is now called English Only and probably the main threat now against our languages from the "No Child Left Behind Act."

We want to include an Amendment to S.575 that would exempt teachers of Native American Languages in the public schools from having to obtain certification from outside their tribes. None of the speakers we have today have a college degree. We are all over sixty years of age, some are physically disabled and some are unable to drive, but we can still speak and remember our language.

Soobesʉ Nʉmʉnʉ Sʉmʉoyetʉ̲ numu niwʉnʉ etʉ.
Ukitsi nʉnʉ tʉasʉ nʉmʉniwʉnʉ̲ hutui.
Ubʉ̲nitu tʉasʉ nʉmʉniwʉnʉ̲hutui nʉʉ.

(Translation: A long time ago we all spoke Comanche.
Now we will all speak Comanche again.
From now on we will speak Comanche forever).

Hearing before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
on S. 575, the Native American Languages Act
May 15, 2003

Testimony of Namaka Rawlins

Aloha e Ka Lunahoomalu e Ke Kenekoa Campbell a me ke keiki o ka aino o Hawaii e Ke Kenekoa Inouye, aloha pu ia oe e Ke Kenekoa Akaka, ke kupa o ka aina 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 pau.

(Aloha Chairman Campbell, Senators Inouye and Akaka and members of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.)

Mahalo nui to the Committee on Indian Affairs for allowing me to provide testimony on behalf of the Aha Punana Leo regarding the Native American Languages Act.

I am Namaka Rawlins, the director of the private non-profit Native Hawaiian language education organization, Aha Punana Leo, Inc. Our state-wide native organization is the oldest in the United States providing education through the Language Nests and Language Survival School model. This year marks 20 years of our work in this area.

We thank Congress, this Committee, and especially you, Senator Inouye, for establishing the governmental structure to allow us at the grassroots level to carry forth the mission that our kupuna - those who have gone before us - have entrusted to us.

In the late 1980s we came to you. We were told in Hawaii that the reason that Hawaiian had been made illegal in the schools was because of a federally imposed policy to eliminate Native American languages like Hawaiian. You introduced for us the Native American Languages Act and suggested that we work with other Native Americans to get the Act passed. After three years of intensive lobbying by Native people from throughout the United States, the Native American Languages Act of 1990 passed. It was just a beginning because it established a new supportive policy by our country for its indigenous languages.

Two years later we came before you again and asked for funding for community efforts in Native American language preservation and revitalization. This Committee on Indian Affairs was again the source of support and the 1992 NALA amendments passed. Many American Indian and Alaska Natives have used planning grants from the 1992 NALA amendments to visit our Hawaiian language nests and language survival schools model. Now, many of these groups are now ready to establish more permanent programs of language nests and language survival schools. There is, however, no source of funding specifically for language nests and language survival schools. The few programs that exist, including ours, have had great difficulty in

achieving funding stability. The third amendment to NALA - S 575 before the Committee on Indian Affairs today, provides a means to fund Native American language nests and Native American language survival schools, give them support from well established programs and to develop stability of funding. And we need to assure that other federal legislation, such as the No Child Left Behind Act, is modified to reflect U.S. policy on Native American languages as found in NAL.

These new amendments to NALA are not intended to take the place of the community programs of the 1992 NALA and other assistance to the teaching of Native American languages in standard public schools. This is a new initiative. Those earlier initiatives need to continue to be funded and support expanded as the United States is really only at the beginning of its effort to revitalize languages that were greatly impacted by earlier highly funded efforts of the federal government to eliminate Native American languages. The United States has taken the lead in terms of recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples, but perhaps because language learning has never been as major an interest in our country as it has been elsewhere, the United States has not given as much funding attention to indigenous language revitalization as other countries such as New Zealand and most recently Canada.

The revitalization of indigenous languages is truly an international issue. Just recently a study was printed in WorldWatch magazine predicting that 90% of the world's languages will die out within the next 100 years if nothing is done. The magazine article describes a devastating future for Native American languages. The founders of the Aha Punana Leo realized the problem in the 1970s when we ascertained that our highly fluent Hawaiian speaking elders had all been born before 1920 and that only a tiny handful of children knew our language at all – these children all being concentrated in a tiny a very vulnerable community. We saw that our language was headed for extinction. We knew from the elders' stories that what had killed the language was the schools. We also knew from them that earlier Hawaiians had had their own full system of Hawaiian language schools that had been the reason that so much of Hawaiian culture had been preserved in writing. Until schools where children could be educated through Hawaiian were again available as a choice, the language was under a constant threat. And until such schools were available, Hawaiian speaking children in the schools were subject to persecution and disassociation from their language and growth in it as had been the case for almost all Native Hawaiians then for nearly a century.

We could not sit by the sidelines and have our language go extinct with the passage of our elders. We could not envision families being denied the choice to put their children in Hawaiian language schools for another century. So we got serious about the business of learning our language ourselves, protecting children speakers from the persecution that the elders had experienced, and developing an overall program of revitalizing our language among our people.

Our revitalization program began with Punana Leo Hawaiian language nests. These were for preschool-aged children and brought Hawaiian speaking elders and others in the community together with Hawaiian speaking children and children from homes that wanted Hawaiian to

become the language of their children again. We then moved these children into Kula Kaiapuni Hawaii Hawaiian language survival schools, adding a grade a year until we graduated our first senior class in 1999. Today there are some 2,000 students enrolled in Hawaiian language nests and Hawaiian language survival schools. Some 100 have already graduated with over 80% accepted into college, several into prestigous institutions. The schools are conducted entirely in Hawaiian through grade four. In grade 5, a one hour English language arts course is introduced, which continues through grade 12. All the children reach the same level of fluency and literacy in English as their peers in the English public schools, even where children speak Hawaiian at home. Our children have even won statewide awards for English writing in competition with students who go to school only in English and speak no Hawaiian.

Language revitalization has been a very difficult path – it was illegal to use our Hawaiian language in education when we began – the legacy of a federal requirement when Hawaii was made a territory that our Hawaiian language schools be banned. We lobbied for three years to change the state ban and even then the state did not immediately carry out the law. Our organization has run the statewide language nest program on our own without state support. Until today, we are the only entity running education through Hawaiian for preschool aged children although a number of others have tried.

At the language survival school level, we opened a kindergarten language survival school class in 1986 at one of our language nests. We declared it a public school open to all as a service to the state while it worked out how it would implement the new law lifting the ban on Hawaiian language education. In 1987, the state asked us to move the program into a state-owed public school site and also asked us to gather together the students, a teacher and materials for the program. Advisors told the state that we should be treated as a bilingual program as provided immigrant groups and wanted to transition us to English by third grade. We insisted that Hawaiian was distinct from immigrant languages and insisted that Hawaiian speaking children be allowed to attend school in Hawaiian for the entire period of compulsory schooling and until graduation. The state did not provide any books claiming that Hawaiian was solely an oral language. We begin teaching Hawaiian reading and writing in our language nests to preschool aged children and disagreed very strongly with the state's position. So we developed the curriculum materials for the language survival schools ourselves. Whenever the state said that it was impossible for them to do something for Hawaiian language medium education, we did it ourselves. We provided the state with transportation, we provide them with sites, and we provided them with teachers. And then we helped them integrate these into their formal institution.

In 1989, we convinced our legislators to establish a Hawaiian language center at the University of Hawaii at Hilo where we had been holding summer curriculum development sessions. This was the beginning of a relationship with state education at a different level. The Aha Punana Leo developed a consortium with this center - the Hale Kuamoo - to provide a full Hawaiian curriculum for children in Hawaiian language survival schools. We developed Hawaiian computer systems, including access to the internet through Hawaiian so that the children on

different islands in the state could communicate in Hawaiian with each other and do their work using modern technology the same as the children in the English schools. The Aha Punana Leo also worked with the University of Hawaii at Hilo Hawaiian language program to provide inservice training to teachers in Hawaiian language survival schools.

As our work with the University of Hawaii at Hilo expanded, we lobbied our legislature to make the Hawaiian program at the University of Hawaii at Hilo into a Native College that would provide further training in Hawaiian and a full teacher licensing unit in Hawaiian for our Hawaiian language survival schools, college courses through Hawaiian, and graduate education in our language and culture. The legislature finally agreed to our proposal in 1997 and Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College. Working with the College we have written down teachings of our elders into a philosophy of education to be used in training teachers. This educational philosophy the Kumu Honua Mauli Ola was then used as a basis by the Native Hawaiian Education Council to develop a set of standards for Native Hawaiian Education for all schools English and Hawaiian that serve Native Hawaiian children and for community educational activities as well.

Our work in Hawaiian language nests and Hawaiian language survival schools has had an important impact on Native Hawaiians outside the schools as well. Local banks now allow checks in Hawaiian and there has been a strengthening of Hawaiian hula and music due to the strengthening of our language. Hawaiian has also spread in second language classes in the English medium high schools where most Native Hawaiians attend. These students have been able to use our books and videos and visit language nests and survival schools to strengthen their use of Hawaiians. Universities and colleges in Hawaii have also expanded their offerings of Hawaiian due to the growth of interest in the language and they also use our materials. Families have expanded the use of Hawaiian in their homes, and some young couples are raising theirchildren as first language speakers of the language from birth again. Besides the 2,000 students enrolled in language nests and language survival schools we affect another 2,000 studying Hawaiian in the English high schools another 2,000 in the universities and colleges and an untold number in canoe clubs, hula schools, and other cultural efforts.

Since the very beginning of our effort we have placed a heavy emphasis on learning from others. We are lucky in Hawaii in that we are exposed to so many different peoples both in our general population and also among visitors to the islands. We also have had exposure to other places through military service and other travel. As part of the Polynesian peoples we also have connections to thirteen other political entities in the Pacific which in turn are connected to other countries in the Europe and the Americas. This has lead to us hosting major conferences, exchanges, visits, and establishment of the Polynesian Languages Forum at Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College.

The concept of language nests and language survival schools is not new. In traditional times, all indigenous peoples had their own ways of educating their babies and children using their own languages. With the expansion of European structures into the rest of the world, a number of

indigenous peoples - Cherokees, Hawaiians, Aleuts, and others adopted systems of schooling based on literacy and books similar to what was happening at the same period in Meiji Japan and other parts of Asia. But indigenous language based education systems within the school model were prevented from being adopted by others and eliminated where they already existed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries - the period which has brought us to this period of imminent extinction for indigenous languages.

However, towards the end of the twentieth century, suppression of indigenous languages began to weaken and schooling through indigenous languages began to be seen as a human right. The larger indigenous languages of Europe - Welsh in Great Britain and Catalan in Spain have been the formerly suppressed languages that have made most progress in revitalization and in the development of systems of support for language nests and language survival schools. Among non-European peoples, the most advanced are the Danish Greenlanders, the New Zealand Maori and the Hawaiians of the United States.

Because of the long history of suppression of indigenous peoples and their languages, establishing language nests and language survival schools involves addressing negative stereotypes of indigenous identity and lingering suppression both from outside the indigenous community and also from within the indigenous community due to internalized negative views of their own culture among indigenous people. We in the Aha Punana Leo have had to deal with this – when our educational system told us that Hawaiian was not to be written, was incapable of being used for teaching beyond lower elementary subjects, and was unimportant as an area for standards development and testing. The low level of funding of Hawaiian comparable to foreign languages with smaller enrollments is another area where a history of past suppression has affected the structure of the educational system.. And within the Native Hawaiian community itself, we have had to deal with those who felt that the children were being harmed from learning through Hawaiian, that we were preventing children from learning English, that Hawaiian had no value, that we were harming Hawaiian rather than supporting it, and that we were trying to make Native Hawaiians who did not speak Hawaiian look bad. We are overcoming these things. More and more Native Hawaiians are supporting the language and seeing the positive effects not only on children but on our people as a community – for the Hawaiian language is a treasure of our Native Hawaiian community regardless of whether we as individuals speak or not. Indeed, some of the strongest supports of our effort have been non-Hawaiian speaking family members of children in our schools. Some of these family members have tried very hard to learn the language themselves but have found that unlike the children who pick it up so easily it has been very difficult for them. Nevertheless they share with the children the cultural knowledge that they learned from their elders - and one of these is that we all have talents to share and we all work together.

Over the past twenty years of our organization we have developed a web of relationships with other Native American communities throughout the United States interested in language revitalization. We have helped groups with information to their tribal councils and school

boards; We have provided information on developing specialized fonts and computer programs; we have served as consultants for tribes and as members on national organizations; we have sponsored resolutions and written articles for national publications. We have even sent teachers to teach teachers in other schools. Our biggest impact has been through hosting visitors. Hosting visitors is part of traditional Hawaiian culture. In the past five months alone we have hosted members of the Cheyenne, Crow, Navajo, Alutiiq, Central Yup'ik Onondaga, Mohawk, Cayuga, and Squamish peoples. Several of these have remained in contact with us for further support on their language projects.

S 575 will allow us to continue our work in Hawaiian and assist other indigenous people as well. By working together, much can be accomplished. We can save for future generations of our own peoples and for all the peoples of the world, the great beauty of the languages and cultures that our elders have left for us, and with those languages develop high quality education that will assure our children will be fully a part of an interconnected world.

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
May 15, 2003
Hearing on S. 575, Proposed Amendments to the
Native American Languages Act of 1990/1992

Testimony presented by
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Before I begin my testimony, I want to thank the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs for the opportunity to comment on S. 575, an amendment to the Native Languages Act of 1990 and 1992 and for your support and commitment to the Indigenous nations, peoples, and languages of this country. The majority of us in this room know the dire vital statistics and sad history pertaining to the Indigenous languages of the United States of America. I come today, not to reiterate those statistics and history, but to discuss the various ways Indigenous communities and individuals are working to renew the life of their communities and languages and to insure that they remain strong for generations to come.

In my testimony I will speak from practical knowledge and experience as a member of Cochiti Pueblo, a small Keres-speaking community in New Mexico, who was involved in my community's initial planning, development and implementation of its mother language renewal initiatives and as a professor/researcher at the University of Arizona, currently examining the relationship between Native language shift and retention and the academic achievement of Native American children. From both these perspectives, I hope to reveal to you some valuable lessons we have learned in New Mexico and Arizona. These lessons will illuminate the reasons why we support the proposed S. 575 amendments to the Native Languages Acts, which include the development and funding for Native American language survival and demonstration schools, Native American language nests, and the development of a center system for Native American language survival schools at the university level.

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE LEARNING IN A COMMUNITY

As Dr. Christine Sims has discussed in her testimony, Cochiti Pueblo has served as a model for other communities in New Mexico and beyond. During the summer of 1996, after five years of preliminary research (i.e., educational and socio-linguistic surveys, identification of community resources and strengths, examination of various Indigenous language renewal programs) and planning, a six-week immersion program focusing on the revitalization of Keres among its children was initiated. Initially, this grassroots initiative was largely supported by tribal and private funding and later by financial support from the Administration for Native Americans and the Linguistic Institute of Native Americans (LINA), a New Mexico-based non-profit training organization that provides technical assistance and training resources to Native speech communities and schools. The success of Cochiti's language renewal efforts is due to the tribal members who devoted their time, energy, intellects, and hearts to this vital endeavor, as well as to the Cochiti Tribal Council, which provided unfailing support and guidance in our efforts. It was not uncommon for the language renewal planning committee comprised of Cochiti tribal members and Tribal Councilmen to meet into the late evening. And, the first cohort of Cochiti teachers voluntarily participated in weekly immersion training two months prior to beginning the immersion program. Vena A-dae Romero, a soon-to-be Princeton graduate, who is sitting here today with us, along with other young adults in the community, tirelessly worked as youth assistants in the immersion program.

Like other Indigenous communities, we started out with no blueprint to guide us in revitalizing our language. Although we had the Hawaiian *'Aha Punana Leo* preschools, the Maori language nests in New Zealand, and the California master-apprentice models to borrow bits and pieces from, we realized that creating an approach that embraced the intellectual traditions of our community and our oral form of government would require something different. Cochiti, like the other Pueblos of New Mexico, has a unique governance structure in which "church and state" are inseparable and the Indigenous language is crucial for its internal workings. Because our physical and spiritual being and our epistemologies are intricately shaped by our Native language, it was crucial that we renew our language in ways that respected our own values, beliefs, and oral traditions. Therefore, with technical assistance from LINA, Cochiti began to create its language renewal initiative based on a socio-cultural perspective and the intellectual traditions of the Cochiti people. It began training Native speakers to become language teachers through second language acquisition approaches and techniques. The "speaker-teachers" learned about the complex process of working with language learners; what has to happen for language learning to happen, and how many things can get in the way of successful language learning. Simultaneously, we began community-wide efforts to create awareness of the vitality of the language and factors that contribute to its loss. To make a long story short, since 1996, Cochiti has faithfully continued its language renewal efforts up to this day. The goal of our efforts is to bring life back to our mother language through the creation of new generations of Cochiti speakers. The two young Keres-speaking Cochitis here today, Travis Pecos and Carla Hererra, are testaments to our community's deep commitment to the perpetuation of its mother language, its way of life, and its children.

In retrospect, in the complex process of developing, planning, and implementing a language renewal initiative in our community, we learned invaluable lessons. We learned that–

- The language renewal process must begin from the inside of the community, in the hearts and minds of its people.

- A clear understanding of your language is crucial because this understanding is the foundation for all the decision making and planning in a speech community's efforts. You should carefully consider the historical, educational, political, socio-linguistic, cultural and spiritual contexts and realities of the speech community.

- The language renewal process must fit your community and should be culturally and linguistically consistent with the hopes, aspirations, and goals of the community. For example, the Pueblos have maintained oral traditions and thus have developed ways to strengthen the functional uses of language in the community, while the Navajos have had a long history of Native language literacy and bilingual education in schools.

- The language renewal process must recognized and incorporate the intellectual traditions of the Native people, their ways of knowing, learning and teaching, including the community's socialization practices and patterns (Romero, 2003).[1]

- Your language renewal efforts must be supported by the formal leadership of the community.

The community-based language renewal initiatives in New Mexico are reaching some success, as described above in the Cochiti example. However, despite these advances, communities often do not have the financial or educational resources to effect any change. In particular, in this complex process of language renewal, communities need, for example, language teachers, materials, training in the teaching approaches and techniques, and technical assistance in language program development, implementation, and long-term sustainment. For community-based language renewal initiatives, which promote functional language use in the homes and communities, these resources become vital to their success. Therefore, while we support all of S. 575's purposes (Sec.2), we also propose the inclusion of additional centers for language renewal program planning and training for the Southwest Indigenous communities. The Linguistic Institute for Native Americans has notably been providing these training and advocacy services to primarily the New Mexican tribes and would be an ideal site/organization for this purpose. They are currently working closely with the New Mexico tribal nations and State Board of Education in the development of Native language teacher licensure policies and requirements. The American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) is a summer institute held annually at the University of Arizona. It assists educators and community members in the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools and communities. AILDI has been a key teacher-training site for 25 years and offers undergraduate and graduate courses that lead toward regular teacher degree programs and endorsements. Along with LINA, AILDI will greatly contribute to the Southwest's Indigenous language renewal efforts as university-based centers supported and funded by this legislation.

LANGUAGE AND THE SCHOOLING OF AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS

I'd like to turn now to Arizona and the education of American Indian children in this country. The discussion above highlighted one community that, from the beginning, engaged the entire community in a methodological process for the renewal of its mother language. Underway in

other Indigenous communities are school-based language renewal efforts, such as the Navajo, Yup'ik, and Hawaiian immersion education programs. Research and experience in Indigenous communities in this country and around the world (Benjamin, Pecos & Romero, 1996; Holm & Holm, 1995; Johnson & Swain, 1997; Sims, C., 2001; Stiles, 1997; Watahomigie & McCarty, 1997)[2] have proven that immersion education provides opportunities for American Indian children to develop the necessary Native language and cognitive proficiencies while simultaneously developing their English and academic proficiencies. This is why these proposed amendments are crucial. They will support practices and learning pedagogy that have been proven effective in promoting the acquisition of both the Native and English languages.

Unfortunately, despite these advances in reversing language shift, external forces continue to exert pressure to abandon the teaching and learning of Native languages in this country. Current state and federal mandates such as Arizona's Proposition 203, which prohibits native-language instruction for most limited-English-proficient children in public schools, and America's No Child Left Behind Act, which requires that funds be used only for the acquisition of English, ignore the language acquisition research findings that show that a school curriculum which incorporates and promotes the language and culture of an Indigenous community positively effects the academic learning and achievement of Indigenous children. In our current research at the University of Arizona[3], my colleagues, Drs. Teresa McCarty and Ofelia Zepeda, and I have witnessed the harmful impact that these state and federal initiatives are having on the Native language revitalization efforts in Arizona's schools and Indigenous communities. We are presently in our third year of a national study examining the impact of Native language shift and retention on American Indian students' acquisition of English and academic content. Our preliminary findings reveal that, under the pressure from current state and federal accountability mandates and high stakes testing, many Native language teachers and schools are abandoning the teaching of Native languages. For instance, one Native elementary school teacher who had once been recognized by her school and community as an "expert teacher" of the Native language reported that she no longer uses her Native language with her students because, "We don't have time to teach the Native language. We've been told to teach the standards" (McCarty, 2002, p. 198). This potent example reveals that as Indigenous communities are focusing on developing and implementing effective approaches and techniques for the renewal of their mother languages, hegemonic societal pressures are hindering their efforts. Clearly, legislative acts such as the Native Languages Act and S.575 are central to the restoration and perpetuation of this country's Indigenous languages.

[1] Romero, M. E. (2003). *Perpetuating the Cochiti way of life: A study of child socialization and language shift in a Pueblo community*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Department of Education, Language, Literacy and Culture, University of California, Berkeley.

[2] Benjamin, R., Pecos, R., & Romero, M.E. (1996) Language revitalization efforts in the Pueblo de Cochiti: Becoming literate in an oral society. In Nancy Hornberger (Ed.) *Indigenous literacies in the Americas: Language planning from the bottom up*. Berlin/New York: Mouton.

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[3] "The Impact of Native Language Shift and Retention on American Indian Student's English Language Learning and School Achievement" is a 3-year research study funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (formerly Office of Educational Research and Improvement) and sponsored by the Department of Language, Reading and Culture at the University of Arizona.

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

MAY 15, 2003

HEARING ON S. 575

PRESENTED BY

CHRISTINE P. SIMS, PUEBLO OF ACOMA, NEW MEXICO

CHAIR OF THE LINGUISTIC INSTITUTE FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

LECTURER, UNIVERSTIY OF NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

AND DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE LITERACY & SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES

PART I. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Pueblo of Acoma, the oldest continuously inhabited village in the United States, and the Linguistic Institute for Native Americans, I appreciate the opportunity to present to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs our support of S.575 as well as our recommendations to the amendments proposed to the Native Languages Act of 1990 and 1992. The proposed amendments to this bill include development and funding for Native American language survival schools, Native American language nests, and the support and development of demonstration programs to provide assistance to survival schools and language nests.

The Native American Languages Act of 1990 and 1992, passed by the U.S. Congress, recognized in its provisions the unique status that tribes hold in the United States as sovereign entities through treaties and acts of Congress (Cohen, 1982). Today, as this Committee reviews this vital and important Act, our hope is that this body will once more reaffirm its commitment to Native people and the survival of their languages and cultures through careful and thoughtful consideration of each testimony that has been prepared and presented for your review.

PART II. THE NEED FOR NATIVE LANGUAGE SURVIVAL

For indigenous people across this nation, the significance of issues related to language survival are inextricably entwined with cultural survival. For Native American communities the continuance of cultural values, traditions, native belief and governance systems are dependent on the continued transmission and use of native spoken languages. Unfortunately, for many native people this process has been seriously impacted by various historical factors that have attempted to destroy Native languages and cultures. This has included federal education policies and key events spanning the history of this nation and its treatment of America's original inhabitants. For some tribes, language loss has occurred to the degree that few or no speakers now exist. In other tribes, efforts to maintain and revitalize native languages and stem the pace of language shift are being seriously pursued through community-based and school-based language efforts.

Native American language revitalization efforts in my home state of New Mexico are being implemented by some tribes utilizing community-based approaches to address the need for creating younger generations of Native language speakers. In these cases tribal members in their various capacities as fluent speaking elders, Native traditional leaders and parents have taken up the responsibility of Native language teaching and language renewal (Benjamin, Romero, & Pecos,1997; Blum-Martinez,2000; Blum-Martinez, & Pecos,2001). Some of these efforts have been supported in part by language grants from the Administration for Native Americans.

Among native language communities of the southwest, the phenomenon of language shift is increasingly evident although it varies from community to community in a state like New Mexico that includes 21

different tribes and six major languages. The need for language survival is becoming an issue of increasing concern, even among language communities where the native tongue is still being spoken as a child language. Among the five major languages of the Pueblo Indian tribes, the Tiwa, Tewa, Towa, Keres, and Zuni, languages have always functioned as the medium of spiritual and cultural life among the nineteen Pueblo Indian tribes that speak these languages. The Athabaskan languages spoken by the Apache and Navajo people are equally vital to the continuation of their cultural heritage. Yet, all are faced with the reality that language survival is threatened by tremendous socioeconomic, educational, and sociocultural pressures in today's society. While initial steps to strengthen and revitalize native language use have been pursued by various New Mexico tribes, the threat of language loss remains constant and warrants continued vigilance.

The uniqueness of Pueblo languages in our state reflects a history of some of the oldest and longest sustained cultures in this nation. Moreover, these languages have existed and still function primarily within a sociocultural and socioreligious community context (Blum-Martinez, 2000; Sims, 2001; Suina, 1990). As such, the oral tradition serves as the critical vehicle by which a community such as mine, Acoma Pueblo, maintains its internal sociocultural organization, its oral histories, cultural knowledge, and spiritual life ways. As well, the theocratic nature of our traditional governance system is dependent on speakers who can use the language in all its domains to encourage, to advise, to admonish, to pray, to guide, and to educate. To lose our language means that everything that is held together as a society will begin to unravel if the native language is lost among younger generations.

The implications of language loss are especially significant given this context where oral language use is still the basis of intergenerational cultural transmission and the foundation of tribal governance. Moreover, the erosion of native languages threatens to undermine the very core of spiritual belief systems that have been the foundation and stability of Pueblo societies through countless generations. The survival of these languages into the 21st century as oral based languages is a testimony to the resilience and wisdom with which tribal elders and tribal leaders have steadfastly refused to give up these languages, despite overwhelming pressures in the last century to abandon them. Their legacy and the future of young generations who will one day take their place and mine as leaders in our tribes will depend upon the steps we take today. Legislative acts such as the Native Languages Act are a critical means by which tribes can be supported in their language maintenance and restoration efforts, while also allowing for intervention measures that are appropriate to the existing needs and realities of different Native language communities.

PART III. THE POTENTIAL FOR STEMMING NATIVE LANGUAGE LOSS

Recent efforts to stem the tide against language loss, as noted earlier, have already begun in communities such as the Pueblo of Cochiti, Acoma, Taos, Zuni, Santa Clara, and Santa Ana. In the small pueblo of Cochiti, for instance, a tribe consisting of approximately 1000 members, the youngest generations of tribal members are beginning to relearn their native language which up until a few years ago remained viable only in age groups thirty years and older. Based on a 1995 survey of language vitality in the community, Cochiti Pueblo embarked on a series of community-based efforts that are focused exclusively on producing speakers of the language. Oral instruction in the native Keres language is provided for preschool toddlers, as well as elementary and secondary level students. The establishment of a Keres 'language nest" in this village, the first of its kind in New Mexico, provides day care services for toddlers who are spoken to throughout their daily stay by caretakers who are fluent in the language. As well, summer immersion camps and year round daily instruction is provided by tribal members, parents, and traditional leaders.

Cochiti Pueblo's long term efforts have already begun to yield significant outcomes in young children who are speaking the Keres language once more. Two of these children are here today at these Senate hearings, as representatives of their Pueblo of Cochiti. Carla Herrera and Travis Pecos represent the hope of their community as young Cochiti people who will one day be leaders in their village, fluent in the native tongue, and capable of passing the language on to yet another future generation. They represent the future of young Native Americans who while maintaining a healthy connection to their communities and families are just as capable as any youngster in America in maintaining parity in academics. These two students have recently been accepted for participation in this year's Congressional Youth Leadership Program that will bring them back to Washington during summer 2003.

PART IV. THE NEED FOR A TRAINING AND DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM IN THE SOUTHWEST

The example of Cochiti Pueblo's efforts has not been lost on other Native tribes in New Mexico as well as tribes from other surrounding states. Various tribes have visited Cochiti Pueblo to observe their immersion teaching and in one case native language teachers from the pueblo mentored interns from another Keres speaking community who were interested in teaching language immersion classes in their community. Such experiences have created in New Mexico a network of shared training resources and expertise that have reached beyond the state. Acoma Pueblo and Taos Pueblo who also have immersion programs in place have also been visited by native speakers from the Apache tribes, the Ute Mountain Ute tribe in Colorado; as well as the San Juan Paiutes, the Tohono O'odham, the Hopis, and the Colorado River Tribes of Arizona.

This informal network of language communities in the southwest interested and eager to begin their own language initiatives points to a larger need for training and preparing a cadre of internal tribal expertise. As well, the unique set of considerations for language communities such as the Pueblo people who must honor the oral nature and traditions of their histories suggest that a demonstration program situated in the Southwest may in fact be better able to serve their needs. Many tribes in the greater southwest find that close proximity to other language programs in their immediate area makes it possible to utilize tribal and limited program resources more efficiently. As well, the informal support that tribes are able to provide each other as they develop new initiatives provides an immediate resource of first hand information sharing that is invaluable to native speakers. To a large extent training organizations such as the Linguistic Institute for Native Americans (LINA) has been able to help in these areas by conducting periodic Native language forums and training workshops. A recent 2002 forum conducted by LINA was attended by 21 different tribes from New Mexico and out of state.

With limited resources, LINA, a non-profit New Mexico based organization, currently provides technical assistance and training to tribes in a number of areas including: language planning, development of language immersion programs, training of Native speakers to teach language, as well as providing advocacy on Native language issues at the local and state level. The organization since its inception in the late 1970s has been governed by a Board of Directors who are all Native Americans from New Mexico.

The Linguistic Institute has a long history of working with Native American tribes in New Mexico since the late 1970s, often collaborating with university departments such as the linguistics and education departments of the University of New Mexico to provide special training institutes for native language speakers. These summer institutes were at one time offered in New Mexico as intensive six week programs of linguistic studies open to all Native language speakers from across the nation. In the 20+ years of program institutes over 40 different Native languages have been represented from across the United States as well as Canada. Since 1995, LINA has shifted its training focus primarily towards community based language initiatives. As such current on-site services provide training and technical assistance to tribes in language revitalization issues. The staff and training expertise of LINA is primarily drawn from University of New Mexico faculty with expertise in Native language planning, language teacher training, language revitalization issues as well as experience in working with Native language communities.

While interventions such as the establishment of language schools are noteworthy in their concept as a measure for providing total academic schooling in the native language, the means by which such measures are implemented requires tremendous financial and administrative resources and the infrastructure that many Pueblo communities do not presently have. More importantly, the parameters within which many Pueblo communities function as tribes whose social structures are deeply rooted in traditional and oral forms of governance, suggest a consideration of a training and demonstration program that should be added into the proposed amendments to the Native Languages Act.

The continuing need for development and training given our unique circumstances in the southwest make for a consideration that we hope this committee will entertain. Our recommendation is that a fourth center of training be established that will serve Native people of the southwest with a particular focus on working with tribal communities in the following areas:

- Development of training programs for fluent speakers that will prepare them for language teaching in the community.
- Development of administrative leadership that assists tribes and communities to undertake and sustain language efforts.
- Development of language teaching internships and mentorships that will help build the internal capacity of tribes to strengthen and sustain long-term community-based language efforts.
- Development of instructional language materials that will serve the needs of oral based language traditions.
- Language policy research that examines the long term effect of federal and state economic, social, and education policies on the survival of indigenous forms of governance and the role that language plays in sustaining such systems.
- Facilitating an understanding between tribes and governmental agencies about language survival issues that allows for appropriate collaborative measures of intervention and support.

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The Linguistic Institute for Native Americans

The Linguistic Institute for Native Americans is a New Mexico-based non-profit training organization that provides technical assistance and training resources to Native bilingual school programs and Native language communities engaged in language revitalization efforts. LINA was originally organized as a training institute to address the need for preparing American Indian teachers working in Native American bilingual education programs. Over the course of twenty years, summer institutes were organized in New Mexico (known as the Summer Institute of Linguistics for Native Americans) and held at the University of New Mexico. Regional Native language conferences and workshops conducted for Native speakers have also been sponsored in New Mexico by LINA. Native speakers representing over 40 different languages from across the United States and Canada have been served through many of the summer institutes held between 1974 and 1991.

Formally organized in 1981 as a non-profit organization in New Mexico, LINA provides assistance in the following areas: development of language use surveys, language planning for tribes, language teacher training, and development of language teaching curricula. On-site workshops, training, and technical assistance, and community forums on language issues are examples of some of the types of services that LINA provides. Services have been provided through short term grants provided by the Chamiza, Lannan, and McCune Foundations, as well as the New Mexico Office of Indian Affairs. LINA works closely with tribal communities and tribal leaders to ensure that services are tailored to the specific needs of their respective languages and to provide advocacy at the state level for Native American language issues.

The Linguistic Institute for Native Americans is governed by a Native Board of Directors who represent a broad spectrum of expertise in the fields of Native bilingual education, educational administration, and language revitalization research. Christine Sims is one of the founding members of the organization and serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors.

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Dr. William H. Wilson
Chair of the Academic Division
Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College
Board Member - Aha Punana Leo

Hearing before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
on S. 575, a bill to amend the Native American Languages Act
to Provide Support of Native American Language Survival Schools
May 15, 2003

Aloha nui kakou a pau (Heartfelt greetings to all) Chairman Campbell 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 Keelikolani College. Among my duties as chair is the outreach to Native American groups following our Hawaiian language nest and survival 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 the Committee for its determination that the Aha Punana Leo and Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College Consortium effort in language revitalization was having an important national impact and that there was a need for a federally funded program to develop this type of education on a national level. I fully support working with the Piegan Institute and Alaska Native Language Centers to provide special assistance to the many communities throughout the United States who seek to develop language nests and survival schools as a means to revitalize their languages.

Language Nests and Language Survival Schools represent a new level of human rights for Native Americans. Essentially what these schools offer Native Americans is a choice - a choice that already exists for non-indigenous immigrant groups. That choice is for schooling for their children through their own traditional language. Immigrants have available to them education for their children through their traditional languages back in their countries of origin to which they can send their children for extended stays. For Native Americans, the United States is the country of origin. Native American Language Nests and Native American Language Survival Schools need to be developed here in our country.

Direction in developing these language nests and language survival schools is a major need. Most Native American languages have not had a history of being used extensively as media of education in the types of schools available to other peoples throughout the world. Furthermore the educational establishment at both the federal and state level, has a long history of repressing Native American languages. Such repression has been so pervasive and institutionalized that it

often remains unnoticed by those in standard educational institutions who sincerely want to assist Native American communities. Thus barriers are erected to those who wish to establish language nests and language survival schools without those who erecting the barriers realizing the negative effects of their actions.

There are a number of false but firmly planted beliefs of the educational establishment in the United States that work against implementing Native American language nests and Native American language survival schools.

For example, the educational establishment believes that the more English is used in school the more skilled indigenous students will be in using English. World wide, the actual evidence from indigenous language survival schools is that even when the study of English is reduced to a one hour per day English language Arts class from grade 5 through 12, indigenous students reach the same level of fluency and literacy in English (or the countryÆs dominant language) as indigenous children enrolled in schools taught entirely through English. (The reason for language survival student success in English relate to exposure to use of English through the mass media and other uses external to the classroom. In addition the cognitive and psychological advantages of children taught through their traditional indigenous language has positive effects on academic achievement including in their study of English. Indigenous children educated in a school where their language is not the language of instruction do not receive these cognitive and psychological advantages)

The educational establishment not infrequently assumes that indigenous languages are somehow incapable of being used to discuss international academic content. They seldom consider that academic content is being taught throughout the world in a variety of languages, some of which are quite small and were as recently as the 19th and 20th centuries considered inferior for the teaching of academic subjects. Note for example Japanese, Hebrew, Korean, and Finnish - none of which were used in modern Western style education two hundred years ago. Further note that the students educated in these small languages attend United States colleges after high school graduation where they not infrequently outperform students from the general American population. Similar high academic results are occurring with graduates of language survival schools world wide. We have evidence for it among our own Hawaiian language survival school students.

The educational establishment tends to take Native American languages for granted as part of Native American home and community life and assume that minimal attention in the school will keep them alive. This is totally false. The school has taken a major portion of the most formative years of Native American children away from the Native American community. The school must therefore be a major part of the Native American language enculturation process for Native American languages to survive. And in todayÆs globalized society, every Native American language is severely endangered needing special and intense attention.

In even the most remote Native American communities and homes there is regular exposure to English mass media and a back and forth flow of relatives who live outside the traditional home area in total English speaking areas. Frequently this interaction brings a habit of only using English right into the heartland of an indigenous people. Add to this compulsory education which takes up a huge part of the formative years of children and you have a recipe for rapid and complete replacement of Native American languages and cultures with English. Native American language nests and survival schools can reverse the current trend to extinction and have already done so with positive academic results. And these results include a balanced and highly skilled knowledge of both the traditional Native American language and English.

Within the educational establishment, it is usually considered highly supportive of indigenous languages to provide education through a mixture of the indigenous language and English until grade 3 (8 years of age.) In actual fact, this transition at grade 3 model is not an indigenous language survival model, but a bilingual immigrant assimilation model simply applied without consideration to major differences between immigrant and indigenous minorities. When bilingual immigrant models are applied to Native American languages, the result is continued weakening of the Native American language with no special benefit to English fluency. The ôkeep the Native American language in lower elementary schoolö model cannot produce a student with balanced and highly developed fluency in both English and the Native American language upon graduation from high school. The Native American language will be weak and the student will likely psychologically associate the Native American identity with lower status and lower academics.

Linguists have done studies on the language retention of children who have have been removed from use of their traditional language. The children studied - often adoptees from Korea or Russia - have been removed from an environment where they speak only their own language at home and with peers and where they have gone to day care or elementary school solely in their traditional language. The result is that such children usually forget their original language completely if they have no further exposure in the actual use of their original language. Even with children as old as eight - there can be total loss of the original language. In children older than 8, some knowledge of the language remains but it tends to atrophy and not develop further to the full adult uses that mark a true fluent speaker rather than a semi-speaker.

Native Americans who have gone to boarding schools from a very early age and who then had no opportunity to use their languages again, can vouch for the affect of putting a child in an educational environment where his or her traditional language is fully eliminated. It is only when the language is strongly reinforced in the community by elders and parents who know no English that Native American languages have survived the boarding school experience. But the days when a community has a large number of elders and parents who speak no English are close to ending, if not already long ended, for most Native American communities. For languages to survive in todayÆs world where Native American communities are no longer isolated, Native American communities need to be more proactive in the use of their language to produce a balanced high school graduate totally fluent in both their traditional language and English. And

this means using the language as a medium of education in language survival schools - at least for a portion of the communityÆs youth.

The experience of indigenous language survival schools worldwide is that the amount of time and number of years spent on the indigenous language is key to not only developing skills in actual use of the language, but in also developing a positive attitude that will lead to actual use of the language in contemporary life. Half the day taught through the language to middle school is seen as a basic minimum to reach an ability in the indigenous language where actual use can occur. However, with only half a day, the indigenous language fluency will be very much less than English fluency.

Once they see they have the success of the language survival school model, communities serious about language revitalization, often want to move half day programs on to full day programs and go on to high school. Remember again, that the students graduating from such full day language survival schools speak, read, and write English as well as their peers in schools that are taught entirely in English. The strength of the full day model is that it produces higher indigenous language use. And even in these preschool to grade 12 total indigenous language medium schools, fluency tends to initially be higher in English than in the indigenous language. It is not until the second generation - when the products of language survival schools have their own children and a portion of them raise their children speaking the traditional language that you begin to reach a situation of true balance between English and the traditional language. Keeping that balance requires the community to develop experts in language maintenance and revitalization for the contemporary world. And with that knowledge students can be taught additional languages as well without negatively impacting on Native American or English fluency. The small countries of Europe such as Denmark and the Netherlands have educational experts who are very skilled in developing such balance and assuring that all students graduate from their schools with high fluency in three and sometimes even more languages. These are the models that Ka Haka Ula O Keelikolani College keeps abreast of in developing support for our language nest and language survival school training.

There are many variations on the general survival school model that take into account unique cultural features of different indigenous languages, their relationships with other languages as written and unwritten media of education, and their stages of revitalization. There are also many preliminary steps toward developing language nests and language survival schools. Communities may not be ready for the language nest and language survival school models and need to focus their efforts on enrichment and partial learning programs funded through other sources. Our Hawaiian programs also went through these stages of development before we opened our first language nest.

Those groups seeking to establish language nests and language revitalization schools need assistance in addressing the model. They also need assistance in dealing with the lingering affects of past repression on their own thinking and the thinking of others in their communities. Every successful language nest and language survival program that I have ever heard of in the world has

had to face major challenges from both within their community and outside it. These challenges tend to be based on misconceptions that the languages are inferior to English, that the language survival schools deprive the children of English, that the children do not learn academic content in language survival schools, and that the language survival schools are ruining the language by using it in a new context. Of course, such attacks are not based on any real research in language survival schools, but they are especially damaging when a school is just starting and cannot defend itself with its own data. These lingering negative attitudes have recently been inflamed by the No Child Left Behind Act which has not been properly accommodated to U.S. policy relative to Native American languages.

We have with us today, Mr. Hololapaenaenaokona Hoopai. Mr. Hoopai is an example of a language survival school student. He graduates this June from Ke Kula O Nawahiokalaniopuu. Nawahiokalaniopuu is a language nest through grade 12 laboratory school affiliated with the English medium Hilo High School. The laboratory school, however, is conducted in Hawaiian with English introduced in grade 5.

Mr. Hoopai is the top ranked student of a class of over two hundred at Hilo High School and has been chosen valedictorian. He has also been accepted to Stanford University with a scholarship from the University. Mr. Hoopai is a fine example of the students who have graduated from Hawaiian language survival schools. Of a total of some 100 students who in the past five years have completed Hawaiian language survival school education through grade 12, about 80% were accepted to college with Mr. Hoopai being the second accepted to Stanford. There have been no drop outs in the program, but some students have transferred to other schools, often private schools. My understanding is that these students have also done well when they transfer to these English medium schools.

At Ke Kula O Nawahiokalaniopuu, Mr. Hoopai has had a college preparatory program provided him through Hawaiian by Hawaiian speaking teachers, every single one of whom grew up speaking primarily English. The teachers had to learn Hawaiian from the resources left behind by elders. They have had to revive Hawaiian chanting and oratory and seek out traditional Hawaiian literature.

The focus on using Hawaiian at the Hawaiian language survival school does not mean that the students in the school are denied education in English. They learn classical Hawaiian epic literature and also study classical English literature including Shakespeare and Chaucer. They study math and science - a strength of Mr. Hoopai - but also study the application of math and science to the Hawaiian subsistence culture of Hawaiian elders centered around taro cultivation, pig husbandry and fishing. These subsistence activities are included at the school with a series of gardens and a variety of animals. While Mr. HoopaiÆs education includes newly coined words for science it also includes ancient terminology for a lifestyle that is today lived only by a few

Hawaiians, but which is at the core of Native Hawaiian values and literature. A parallel in Anglo-American culture is the role that learning about the historical periods of that culture such as the lives of the pioneers who lived in log cabins and grew their own food and the ranches of the West with their cattle centered culture.

While providing for an education about different historical periods of Hawaiian culture, different periods of English language and culture, and the international skills of mathematics and science, the school seeks as its primary mission the instillation of a Hawaiian mauli or life force that will guide these students throughout their lives. How to use the language in daily life is but part of this mauli - an overall Native Hawaiian world view from which to live ones life.

Developing such a system of education is quite a challenge - it takes time and long term commitment. But it is possible and groups with less language and culture resources than many Native American peoples have seen success in pursuing language nests and language survival schools. S 575 is a vehicle for the United States government to provide support for those who have made a commitment to actualize the human rights ideals of the Native American Languages Act. I very much appreciate the introduction of this bill and urge its passage.

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May 10, 2003

Senator Campbell, Chairman and Senator Inouye, Vice-Chairman,
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fax -- (202) 224-5429

Dear Senators:

The indigenous languages of the United States represent an important part of our national heritage. They are a national treasure not only because of the role some of them played through the communiqués of code-talkers during World War II, but because they reveal and carry unique and irreplaceable bodies cultural knowledge. Every language contains within its semantic codes and structure a complex knowledge system --an ordered way of coming to approach and understand the world in a meaningful way. Every time an indigenous language is lost -- a vital body of knowledge goes with it.

Today, indigenous communities throughout the United States are working to preserve and revitalize their languages to insure they are present for future generations to know and use. Unfortunately, in many areas of the United States, including the state of Minnesota, the number of fluent speakers of native languages is rapidly declining. Recognizing the fact that many native languages are now threatened with the passing of each generation, tribes and affiliated educational institutions are working on a wide range of fronts to preserve native languages as a vital treasure for indigenous communities. Work is being carried out to document indigenous languages. Efforts are being made to teach them in preschool immersion settings and in K-12 as well as higher educational institutions. Finally, there are strategies to develop programs that train teachers in native language pedagogy. Much of the recent commitment to language revitalization takes place among grassroots organizations. Much of their support has been piecemeal, funded by grants from private foundations (such as Grotto) and carried out by the efforts of thousands of devoted people who often receive little or no compensation for their work in this area. The dedication of private foundations, individuals, tribal/urban Indian communities, and educational institutions such as the Department of

American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota, the Peigan Institute of Browning, Montana, Lac Court d'Oreille Tribal College in Wisconsin, and Sinte Gleska University in South Dakota, to name only a few, can only go so far in the face of limited resources. Funds need to be made available to tribes and educational institutions to support ongoing and future projects that contribute to the preservation of this country's indigenous languages as living speech communities.

At the University of Minnesota, the Department of American Indian Studies has been teaching the Dakota and Ojibwe languages for over thirty years. Our commitment to the preservation of these languages is not only revealed in the classroom but at the community language tables we hold and the list serves and conferences we host to enhance a broadly based sharing of knowledge around language issues. Through our experience in these areas, we have learned that language teaching is not only praiseworthy in its own right but it has important and positive consequences in other areas. The student communities created around language instruction play a critical role at this institution in keeping American Indian students involved and motivated in other areas of their college experience, and the relations developed between our department and local native communities around language issues represent a positive form of civic engagement and collaboration between universities and their local community constituencies.

Having recently traveled to New Zealand to meet with Maori educators, the members of our department were much impressed by the successes of Maori people in language preservation. One of the most important lessons we learned is that families and communities must have choices in how they choose to learn and teach their own language. We learned that each approach has its strengths and weaknesses and its supporters and detractors. But we also learned that, when combined, their impact has had a substantial impact on keeping this Maori treasure alive and a vital part of the way Maori people are achieving a strong future for themselves and their children.

As citizens of the United States, we should look with pride to the diverse bodies of knowledge contained within the languages of this country's native peoples, and as a consequence, we should make every effort to support and advance the preservation and revitalization of indigenous languages throughout our nation. I , therefore, strongly urge the passage of S.575 as an amendment to the Native American Language Act.

Respectfully Yours,

Patricia Albers

Patricia C. Albers
Professor and Chair

cc: Minnesota Senators Mark Dayton, Norm Coleman

BLACKFEET NATION

P.O. BOX 850 BROWNING, MONTANA 59417
(406) 338-7521 FAX (406) 338-7530

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

JAY ST. GODDARD – CHAIRMAN
JIMMY ST. GODDARD – VICE CHAIRMAN
GORDON MONROE – SECRETARY
CLIFFORD TAILFEATHERS – ACTING SECRETARY
JOE A. GERVAIS – TREASURER

BLACKFEET TRIBAL BUSINESS COUNCIL

JAY ST. GODDARD
JIMMY ST. GODDARD
GORDON MONROE
CLIFFORD TAILFEATHERS
FRED GUARDIPEE
EARL OLD PERSON
WILLIAM "ALLEN" TALKS ABOUT
ERVIN C. CARLSON
HUGH MONROE

R E S O L U T I O N

NUMBER: 146-2003

WHEREAS, The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council is the duly constituted governing body within the exterior boundaries of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation; and

WHEREAS, The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council has been organized to represent, develop, protect, and advance the views, interests, education, and resources of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation; and

WHEREAS, The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council is empowered by Article VI, Section 1(m) of the Constitution for the Blackfeet Tribe, to encourage and foster Indian arts, crafts, culture, and traditions; and

WHEREAS, On February 15, 1994, the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, per Resolution #236-94, adopted the Pikuni Code of Education which is designed to perpetuate Blackfeet cultural and spiritual values and to encourage and facilitate the teaching and learning of the Pikuni language within the family and within school systems; and

WHEREAS, The Piegan Institute, a tribally sanctioned educational authority, a not-for-profit organization researching and promoting the Blackfeet language, has developed the Nizipuhwahsin Center, a Blackfeet language immersion program for children and families; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill S.575 the Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003 will benefit and support the Blackfeet Tribe in the effort to preserve and promote our tribal language, and the support and endorsement of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council will validate Piegan Institute as a national demonstration program which can provide an important contribution to the survival of the Native American language; now

Page 2
Resolution # 146-2003

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council supports and endorses S. 575 the Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003 and Piegan Institute as a national demonstration program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Tribal Chairman and Tribal Secretary are hereby authorized to sign this resolution.

ATTEST:

THE BLACKFEET TRIBE OF THE BLACKFEET INDIAN RESERVATION

GORDON MONROE, SECRETARY
BLACKFEET TRIBAL BUSINESS COUNCIL

JAY ST. GODDARD, CHAIRMAN
BLACKFEET TRIBAL BUSINESS COUNCIL

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council during a duly called, noticed, and convened Regular Session held the 1st day of May, 2003, with Six (6) members present to constitute a quorum, and by a unanimous vote to approve said Resolution.

GORDON MONROE, SECRETARY
BLACKFEET TRIBAL BUSINESS COUNCIL

From Ocean Icons To Prime Suspects

Orcas Devastate Seal, Otter Populations

By Blaine Harden
Washington Post Staff Writer

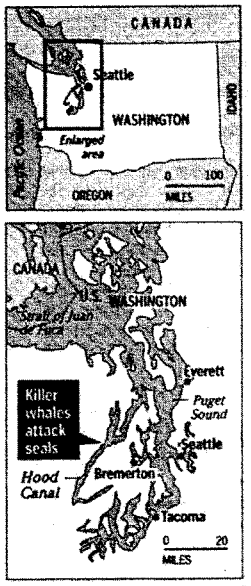
SEATTLE—Much to the horror of local harbor seals, killer whales from out of town popped into Puget Sound recently for an eight-week feast.

Eleven killer whales, each eating one or two 180-pound seals a day, polished off about half the harbor seals in Hood Canal, a deep-water finger of Puget Sound that runs along the eastern edge of the Olympic Peninsula.

By early March, the killer whales had had their fill—about 700 harbor seals. The transient predators swam back out to the Pacific, leaving behind a deeply traumatized community of harbor seals.

"They were up on the bank quivering," said Steve Jeffries, a marine mammal biologist who works for the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife

Puget Sound harbor seals are not quivering alone. Killer whales, a beloved icon of the environmentalist movement, may be on a species-threatening rampage.



BY LARRY FOGEL—THE WASHINGTON POST

In the past 15 years, killer whales—also called orcas—have wiped out entire populations of sea otters on some of the Aleutian Islands in Alaska. They are also prime suspects in the otherwise unexplained disappearance in the past 30 years of 80 percent of Alaska's Steller sea lions.

According to a new theory of killer whale predation, the highly intelligent, pack-hunting creatures have been forced by man to change their dining habits and are voraciously killing a cascade of mammalian prey from the North Pacific to Antarctica. Over the past 50 years, according to the theory, killer whales have caused sequential worldwide declines in the population of various seals, sea lions, minke whales and sea otters.

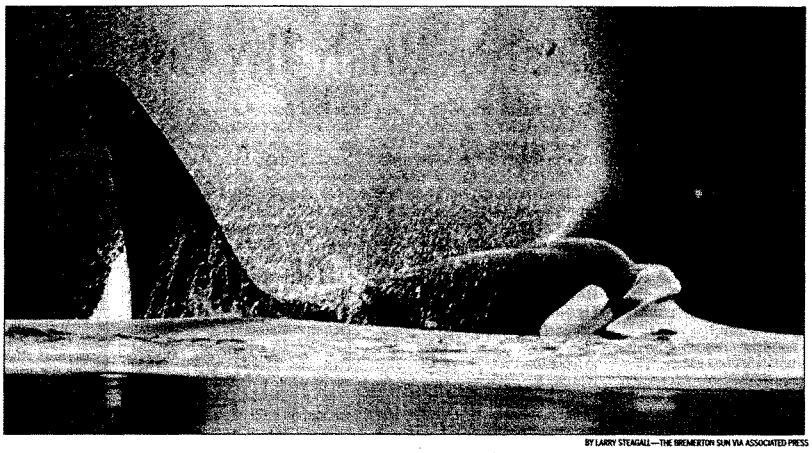
The predation theory, which is the focus of a meeting this weekend of more than 50 marine scientists in Santa Cruz, Calif., blames the destructively changing tastes of killer whales on industrial whaling.

By its peak in the early 1950s, before international bans, highly mechanized whaling had reduced most species of big whales to a fraction of their historical numbers. In the North Pacific and southern Bering Sea prior to whaling, the gross estimate of whale biomass was about 30 million tons. By the time whaling ended, 3 million tons of living whale remained.

"When that happened, some killer whales, which had been preying on big whales, had to do other things to make a living," said James A. Estes, a research scientist in Santa Cruz for the U.S. Geological Survey and an originator of the theory that whaling forced some killer whales into novel eating habits.

"When the number of prey was insufficient to satisfy them—they do eat a lot—they moved on to something else and they did it in a sequential way," said Estes, who concedes that the predation hypothesis is speculative. "My gut feeling is that it is right, but it could very well be wrong."

The precipitous decline of sea otters in some parts of Alaska is the best-documented case of *nouvelle cuisine* for killer whales. It is also the most nutritionally curious. A sea otter is not particularly satisfying for a killer whale, which is the largest known predator of warm-blooded animals. Orcas are about 26 feet long, weigh 10 tons and eat about 4 percent of their body weight a day. A sea otter weighs about 40 pounds, which includes



BY LARRY STEAGALL—THE BREMERTON SUN VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

A small group of orcas ate 700 harbor seals in eight weeks in Hood Canal in Washington state before swimming back to the Pacific.

the thickest fur of any animal.

Sea otters are "dental floss" for killer whales, said Robert T. Paine, professor emeritus at the University of Washington's biology department. An orca needs to eat seven sea otters daily to fill up.

In the North Pacific, a half-century of steep sequential decline in the population of sea lions, harbor seals and sea otters "jives well" with the theory of shifting overkill on the part of killer whales, according to Alan M. Springer, a research professor at the University of Alaska's Institute of Marine Science in Fairbanks.

Researchers in Alaska have not found a decline in food or habitat—or an increase in illegal hunting—that explains the sudden disappearance in some areas of seals, sea lions and sea otters. There has also been a notable absence of carcasses along the Alaskan coast. Killer whales often eat smaller prey in a single gulp.

It does not take very many killer whales to ravage a large healthy population of small marine mammals, according to Springer, a marine ecologist who is presenting a paper supporting the predation theory in Santa Cruz.

"You don't have to gather all the killer whales in the North Pacific to get this to happen," he said. "A surprisingly small number—we are talking tens of killer whales—could have done this to the sea otters."

The killer whale world, with an estimated population of 30,000 to 80,000, is roughly divided between fish and mammal eaters. Those that eat mostly fish tend to live in resident pods, or family groups, that stay in one area. Those that eat mostly mammals tend to travel in transient pods that roam the oceans. Killer whales, the largest member of the family of oceanic dolphins, live from 50 to 80 years, and it is not uncommon for members of a pod to have hunted together for more than half a century.

In the Southern Hemisphere, where killer whales are most numerous, there has also been a sharp sequential decline in two species of marine mammals since whaling was banned in the 1950s, according to Trevor A. Branch, a graduate student at the University of Washington's School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences.

Starting in the 1950s, he said, the number of southern elephant seals plummeted between 45 and 80 percent before stabilizing at a low level in the 1980s. At that point, the number of Antarctic minke whales (which are roughly the same size as killer whales) began to swoon, declining by about 57 percent through the 1990s.

"There is circumstantial evidence that killer whales went after elephant seals and then minke whales," said Branch, who is also presenting a paper at the conference in California.

Circumstantial evidence notwithstanding, there are many marine mammal researchers who don't buy the theory that killer whales are laying sequential waste to marine mammals worldwide.

"They are generalizing across the entire world with so little real evidence," said Craig Matkin, a marine mammal biologist from Homer, Alaska, who has studied killer whales for 20 years.

To start with, Matkin and other biologists say, there is no compelling historic evidence that large number of killer whales were ever dependent on the large whales wiped out by industrial whaling.

Matkin said he also worries that blaming killer whales for recent sharp declines in numbers of some marine mammals will give politicians and bureaucrats an excuse not to protect coastal water quality and habitat.

"It is the Greenpeace nightmare," writes Branch, the researcher at the University of Washington. "Antarctic minke whales are the banner-waving symbol of the anti-whaling movement, but so is 'Free Willy' [a movie-version killer whale is freed from an evil marine park owner]. What do you do when one is decimating the other?"

For the scientists meeting this weekend in Santa Cruz, that question is unanswerable. No one is proposing that killer whales be killed for inappropriate eating. In any case, federal law protects all marine mammals.

"The only possible test is the future," said Estes, the scientist who has popularized the predation theory. "If we manage to save the great whales and they recover, we might see transient killer whales go away from smaller marine mammals."

In the case of the slaughtered harbor seals of Hood Canal, the killer whales may well have done an ecological good deed.

By historic standards, there are too many harbor seals inside Puget Sound, and they are feasting on endangered summer chum salmon. Since the Marine Mammal Act protects the seals, there was little that could be done to protect the salmon—until the transient killer whales showed up for an extended meal.

Proposal to Amend

S. 575

Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003

To provide for a demonstration program

at

Sealaska Heritage Institute

for the

Revitalization of Critically Endangered Languages

Prepared by
Sealaska Heritage Institute
May 2003

Proposed Amendments to

S. 575

Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003

Change Sec. 110 (a) to read:

(a) ESTABLISHMENT - The Secretary shall make grants, or enter into contracts, to establish 4 demonstration programs that will provide assistance to Native American language survival schools and Native American language nests.

Under Sec.110 (b), add the following:

(4) the Sealaska Heritage Institute, in consortium with other entities as the Institute determines to be appropriate, for the conduct of a demonstration program for critically endangered languages, providing training, outreach, conferences, and visitation programs relevant to--

(A) Native language teacher training and curriculum development
(B) master/apprentice language teams
(C) reawakening dormant speakers
(D) the use of Internet technologies in language revitalization
(E) language revival techniques for languages with no fluent speakers

Haa yóo x̲'atángi, haa at.óow áyá. Kée keix̲ tootee!

Our language is our at.óow. Let's raise it up!

-- Bessie Cooley, Tlingit Elder

At present, over 85% of all Native languages in the United States are no longer being learned by children. Of these, nearly half are now considered **critically endangered** languages; that is, they are spoken by only a small number of the most elderly members of the community, and are in immediate danger of extinction.

Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI), a Native-run non-profit corporation based in Juneau, Alaska, proposes to operate a *Demonstration Program for the Revitalization of Critically Endangered Languages*, as part of S. 575, the proposed amendment to the Native American Languages Act.

This document provides basic information on SHI, its work in the area of language revitalization, and details of the proposed demonstration program.

1. Background on Sealaska Heritage Institute

Sealaska Heritage Institute is a regional Native nonprofit organization founded for the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian people of Southeast Alaska. SHI was established in 1981 by Sealaska Corp., a for-profit company formed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). SHI, formerly Sealaska Heritage Foundation, administers Sealaska Corp.'s cultural and educational programs.

During its first decade of operation, SHI focused on the documentation of oral traditions, a project led by Tlingit scholar Dr. Nora Marks Dauenhauer and her husband, Dr. Richard Dauenhauer. Over nearly a 20-year period, these efforts led to several major publications by the Institute of the Dauenhauers' work, including: *"Because We Cherish You..." Sealaska Elders Speak to the Future*, in 1981; *Haa Shuká, Our Ancestors*, Volume I of our Tlingit Oral Narratives (1987); *Haa Tuwunáagu Yís: For Healing our Spirit*, Vol. 2, Tlingit Oral Narratives. (1990); the Third Edition of *Beginning Tlingit* in 1991; *Haa Kusteeyí, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories* (1994); and *Aan Aduspelled X'ú x', Tlingit Spelling Book* in 1999. During this period, the Institute also created Naa Kahídi Theater, which won national acclaim for its dramatic presentation of Native legends.

While continuing to honor the Institute's mission statement, "To perpetuate the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures," the Trustees in 1997 adopted language preservation and enhancement as the foremost priority of the Institute. Few funds were available initially for this objective, but the Institute launched an aggressive fund-raising campaign, and today, SHI sponsors and supports numerous language and culture programs across Southeast Alaska.

2. Current Sealaska Heritage Institute Programs

Under the leadership of Dr. Rosita Worl, a Tlingit and Harvard-trained Anthropologist, SHI developed its flagship language program, the Sealaska Kusteeyí Workshops, held annually in both Juneau and Ketchikan. These two-week workshops, available for university credit, provide intensive immersion instruction in all three Native languages of Southeast Alaska, as well as training in language teaching methods and curriculum development.

Over the past five years, SHI has offered the following courses during its Kusteeyí Workshops:

- Beginning Tlingit
- Intermediate Tlingit
- Introduction to Tlingit Linguistics
- Tlingit Literature and Grammar
- Tlingit Orthography
- Tlingit Reading and Spelling for Fluent Speakers
- Tlingit Public Speaking for Dormant Speakers
- Beginning Haida
- Intermediate Haida
- Beginning Tsimshian
- Intermediate Tsimshian
- Introduction to Teaching Methods
- Heritage Language Teaching Methods
- Eaching Methods for Alaska Native Languages
- Designing Communicative Lessons for Alaska Native Languages
- Teaching through a Language Immersion Curriculum
- Operating a Language Immersion Retreat
- Master/Apprentice Program Training
- Northwest Coast Twined Weaving
- Introduction to Chilkat Weaving
- Spruce Root Weaving

Building on the success of these workshops, SHI has undertaken a variety of other projects, including:

- partnering with the Juneau School District to create the first bilingual and bicultural classroom in Southeast Alaska at the Harborview Elementary School, now encompassing Kindergarten through fifth grade,

- operating annual, two-week Tlingit language immersion retreats near Sitka and in Glacier Bay, designed to help intermediate-level speakers achieve communicative fluency in the language,

- training teachers and developing a curriculum for a Tlingit language half-day immersion program for Kindergarten through second grade

- funding and training several sets of master/apprentice language teams throughout Southeast Alaska

- funding language and culture Summer camps in various Native communities.

To direct these projects, SHI has on staff two professional linguists specializing in Native languages and language revitalization, as well as a fluent-speaking Tlingit language specialist. SHI also contracts with several other fluent Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian language specialists on projects throughout the year. Plans call for a continuing expansion of all of these programs to better serve the language needs in all the communities of Southeast Alaska.

3. Proposal for a Demonstration Program

The Sealaska Heritage Institute proposes to operate a Demonstration Program for the Revitalization of Critically Endangered Languages as part of S. 575, the pending amendment to the Native American Languages Act. Today, the overwhelming majority of Native languages in the United States are no longer being learned by children, and many are spoken by only the oldest community members. This demonstration program would expand upon the successful Sealaska Kusteeyí workshops to provide a practical model, based on both well-tested and innovative techniques, for language revitalization in those communities with the most critically endangered languages.

The proposed demonstration program would focus on the following five areas:

(A) Immersion teacher training and curriculum development

Two of the most important elements in any successful school-based Native language program are well-trained teachers and a curriculum designed to bring students to conversational fluency in the language. SHI has been a leader in this area in recent years, providing both teacher training and curriculum development designed for a total language immersion classroom.

(B) Master/apprentice language teams

In many communities with critically endangered languages, school-based language programs are not a viable option. The most successful non-school-based approach to language revitalization has been the master/apprentice language teams. This approach pairs a master fluent speaker with one (or more)

younger learners for around 20 hours a week, during which time only the Native language is used. In this way, the students learn the language in a naturalistic setting, and in a manner that closely mirrors how the masters learned the language as small children. SHI is currently providing training and support for several master/apprentice teams throughout Southeast Alaska as part of the Sealaska Kusteeyí workshops.

(C) Reawakening dormant speakers

Even in communities with the most critically endangered languages, there are usually many people who retain a passive knowledge of the language -- they can understand nearly everything said in the language, but are reluctant to try to speak. These are the dormant speakers. Although usually overlooked in the development of language revitalization programs, dormant speakers often outnumber fluent speakers in communities with critically endangered languages. SHI has been developing techniques to revive and expand the conversational fluency of dormant speakers of Tlingit, so that these individuals can take a more active and productive role in carrying the language forward to future generations.

(D) The use of Internet technologies in language revitalization

The development of Internet technologies in the past ten years has radically transformed many aspects of work with endangered languages, from the digitization of high-quality audio and video recordings, to the development of multimedia language teaching tools, to the creation of on-line, virtual language learning communities. SHI staff linguists have been involved in the application of these technologies to the revitalization of endangered languages in communities across the United States since the mid 1990's.

(E) Language revival techniques for languages with no remaining fluent speakers

In all parts of the United States, there are Native communities who have already seen the passing of the last fluent speakers of their traditional languages. For these communities, often all that remains of their languages are the field notes and recordings of linguists and anthropologists. Even so, there are today several formerly extinct languages, such as Miami and Wampanoag, which are being relearned and reintroduced into their original communities based on just these sorts of historical records.

4. Conclusion

As part of the proposed demonstration program, SHI will provide training, outreach, conferences and visitation programs in each of the five areas outlined above, designed specifically for members of communities with critically endangered languages. Many of the most basic issues faced by these communities are left unaddressed by the three other proposed demonstration programs. We believe the inclusion of this fourth demonstration program makes the proposed amendment to the Native American Languages Act stronger and more responsive to the urgent needs of communities across the country.

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