

RECOVERY AND PRESERVATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES

FIELD HEARING

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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C O N T E N T S

	Page
Hearing held on August 31, 2006	1
Statement of Members:	
McCollum, Hon. Betty, a Representative in Congress from the State of Minnesota, prepared statement of	51
McKeon, Hon. Howard P. "Buck," Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce	1
Prepared statement of	2
Petri, Hon. Thomas E., Vice Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce	3
Udall, Hon. Tom, a Representative in Congress from the State of New Mexico	5
Wilson, Hon. Heather, a Representative in Congress from the State of New Mexico	4
Resolution of support from All Indian Pueblo Council	42
Statement of Witnesses:	
Cornelius, Dr. Carol, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin	30
Prepared statement of	33
Montoya, Sam, language and cultural resource administrator, Pueblo of Sandia	34
Prepared statement of	37
Shije, Amadeo, Chairman, All Indian Pueblo Council	8
Prepared statement of	11
Sims, Christine P., Ph.D., assistant professor, department of language, literacy, and sociocultural studies, Institute for American Indian Education, College of Education, University of New Mexico	23
Prepared statement of	27
Tabaha, Kimberly J., student of Window Rock High School	39
Prepared statement of	41
Wilson, Ryan, president, National Indian Education Association	11
Prepared statement of	15
Additional Material Submitted:	
Cross-Maple, Dr. Kathryn, Indian Education Division, New Mexico Department of Education	58
Gregory, Dr. George Ann, Choctaw/Cherokee	52
Native American Review Article by Jon Reyhner, Ed.D., Professor of Education, Northern Arizona University	54
Tso, Eddie, program director, office of Diné culture, department of Diné education, the Navajo Nation, prepared statement of	53
Wacondo, Elizabeth, librarian, the Laguna Public Library, Pueblo of Laguna, prepared statement of	53
Washington State Tribal Leader Congress on Education on Recovery and Preservation of Native American Languages	57

RECOVERY AND PRESERVATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES

**Thursday, August 31, 2006
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Washington, DC**

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 2:30 p.m., at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, 2401 12th Street, NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Hon. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives McKeon, Petri, Wilson of New Mexico, and Udall of New Mexico.

[Invocation given by Pueblo Santo Domingo Governor Julian Coriz in his native language.]

Chairman MCKEON. Thank you for that invocation. Even though I couldn't understand the language, I understood the spirit and I appreciate it and it's very fitting that we have the invocation in your native tongue. Thank you very much.

We are holding this field hearing today to hear testimony on the recovery and preservation of Native American languages. With that, I ask unanimous consent for the hearing record to remain open 14 days to allow member statements and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing be submitted into the official hearing record. Without objection so ordered.

Good afternoon. Welcome. In August the congressional district work-period offers us a unique opportunity to personally visit districts such as Congresswoman Wilson's and encourage dialog on matters affecting local citizens. This hearing represents such an opportunity. Today we will be discussing an important issue to this community and much of the Southwest, the loss of Native American languages, as well as potential solutions for language preservation.

Yesterday I was in Flagstaff and we were talking about the No Child Left Behind Act but there was much discussion on this issue that we will be talking about today, and I'm glad that some of the people that were in that discussion yesterday, I know, have traveled to be with us here today, and I thank you all for being here for your attendance.

Before we get started, though, I would like to take a moment for thank Representative Heather Wilson for hosting today's hearing in her district and the work she has done on this important issue that we are discussing. I also thank my colleague and Vice-Chair-

man of our committee, Representative Tom Petri, as well as Representative Tom Udall, also from New Mexico, for joining us here. Congressman Petri came from Wisconsin. Got up very early this morning to be with us and I appreciate him.

Today's hearing is an important one, not only for this community but, frankly, for Congress as well. Sadly, in Native American communities across the country, native languages are in rapid decline. In fact, it's estimated that only 20 indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050. As a result of this rapid decline, some communities across the country have made language recovery and preservation one of their highest priorities. The link between education, language and culture is considered by many as paramount to preserving the identity of Native Americans. Many in the Native American community believe the loss of native languages may be slowed by increasing support for Native immersion programs. With that in mind, in February of this year, Congresswoman Wilson introduced the Native American Languages Preservation Act.

Congresswoman Wilson's bill would establish grants for Native American language educational organizations, colleges, governments and organizations to help preserve native cultures and languages. The philosophy behind these programs is very basic. Advocates of these programs argue that language immersion programs are effective ways of creating fluent native language speakers. And data also points to another benefit. Native students who go through an immersion program perform substantially better academically than Native students who have not gone through such a program. In fact, some national studies on language learning and educational achievement have indicated a direct correlation between language learning and higher academic achievement.

Today we will have an opportunity to examine the concept of language immersion in greater depth and consider the role it could play in our efforts to slow the decline in Native languages. We will hear the perspectives of expert witnesses on how to address the issue of language loss, recovery, and preservation. And, indeed, we will be taking an in-depth look in Representative Wilson's Native American Languages Preservation Act.

Can you hear me back in the back? I am giving a wonderful speech. Can you hear me now? Now? We're working on this. Now? Should I turn the mike on? Now?

It really wasn't that good. OK. Somebody said we might just need a battery in this mike.

I want to thank our witnesses for being here with us today. We have a distinguished panel of witnesses. I would like to begin by welcoming all of them here. Right after we have some statements from the other members. Who are we going to start with? Mr. Petri? Are you giving an opening statement? Let's go right down the line.

[The prepared statement of Chairman McKeon follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Hon. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, Chairman,
Committee on Education and the Workforce**

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represents such an opportunity. Today we will be discussing an issue important to this community and much of the Southwest: the loss of Native American languages as well as potential solutions for language preservation.

Before we get started, though, I'd like to take a moment to thank Representative Heather Wilson for hosting today's hearing here in her district and for her work on the important issues we'll discuss. I also thank my colleague and the Vice-Chairman of our Committee, Representative Tom Petri, as well as Representative Tom Udall—also from New Mexico—for joining us here.

Today's hearing is an important one, not only for this community, but frankly for Congress as well. Sadly, in Native American communities across the country, Native languages are in rapid decline. In fact, it is estimated that only 20 indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050. As a result of this rapid decline, some communities across the country have made language recovery and preservation one of their highest priorities. The link between education, language, and culture is considered by many as paramount to preserving the identity of Native Americans.

Many in the Native American community believe the loss of Native languages may be slowed by increasing support for Native language immersion programs. With that in mind, in February of this year, Congresswoman Wilson introduced the Native American Languages Preservation Act. Congresswoman Wilson's bill would establish grants for Native American language educational organizations, colleges, governments, and organizations to help preserve Native cultures and languages.

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I believe today's hearing will be very insightful and will help us better understand the importance of preserving indigenous languages and cultures, and I thank our witnesses and other stakeholders for joining us this afternoon.

Mr. PETRI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It's a real pleasure for me to be here in beautiful, sunny, pleasant, early fall Albuquerque, New Mexico to discuss the recovery and preservation of Native American languages. I am looking forward to the opportunity to hear from Native American language advocates on what can be done to preserve these languages for future generations.

While several bills have been introduced in this general area, I would like particularly to recognize our colleague, Congresswoman Heather Wilson, for her recognized leadership on this issue embodied by her introducing of H.R. 4766, the Native American Languages Preservation Act, which would provide Federal support for programs that provide training for young children and their family.

It's increasingly clear that each year the numbers of Native American speakers of their own language as a first language is rapidly declining. Of the nearly 300 Native languages of the United States only some 210 are still spoken, and one of the witnesses we are going to be hearing from, Mr. Ryan Wilson, President of the National Indian Education Federation, references in his testimony a prediction that there will not be 210 but possibly only 20 languages spoken in the year 2050. That's a trend we don't want to see—prediction we don't want to see translated into reality. Of

course, quite often these languages are spoken only among the elderly.

Efforts are underway to preserve these languages and encourage a new generation of Native Americans to keep these languages alive as an integral part of Native American culture and identity.

Please, and I should note, I am not the only one to come from the northern tier, as it's called, of Wisconsin. We have a representative I have the Oneida tribe in my home state joining us today. As you will hear, Dr. Carol Cornelius has led efforts among the Oneida nation to preserve its language since 1996 after recognizing that only 25 to 30 elders spoke Oneida as a first language. Oneida since made language preservation a priority by pairing elder native speakers with younger English speakers to train a new generation to appreciate and preserve their traditional language. I look forward to hearing from all of our witnesses on current programs underway and what we can do to further preserve traditional languages. I thank you again, Chairman McKeon, for your leadership on this issue and having the hearing today.

Chairman MCKEON. Ms. Wilson.

Mrs. WILSON OF NEW MEXICO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to thank you personally for coming here to New Mexico. I know for you it's a trip back to New Mexico and that for a time in your misspent youth you lived here in Albuquerque.

Chairman MCKEON. Well-spent youth.

Mrs. WILSON OF NEW MEXICO. And we wanted to welcome you back to New Mexico and thank you for your interest in this issue that's very important to us. And I also wanted to thank Tom Petri for coming down. I know there's no direct flight from Wisconsin to Albuquerque that I know of and I very much appreciate your efforts to get here today.

I also wanted to thank my colleague, Tom Udall for his involvement and support on this issue and, of course, our witnesses that are here today, those who are visiting New Mexico as well as those who are deeply involved in the issue here locally. I look forward to your testimony today, very much so.

And, of course, those of you who have chosen to come today to hear this, I wasn't sure how many folks would come. I was expecting maybe 20 or 30, you know, and the fact that so many people have come today, so many tribal leaders are here, tribal council leaders and Governors and lieutenant Governors and educational leaders are here today, is a visible demonstration of how important this is to New Mexico and to our tribes. Here in New Mexico we have 19 different Pueblo and three tribes, multiple language and dialects, but I first became interested in the issue when the Hickory Apache tribal council came to see me and said they were starting a language nest to preserve their language, and shortly after that, I was at Sandia Pueblo at their early childhood education center where they led the stream of money from Head Start with other tribal funds and have a very good child care program that starts at 6 weeks old and goes all the way to the first day of kindergarten.

What was to me—there were a lot of wonderful things going on there, but one of them was that the grandmas come, and they come to sing and speak to the babies and the children so that they will

have a language that their parents do not have; that it's skipping a generation, and that's how they are trying to restore their own use of their own language.

Survey of native languages found that among the Apache in the Mescalero reservation in Southern New Mexico there are only ten native speakers left. At Sandia Pueblo north of Albuquerque most of their native speakers are middle-aged or older because they wanted their children to learn English and now they are having to skip a generation to preserve the language.

Even among the Navajo, Navajo is spoken by more Native Americans about any other language in the United States. Even Navajo is endangered. Navajo children, only half of Navajo children starting kindergarten are fluent in their native language. That's why I introduced H.R. 4766, to try to preserve these languages, because language is connected to culture, and culture is what we celebrate here in New Mexico.

It's intended to create and expand this idea of language nests and language survival schools and also to set up a demonstration program with universities and combine the strength and teaching at universities with the ability to teach language in new ways and preserve this wonderful heritage and culture that we enjoy here in New Mexico.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for your willingness to be attentive to this issue, to come back to New Mexico and to share this day with us. We appreciate it.

Chairman MCKEON. Mr. Udall.

Mr. UDALL OF NEW MEXICO. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and I also very much appreciate you being here and being a part of this community. You can see how welcome you are by this incredible attendance we have today, so thank you for coming. Knowing what you did when you were here in New Mexico as a youth, I am not sure it was misspent. I think it was very well spent. But we won't get into that.

First of all, I just would like to put in two statements into the record, Mr. Chairman. The New Mexico Department of Education is represented here by Dr. Kathryn Cross-Maple of the Indian Education Division. Kathryn is the cabinet secretary, and they have a statement on what the State of New Mexico has done in Indian education and native language initiatives. Also, your committee member, Betty McCall, was unable to be here, but she wants to have a statement put into the record.

Chairman MCKEON. No objection. So ordered.

Mr. UDALL OF NEW MEXICO. With that, let me thank you and Ranking Member Miller for holding this hearing on an issue that is central to the culture and history of our great state. I hope your visit will help underline the need to quickly pass bipartisan legislation on language preserving native languages as so many of our tribes and Pueblos will demonstrate the importance that language has in their way of life.

Additionally, I would like to welcome the various Pueblo leaders, Native American language experts and others who are in attendance. I thought it was particularly nice that we had a small reception before where we were able to exchange some ideas there.

For too long in this state and throughout our country, we did not appreciate the importance of language and its ability to enhance the rich dynamics of our history. From learning the ancestry of those who came before us to passing stories down through generations, to maintaining religious, cultural and social ties, language is fundamental. We now recognize the need to cultivate and pass languages along to our children and grandchildren.

I have had the great honor of visiting the Pueblo in my district during my four terms in office and learning the traditions and characteristics unique to each individual tribe. In those visits, I have had the opportunity to go to two Pueblos that I would just like to recognize for their native language program. One is Santa Clara, where I visited in the last couple years, and they have an excellent program, and also I was at Tesuque Elementary School where their program is making great progress.

Both of these Pueblos, I think, have excellent programs and they are making great progress in having every tribal member speak his native language.

There's no doubt in my mind that we need to strengthen our efforts at promoting native language preservation, and we must do so starting today. Native languages are being lost at a rapid pace. Tribal members are often the only ones fluent in the language as an increasing number of children are growing up in homes that only speak English. If we do not act soon, we will face a situation where the languages begin to die with the elders.

If we truly hope to prevent the loss of these languages, we must find a solution, a bipartisan solution, which will put in place new immersion programs that are urgently needed. Studies show such programs offer the best opportunity for languages to be passed on. Certainly if there is a shortage of individuals speaking Native American language, there is no shortage of those who hope to see those languages revived and preserved and immersion programs will help fulfill that need.

I want to applaud the efforts made by Representative Ed Case and my colleague here in New Mexico, Representative Heather Wilson, to expand and enhance the Native American language preservation programs currently in place, and I believe that their legislation is a big step in the right direction. While there are some differences between the bills that have been introduced, I have complete faith that common ground can and will be found. Authorizing legislation for new programs must move forward and time is of the essence if we want to stem the loss of these languages.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and Ranking Member Miller once again for focusing the attention of the committee on this extremely important issue and for taking the time to visit our state. I believe we can all agree that there's an urgent need to protect and preserve Native American languages and we must invest by implementing new immersion programs.

With the current state of Indian education, our great nation faces many great challenges. I am thankful for your attention to this issue and hope that we will see in the very near future subsequent hearings on these issues. There is definitely a deep reservoir of intelligence and expertise in New Mexico, and we are happy to welcome you and your committee back any time.

I also want to just recognize Representative Petri. Representative Petri and I are sponsoring a piece of global warming legislation, bipartisan piece of legislation. Why would I bring this up in this context? Because for me native languages are about the traditions with the earth, the fact that we come from Mother Earth, that we are part of Mother Earth, and I believe that the traditions that are represented in those languages have much to teach us. If we had adopted the ways that you had and the views that native people had of the earth, we would be a lot further along in terms of protecting our planet.

So Representative Petri, you and I are on the front on the global warming battle but the native tribes are way ahead of us so we have a lot to learn today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Great to be here today.

Chairman MCKEON. Thank you very much. Now I would like to introduce our witnesses. First will be Mr. Amadeo Shije. He is chairman of All Indian Pueblo Council here in Albuquerque. The All Indian Pueblo Council is a consortium of the 19 Pueblo tribal governments in New Mexico and provides essential services to the Pueblo people. He was born and reared on the Zia Indian reservation and is a former Governor of the Pueblo of Zia. At age 18 he was inducted into the tribal council and is serving a lifetime appointment. Mr. Shije is a veteran of the U.S. Navy and a graduate of New Mexico Highlands University.

Then we will have Mr. Ryan Wilson, President of the National Indian Education Association, which is the largest and oldest Indian educational organization in the Nation that is committed to increasing educational opportunities and resources for American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students while protecting their cultural and linguistic traditions. He is a member of the Ogalla Lakota Nation from Pine Ridge, South Dakota.

I served a mission here for our church with the Latino people. My brother served a mission in Pine Ridge with the Indian people. I didn't know you were from there. That's good.

He is also highly involved in tribal youth development where he serves as the Executive Director of the American Indian Youth Leadership Institute, the Northwest Indian Youth Conference and the IWSA Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Wilson is a graduate of the University of Washington.

Then we will have Dr. Christine Sims, Assistant Professor in the Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies at the University of New Mexico. She is one of the founding members of the Linguistic Institute For Native Americans, which is a New Mexico based nonprofit organization serving Native American tribes and language programs. Over the course of 20 years, she has organized summer institutes in New Mexico known as the Summer Institute of Linguistics for Native Americans, regional Native language conferences and workshops for Native Americans' local tribes. She is a tribal member of Acoma Pueblo and resides on the Acoma Pueblo Indian Reservation in Northwestern New Mexico.

Then we will have Dr. Carol Cornelius. She has been an area manager for the Oneida Cultural Heritage Department for the Oneida Tribal Indians for the past ten and a half years. She is also adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin in Green Bay. She

has written numerous publications on the history of the Oneida tribe and served as consultant for numerous Native Americans at this time. In addition, school board member for the Oneida Native Elementary School and is co-president of the Cornell Education Society at Cornell University.

I used to serve on a local school board. I had a friend tell me there's a special place in heaven for people who serve on the local school boards. I am hoping that's the case.

Dr. Cornelius earned her Ph.D. From Cornell University.

Then we will hear from Mr. Sam Montoya, the Language and Cultural Resources Administrator at the Pueblo of Sandia. Mr. Montoya also works as an Area Roads Program Manager and the Economic Development Program for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He is fluent in Southern Tiwa and Spanish, and I presume English. Mr. Montoya is a graduate of Fort Louis college in Durango, Colorado.

Finally, Ms. Kimberly Tabaha is a senior at Window Rock High School. You are just a kid. In Fort Defiance, Arizona, and also a student of the Navajo Language Immersion School. Welcome, all of you. Let's hear first then from Mr. Shije.

**STATEMENT OF AMADEO SHIJE, CHAIRMAN, ALL INDIAN
PUEBLO COUNCIL**

Mr. SHIJE. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman McKeon and members of the committee. Welcome to New Mexico, and in particular I would like to welcome back Representative Heather Wilson and also Mr. Tom Udall. Welcome back to New Mexico. It's always good to see you back on the home grounds.

You know, when tribes get together, we always seem to talk about some negative things and some things that we are reactant to, and hardly ever do we talk about those things that are really good news. Today I would like to, if the committee will indulge me for a minute or two, I would like to introduce a group of young people—I don't know if they are in the audience—but these young people hail from the very village where I was born and raised. They attend the Zia Elementary School up in Zia Pueblo. The good thing about that school is in the last four consecutive years they are the only school in the Albuquerque region, the Albuquerque Bureau area, that had attained the annual yearly progress, what a lot of people call AYP.

These students have been able to do that with a lot of obstacles, and one of the biggest obstacles was the fact that there is not enough funding for language teachers up at that school.

One individual, one young lady—I don't know if she is in the audience—Laurie Pino, if you will stand. There she is right there. She, by herself, has been able to go through all these classes and teach these young people the language and everything associated with the tribe, the cultural background, the histories and sitting around and talking to them, telling stories, because that's the way of the Pueblo people, and that is how you learn because the language is not written. So everything has to be communicated orally. With that, I would like to congratulate the students as well as the faculty from the Zia Elementary Middle School. They have attained so much and we hope that they continue to flourish as they go

along, because we do have students that are excelling up in that area.

Today I sit before you as the 19th Chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council. The Council was first recorded as having its first meeting in the year 1598. There was 30 some odd—38 tribal leaders at the time. They were holding the meeting. Insofar as what the topic of discussion I can only assume was probably discussion about the emergence from the east, the emergence from the west of non Indian individuals, and they were probably sitting around wondering and talking how they should accept these visitors coming in from these two directions.

And I always tell this story about I think the Pueblo did such a great job of having a welcome reception for these people that they never left the country. They stayed behind. That's what you call Pueblo hospitality.

As Pueblo Indians, we value our language, traditions, culture, religion, people and way of life. In spite of detrimental Federal policies of the United States, the Pueblo communities still practice their daily ceremonial lifestyles. There are no rights or duties more precious to us than those regarding religion and ceremonies, and in every aspect of our daily lives and fulfilling our daily existence the use of the language is there. Language has been and continues to be our last stronghold of the traditional form of government which existed long before Columbus and long before the formation of the United States.

The protection of our language and religious freedom of our communities is critical to the pueblo's existence and survival. As Pueblo people, we give value to those things that make us Indian people. Our language, our culture, the values and traditions that perpetuate our cultural survival.

At the same time, we must give equal value to educating and developing those skills necessary to deal with the external communities, to protect our communities internally, thus creating a balance in our lives. This statement I took from a Pueblo man, Mr. Regis Pecos.

The continuance of Pueblo values and traditions are dependent upon the continued use of our native language. Unfortunately, this process has been seriously impacted by historical factors that have attempted to destroy our language and culture. This has included constant changes to Federal educational policies, key events throughout the history of this nation that have impacted tribes and treatment of native people.

Chairman McKeon, you indicated earlier it is estimated that only 20 indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050. For some tribes, this is already occurring. The loss of the language has already occurred. In others, efforts to maintain and revitalize native languages are being seriously pursued through community-based and school-based language efforts. This is accompanied by utilizing fluent speaking elders, traditional leaders and encouraging young parents who speak the language to teach and take the responsibility to teach their young children.

One of the ways that we continue to immerse language in our communities here in the Pueblo country is we still have community gatherings. We still have community work where the tribal mem-

bers come together and work on certain project as a whole. The whole family comes out to help. This is one way to teach our young people the culture and also at the same time, during these functions, the tribal language is spoken.

Because the Pueblo people are close-knit, they live in close proximity to one another, and growing up I thought that was one of the reasons why I was able to really grasp hold of the culture and traditions of my tribe and to be able to speak the language. I am considered to speak fluent Pueblo language, but is it really fluent? Because some of our elders that are currently with us still are telling us, "You are losing. We are not speaking what we used to hear when we were young people," so I am assuming that the language has already been lost to some certain extent. Whether we are able to retrieve it or get it back, that's a question and answer that has to be answered by the tribe themselves.

The need for language survival is an issue of increasing concern. In particular, the Pueblo language in our state reflects a history which I would like to think as some of the oldest and longest sustained culture in the nation. Our languages have existed and today all functions within the sociocultural and socio-religious community continues on.

What I mean here is that the language that we speak is not written, so in order for us to maintain the language, we have to teach our young people through storytelling, through activities, as I mentioned earlier, by community work. We also have some areas where we have in some of our younger people the Head Start program where we have been able to bring tribal members to come and talk to these young people in their language, and by doing that the young people have been able to speak. I am glad to say in my community and most of the Pueblo communities our very young people are starting to speak the language once again, and that's great to see and that's what makes, I believe, our elder people happy when they see that.

To lose our language means the loss of everything that we Pueblo people stand for. I don't think there is a single individual in this room that can say that we will lose our language, because I don't think we will. We have sustained, been able to carry on the language and we will continue to do so.

So on behalf of the All Indian Pueblo Council, a consortium of New Mexico's 19 Pueblo nations, we support H.R. 4766, the Native American Language Preservation Act 2006, which will provide much needed support to Native American Immersion schools. The Native Language Act Amendment of 2006 will provide much needed support for native language emergent schools because it is, as you mentioned, Chairman McKeon, it is well proven that language immersion programs are effective ways to create fluent speakers in the native language. We urge the Committee to act on H.R. 4766 and for Congress to pass H.R. 4766. H.R. 4766 would amend the Native American Language Act which was passed in 1990, amended in 1992 and will create a competitive grant program with the Department of Education to support many language immersion programs in our communities.

I am sitting here thinking maybe one of the immersion initiatives could be as of recently the All Indian Pueblo Council and also

the Indian Pueblo Council filed a Federal injunction against the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Education. You can consider that as some type of immersion because we are requesting certain things to take place that directly affect our young people.

If taking things to Court is one way to do it, I think tribes now have the ability to do that. And they have shown that they will do it and they continue to do certain things that a lot of people think they were not able to do.

So with that—I know I was only given 5 minutes—I thank you, Committee, for allowing us to speak. I am sure the rest of the panel will go into depth and detail on some of the things that I have mentioned to you today. I will stand for questions when the time is appropriate.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Shije follows:]

Prepared Statement of Amadeo Shije, Chairman, All Indian Pueblo Council

My name is Amadeo Shije, Chairman of the All Indian Pueblo Council (AIPC) representing the 19 Pueblos in the State of New Mexico.

I am writing on behalf of the All Indian Pueblo Council in support of H.R. 4766, the Native Language Act Amendments Act of 2006. This bill was introduced by Representative Heather Wilson to provide much needed support for Native language immersion schools. We strongly urge you to support the passage of this important legislation.

The AIPC and the Native communities across the country are realizing a rapid decline in Native languages. It is estimated that only 20% of indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050. The AIPC and the Pueblos have made language recovery and preservation one of their highest priorities. It is proven that language immersion programs are one of the few effective ways to create fluent speakers in Native languages. Further, data shows that Native students who go through an immersion program perform substantially better academically than Native students who have not gone through such a program. For these reasons, it is urgent that Congress pass H.R. 4766 this session.

By amending the Native American Language Act passed in 1990 and amended in 1992, H.R. 4766 would create a competitive grant program within the Department of Education to support Native language immersion programs in Native communities that would be called language nests and language survival schools. The language nest grants would provide financial support to tribes and tribal entities to create and/or continue Native language immersion programs for children under the age of seven and their families. The language survival school grants would provide financial support to tribes and tribal entities to expand language nest programs to provide immersion programs for students in elementary and secondary schools. H.R. 4766 would also allow for four demonstration programs based upon certain eligibility criteria. The demonstration programs would serve as technical experts to immersion programs, tribes, and the Department of Education as well as an information clearinghouse on immersion concepts and best practices.

With so many Native languages and traditions becoming near the brink of extinction, the AIPC firmly believes that access to education through Native language immersion programs can be used to help preserve rather than replace Native culture. For the 19 Pueblos, the link between education, language and culture is fundamental and cannot be stressed enough as we preserve to maintain our identities. We appreciate your efforts to improve the education of Native children and thank you for your consideration of this important piece of legislation.

Chairman MCKEON. Thank you very much.
Mr. Wilson.

STATEMENT OF RYAN WILSON, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Mr. WILSON. Good afternoon, Chairman McKeon, Vice Chairman Petri, Congresswoman Wilson. We want to give you a special

thanks as well for introducing this Bill and Congressman Udall as well. Good afternoon and thank you again.

As we understand it, the National Education Association, this is the first time in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives that there's been a field hearing on Indian education and this critical issue of immersion so we applaud you in those efforts and we understand as well that in our annual legislative summit on a cold, snowy night in the heart of the winter the bill was introduced on February 14th. When Congresswoman Wilson introduced it, it really ushered in a joyous daybreak to a long, long night of apathy when it came to our native languages so you hold a special place in our heart and we want to acknowledge you for that.

I'm going to elaborate a little more on our Chairman Shije and what he expressed and I want to kind of jump into that. So far—when we look at—we are going to give you a little bit of an overview on some of the schools. And Dr. Sims is going to advance some of the critical data that you need to be hearing as well that will really accentuate where the schools place our young people academically. And I would like to give—what we want to say is a national perspective or overview on what some of the schools are doing now.

But I want to start by also saying that today, we are at the beginning of a new century, the dawning of the 21st century. The United States of America and other countries around the world are supporting human rights, including the rights of indigenous minorities in places like Eastern Europe, the Middle East and other places in the world including Asia.

The time has come now for equal recognition of the basic human rights of America's native peoples and the control of our education, tribal control, and what chairman Shije was talking about, the issue with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They are approaching them from the issue of consent and consultation and what that really means. This is what we want as tribal people is really respectful, heightened ability to have communication. By having this hearing today, this historic hearing, you are taking a very, very important step in doing so.

America, as you are going to hear from the other panelists through a variety of policies, became the single largest investor in the destruction of these languages, and there's a common theme that we hear so many times in Indian country when we approach our non Indian brothers that this should be taught in the home. This way of life belongs in your tribal community, in your village, wherever that may be, but in actuality, when you understand fully of history of what has happened, the trauma that has happened to these tribal communities, and that these languages, sacred languages, were put on trial, they were judged, they were convicted and they were jailed, and we were told—the only people here—to never stress our First Amendment rights, to never use our languages, have it outlawed, and here we are in 2006 everywhere we go we are told that, that they don't belong in the schools. They don't belong being taught this way.

What we are saying here, everybody in the room, and you see this huge crowd that's come out, that it really exemplifies what's dear to our hearts. We are in a crisis and we are really saying that

it belongs in our schools. Maybe not every school, but we have to create venues in our tribal communities where this can be taught, and we have to codify forever a place in the Department of Education to fund these schools. And that's what this bill is about and that's what this hearing is about and this is why we have come here.

As I get more into what I'm going to say, it is not just the Pueblo people. We are so very happy to be here in Pueblo country. What they have done here. The All Indian Pueblo Council was the first tribal organization to endorse this bill. But subsequently other ones have come forward and say now is the time. And with one voice the National Congress of American Indians, affiliated tribes of Northwest Indians and we have a representative from the Muckleshoot Tribe from the Northwest that's come down to join us as well. The Great Plains tribes, the Wyoming Montana Tribal Leaders Association, the large, land-based tribes which represent those tribes that control 60 percent of the entire land base in all of Indian country; the United Southeastern tribes, and of course, the National Indian Education Association, which has led us in this newly formed national alliance to save native languages, they have all come here, and I would like, with your permission, to submit letters of support and other supporting testimony for the congressional record.

Chairman MCKEON. No objection, so ordered.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Chairman. What we want to really say is, as Representative Udall expressed, now is the time. We can no longer, as we sit by and watch these languages erode at lightning speed move at horse and buggy pace to replace them and to revitalize them. This revitalization movement, some people said we want to isolate ourselves from the rest of America. That's not true. That's not accurate. What you are going to hear today from this distinguished panel is this isn't an isolation movement, this is actually a movement to elevate the acquisition of English, to elevate our standards in academic progress and to really enjoy the full fruits of American dream, equity of opportunity and equality of opportunity.

We are doing that in a way that's very purposeful and meaningful, because if you look at it, and I want to take you back to 1968, and some in the room maybe are too young to remember this. I obviously am, but I was able to read about it, and in a very, very powerful way the U.S. Congress investigated for the first time ever the conditions of Indian children, and it was led by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Robert Kennedy, and they went out into Indian country like what you are doing here. They went and traveled and visited our schools.

They went into our homes, and they uncovered something that was appalling to mainstream America but it wasn't to us because we live this amongst it. You thought this, Chairman McKeon, because your brother did his mission in the poorest place in America, in Pine Ridge. But the American Indian that was documented through this report is systematically chronicled that we ranked at the bottom of every socio, every health, every education, housing and economic indicator that there was in America. And now here

we are all these years later, 38 years later, and we still rank at the bottom of every one of those indicators.

When we talk about Indian education, we gave up millions of acres of the richest land in the world in exchange for this continued inherent sovereignty and for these other things, and education was a piece of that. You heard yesterday it's a trust responsibility. It's a treaty right. And this is what we have come here to say is we want to express that right through these immersion schools as well.

Because what we know, the current data shows us this, what is happening now, if we send 100 kids into kindergarten we know only 50 of them are going to graduate from high school. This is on average nationally. That wouldn't be accepted anywhere in America, but that's the reality of Indian country.

Out of those 50 kids that graduate, only 20 of them might be ready to go on to a Division One college and be competitive academically. Out of that 20 that are even academically capable of doing that, maybe only 10 might apply, and even out of that ten only a handful are going to actually go on to higher education. I am talking non tribal colleges, but our mainstream universities.

This is the reality that we face and we have to be honest about it in a way that says what is happening now, it isn't working. No Child Left Behind was an incredible step in the right direction for accountability, for setting goals and for really making the Indian count for the first time in so many schools where he was invisible, and we applaud this Committee for the work they did in that. But the implementation of it hasn't really quite been what we had thought. What we are asking you is to help close that achievement gap between promise and fulfillment. And this immersion school movement, this revitalization movement is really going to establish a new way of thinking, and as I said, through the Department of Education, to really impact for the first time since 1972 and that's when the original Indian Education Act was passed.

Chairman McKeon, your predecessor, I was in his office with some of our staff, and we were talking about the Indian Education Act and the statute as it applies to this elementary and second education act. I was explaining that we had a desire for you guys to come out to Indian country and have a field hearings during the whole reauthorization process. The Chief of Staff for your predecessor, Congresswoman Barnard, she was explaining there's a lot of special interest groups that want to have inclusiveness and weigh in on reauthorization. I had to give her the explanation in a gentle way, Indian country is not a special interest group.

Title 7 of the No Child Left Behind Act is the Indian Education Act. This is because we have a unique relationship with the Federal Government, and it's based on those treaties, based on the trust responsibility. This is what we want to help you guys understand in a good way and this is what our needs are. And what we are saying, when we look at our young people who go to the Piegan Institute in Browning, Montana; our young children that go to the Akwesasne Freedom School in the St. Lawrence River in New York, Ahapunanaleo School in Hawaii; the Lower Kuskokwim School District up there in Bethel, Alaska; what is happening here, our neighbors in Navajo Country, fort Defiance, Rock Point, those

young people that go there, what we are finding now, this emerging research, this emerging data, what it's showing is beyond any shadow of a doubt when these schools are run properly, when there's an investment—and none of these schools are receiving those same Federal dollars as these other tribal schools, grant schools, BIA schools or public schools that are housing students. Most of them are privately funded and they are outpacing every one of them. They are outpacing their counterparts going to the other schools.

What we have to say collectively among us is what are we doing to our own children when we are not advancing these practices? When we know something works yet we systematically prevent them from having access we are cheating generation after generation of young people. We can't do that anymore. We can't sit idly by when we know something is working and not advance it to the forefront. That's what the National Indian Education Association tried to do.

We know how difficult it is for a Bill to get through Congress. But what we are saying is we have elders all over the country that are watching this bill. They are living and hanging on to life because they want to see this get passed. They want to have a tool, a vehicle, a conduit, so to speak, to pass our engendered way of life and languages on to our young people.

And as I said earlier, those awesome challenges that face Indian country, and again, we know that. You heard about the meth epidemic yesterday. We all know about our alcoholism. We know about our diabetes, all these things, the high school dropout rate, the truancy, the low academic standards in the schools. What this does is this creates a commitment to excellent, because that's what our way of life is. It's an excellent way of life. It creates healthy minds. It creates young people that have assets, that are resilient and that are achieving because they are biculturally competent.

We don't just want to reach the same standards. They use that word "closing the achievement gap." We don't want to just close the achievement gap. We want our young people to be the most educated people in America, not just equal to our non Indian brothers. We want them to be the most educated people in America, and that will never come through the exclusive dominance of the English language. It will come through biculturally competent people. We have to create native thinkers and learners who have conquered the language, not Indian children who have been conquered by the English language. That comes from our own way of life and promoting that.

So Chairman, I thank you again this historic day. I thank you for inviting me to give testimony and I will be here as well to answer any questions that you may have, the Committee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wilson follows:]

Prepared Statement of Ryan Wilson, President of the National Indian Education Association

Good afternoon, Chairman McKeon, Vice-Chairman Petri, Representative Wilson, and Representative Udall. My name is Ryan Wilson, President of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) located in Washington, D.C. I am honored to be here to testify today before this Committee to provide the views of NIEA on the importance and benefits of Native language immersion programs.

Before I begin, I would like to take this moment to thank you for holding this important hearing on preserving Native languages. We appreciate the dedication to this serious issue you show by the fact that you are here—far away from Washington, D.C.—to seek our views and to see Indian Country first hand. I also want to thank, in particular, Representative Wilson for introducing H.R. 4766 and for her leadership in working with Native communities to provide them with much needed resources to save our precious languages.

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) is the oldest and largest Native education advocacy organization. Founded in 1969, NIEA has over 3,000 members. Its membership is comprised of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian educators, tribal leaders, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students. NIEA's membership also includes tribal governments located across the country. NIEA focuses its advocacy on the unique educational and culturally-related academic needs of Native students. Also, NIEA works to ensure that the federal government upholds its responsibility for the education of American Indians. The trust relationship of the United States includes the responsibility to ensure educational quality and access. NIEA works with all tribes to support innovative educational approaches.

You have requested that my testimony focus on the importance of preserving Native languages and on Native language immersion programs. Further, you have requested that I discuss the benefits of language immersion programs, describe what Native communities are currently doing to encourage such programs, and to provide NIEA's views on H.R. 4766, the Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006. I hope that you find that my testimony provides you with the information that you seek.

Importance of Preserving Native Languages

For Native people in the United States, our cultural beliefs, traditions, social structures, heritage, and governance systems depend on our Native languages. We conduct our ceremonies, prayers, stories, songs, and dances in our Native languages just as we have done since the beginning of time. Our languages connect us to our ancestors, our traditional ways of life, and our histories. For us, the survival of our cultures and identities is inextricably linked to the survival of our languages. If our languages die, then it is inevitable that our cultures will die next.

The United States, in one of its darker moments in history, adopted an assimilationist policy where it pro-actively sought to eradicate Native languages by harshly forbidding the speaking of Native languages at BIA schools. The United States adopted this policy because it knew that people disconnected from their languages were more apt to lose their cultural identities and that a society's culture more quickly dies if the language dies. One linguist stated in his research that Lieutenant Richard Pratt, architect of the BIA school system, summed up its educational philosophy succinctly: "Kill the Indian * * * and save the man."¹

Ms. Rita Coosewoon, Language Instructor, Comanche Nation College and Elgin High School, very eloquently described the deep impact that the United States' assimilationist policies had on her personally and why these policies have hastened the deterioration of our Native languages. At a Senate Indian Affairs Committee's hearing on Native language immersion schools on May 15, 2003, she stated:

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.²

Native languages are one of the treasures of this country's heritage and history. Native American languages have contributed to the rich fabric of what makes our country so great. Many states, cities, towns, streets, rivers, and other geographical places in our country are Native words. For example, the name "Connecticut" means "beside the long tidal river" in Mohican; the name "Oklahoma" means "red people" in Choctaw; the name "Alaska" means "great land" or "that which the sea breaks against" in Aleut; the name "Chicago" means "garlic field" in Algonquian; the name "Minnesota" means "sky-tinted water" in Dakota; the name "Malibu" is believed to derive from the Chumash Indians; the name "Manhattan" is believed to mean "isolated thing in water" in Algonquian; the name "Missouri" means "town of large canoes" and is believed to derive from the Missouria tribe; the name "Nebraska" means "flat water" in Otoe; the name "Tahoe" means "big water" in Washoe; and

the list goes on and on.³ It would be a shame to continue to lose the languages from where these words are derived.

Indeed, these languages have played a vital role in protecting our country in times of war. In World Wars I and II, many brave Native Americans performed the role of code talkers, using a code language derived from Native languages. This ensured secure and rapid communication of critical information on the battlefield. We should honor these patriots by protecting their languages that helped protect this great country. Recently, NIEA held a Native Languages Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C. Navajo and Lakota Code Talkers from New Mexico, Arizona, and South Dakota participated along with many Members of Congress and language immersion practitioners. The passion for protecting Native languages was palpable at the Summit; and, when the Code Talkers spoke about their experiences in the military and their love for their language in the midst of discriminatory treatment, everyone who was there was energized to do all that they could to preserve these languages.

Our Native languages are not spoken anywhere else in the world; and, if they are not preserved, then they will disappear forever. In Native communities across the country, Native languages are in rapid decline. Sadly, many tribes have already lost their languages. Language scholars estimate that there were approximately 300 languages spoken in North America prior to the arrival of Columbus.⁴ Some project that only twenty indigenous languages will remain viable by the year 2050.⁵ 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. Given the rapid pace of deterioration of Native languages, it is a race against the clock to save Native languages. Therefore, Native language recovery is one of NIEA's highest priorities.

As one linguist stated, "Every language loss causes serious damage to individual and group identity, for it destroys a sense of self-worth, limits human potential and complicates efforts to solve problems in the community."⁶ Another linguist stated, "Each language is a unique tool for analyzing and synthesizing the world, incorporating the knowledge and values of a speech community. Linguistic "categories [including] number, gender, case, tense, mode, voice, 'aspect' and a host of others * * * are not so much discovered in experience as imposed upon it." Thus to lose such a tool is to "forget" a way of constructing reality, to blot out a perspective evolved over many generations. The less variety in language, the less variety in ideas."⁷

Native Language Immersion Programs and the Benefits of These Programs

The key to stemming the loss of Native American languages is by significantly increasing support for Native American language immersion schools and other immersion programs. It is well proven that language immersion schools are one of the few effective ways to create fluent speakers in Native languages.⁸ For example, in Fort Defiance, Arizona, the students that participated in the Navajo immersion program did considerably better on the tests of Navajo language ability and tested as well in English proficiency as the English-only students. The resulting impact is that the Navajo immersion students were gaining control of their own language with no loss to their knowledge of English. Meanwhile, the English-only students were minimally competent in English, and scoring at lower levels than they previously scored in Navajo competency.⁹

Native language immersion is a way of learning language that concentrates on communication exclusively in a Native language. Immersion teachers provide instruction on all topics with the Native language being the learning medium. Also, immersion programs are typically performed in the context of the culture of the community. Linguists estimate that a time frame of 4 to 7 years is needed to develop age appropriate levels of academic proficiency in a second language.¹⁰ There are many grassroots programs designed to revitalize Native languages throughout tribal schools, communities, and families; but these efforts are fragmented and inadequately funded.

In addition to developing fluent speakers, language immersion schools have other remarkable benefits. Studies and analyses are showing that Native language immersion programs provide a proven method in decreasing Native drop-out rates and in increasing educational attainment.¹¹ Keeping students interested in school is a challenging prospect for all educators and parents. For many Native students living in rural and isolated areas, if subjects are taught in non-cultural pedagogies and removed from their community's perspectives, then often Native students lose interest in school due to the non-relevance of the materials to their lives and identities. Immersion programs are facilitating academic achievement of Native students in a wide array of subject areas, including math, reading, and science as well as in the

areas of arts and languages. Also, these programs are valuable in fostering self-awareness, self-esteem, social growth, and problem solving skills, which are crucial in developing confident individuals who can tackle life's challenges.

One study reported that, while Native American children and youth have exhibited stagnant educational achievement (and have the poorest achievement of all American ethnic groups), Native language immersion has demonstrated remarkable promise in participants' educational achievement and in improving cognitive abilities.¹² Another study reported that solid data from the immersion school experience indicates that language immersion students experience greater success in school measured by consistent improvement on local and national measures of achievement.¹³ For example, in Hawaii, there are twenty-two public schools either with immersion streams or with entire immersion curriculum. These schools have approximately 1700 students enrolled that outperform the average Native Hawaiian student in Hawaii public schools.¹⁴ While data specific to Native American language immersions schools is continuing to be compiled, national studies from both the public and private sectors emphasize the positive impact of language studies on educational achievement.¹⁵

Below are a few more examples of successful immersion schools where the students are doing better than their counterparts who are not in immersion programs.

The Piegan Institute is located in Browning, Montana, and serves students in grades K through 8 through instruction in the Blackfeet language. Piegan Institute programs provide an integrated approach that encompasses social, intellectual, academic, and linguistic dimensions. The focus throughout is on making connections across the various contexts of a learner's experience, the classroom, the family, the community and what language means for a learner in each of these contexts.

The Akwesasne Freedom School is located on the St. Lawrence River in upstate New York and is an independent elementary school for grades pre-K through 8 run by the Mohawk Nation. The school was founded in 1979 by Mohawk parents concerned that their language and culture would slowly die. In 1985, a Mohawk language immersion program was begun. The Mohawk "Thanksgiving Address," which teaches gratitude to the earth and everything on it, is used as a curriculum base. Students study reading, writing, math, science, history and the Mohawk ceremonial cycle. The Akwesasne Freedom School combines solid academics with a strong foundation in Mohawk culture.

In an effort to reverse language loss, the Lower Kuskokwim School District, located in western Alaska, began a Yup'ik Immersion program in Bethel under the state's Language Other than English as a Second Language program option. Thirty-two kindergarten children initially enrolled in this program. Today, the program has expanded to several villages and offers both Two-Way Immersion and Full Early Immersion programs. However, these programs are limited by materials, teachers, and financial resources while dealing with the continuing pressure to meet the standards of No Child Left Behind.

The successes of Native language immersion schools and programs is demonstrated by many of the language schools meeting the standards outlined in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) through Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and the students' abilities to outperform their Native counterparts in non-immersion schools. The seven schools that met AYP in 2004 in the Lower Kuskokwim School District all had strong Yup'ik language and culture programs, especially at the primary levels. In 2005, two schools, one with a Yup'ik language Development Program and one with an early immersion program, met AYP for the second year.¹⁶ This information demonstrates that the standards for the Yup'ik program are high and the Yup'ik instruction at the primary level results in strong academic proficiency in reading, writing, and math. The Yup'ik example is just one of many that shows the positive impact Native language programs have on student achievement.

Also, in northern Arizona, the two language programs at the Rock Point Community School and the Navajo immersion program at Fort Defiance Elementary School have proven that instruction in Native languages fosters Native student achievement.¹⁷ At the Rock Point Community School, where the emphasis on instruction is on Navajo language and thought, the students performed better than comparable students in nearby schools at all grade levels, "and the margin of differences tended to be larger at each succeeding grade."¹⁸ At the Fort Defiance Elementary School, where kindergarten and first grade are taught entirely in Navajo with increased instruction in English in second through fifth grades, the students performed considerably better on local assessments of writing-in-English and the math portion of standardized tests than their counterparts.

Recognizing the significant deterioration of Native languages, many Native communities across the country are implementing wonderful language immersion programs through either school-based or community-based programs, but many are

struggling due to limited financial means. Below is the list of Native immersion programs of which NIEA is aware. Given that Native immersion efforts are grassroots-based, there is no one repository for this information. Therefore, this list is not exhaustive.

Akwesasne Freedom School, Rooseveltown, NY
 Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, Anadarko, OK
 Native American Studies Department, University of Montana, Missoula, MT
 Bahweting Elementary School, Sault Ste. Marie, MI
 Bay Mills Community College, Brimley, MI
 Blackfeet Community College, Browning, MT
 Cannaibrulee Native American Center of the Gulf South, Kenner, LA
 Catawba Cultural Preservation Project, Rock Hill, SC
 Center for Gifted and Talented Native Hawaiian Children, Hilo, HI
 Cherokee Nation Cultural Center, Tahlequah, OK
 Cheyenne River Community College, Lakota Studies, Eagle Butte, SD
 Cheyenne Eagle Butte Schools, Lakota Language Program, Eagle Butte, SD
 Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma, Tishomingo, OK
 Dean C. Jackson Center, Navajo Language Curriculum, Chinle, AZ
 Chitimacha Tribe, Cultural Education Department, Charenton, LA
 Choctaw Nation Government Offices, Choctaw Language Dept., Durant, OK
 Cocopah Language Program c/o Cocopah Museum, Somerton, AZ
 Comanche Language and Cultural Committee, Lawton, OK
 Comanche Preschool Language Program, Lawton, OK
 Coshatta Tribe, Elton, LA
 Delaware Indian Language Project, Bartlesville, OK
 Dine' Community College, Navajo Language Program, Tsaile, AZ
 Dine' Cultural Language and Community Services, Window Rock, AZ
 Dine' Nation Language Program, Window Rock, AZ
 Dull Knife Memorial College, Lame Deer, MT
 Euchee Language Class, Sapulpa, OK
 Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, Cloquet, MN
 Ft. Belknap Community College, Gros Ventre & Assiniboine Languages, Harlem, MT
 Hale Kuamo'o, Center for Hawaiian Languages and Culture, University of Hawaii, Hilo, HI
 Hoopa Languages Program, Hoopa, CA
 Little Big Horn Community College, Crow Studies Department, Crow Agency, MT
 Little Hoop Community College, Fort Totten, ND
 Loyal Shawnee of Cherokee Nation, Psaslagi Cultural Center Language Project, Tahlequah, OK
 Marty Indian School, Marty, SD
 Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council, Wampanoag Language Development Committee, Mashpee, MA
 Menominee Language Instructor/Programs, Native American Educational Services (NAES) College, Keshena, WI
 Mescalero High School, Mescalero, NM
 Miami Tribe of Oklahoma, Miami, OK
 Muskogee Creek Nation of Oklahoma, Okmulgee, OK
 Nebraska Indian Community College, Macy, NE
 Northern Ute Tribe Education Department, Fort Duchesne, UT
 Northwest Indian College, Bellingham, WA
 Oasis Primary School, Sells, AZ
 Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, SD
 Ojibwe Mekana, Ojibwe Language Instruction, Duluth, MN
 Oneida Tribal High School, Oneida, WI
 Peach Springs School District, Bilingual Academic Excellence Program, Peach Springs, AZ
 Piegan Institute, Blackfeet Language Program, Browning, MT
 Project Tradition and Technology, Peach Springs, AZ
 Pueblo of Acoma, Sky City Community College, Acoma, NM
 Pueblo of Acoma, Acoma Language Retention Project, Acoma, NM
 Pueblo of Cochiti, Cochiti Language Preservation Program, Cochiti, NM
 Pueblo of Isleta del Sur, El Paso, TX
 Pueblo of Nambe, Naminbi Ecocultural Language Program, Nambe Pueblo, NM
 Pueblo of Picuris, Penasco, NM
 Pojoaque Language Program, Poeh Cultural Center, Sante Fe, NM
 Pueblo of San Juan, Ohkay Owingeh Community College, San Juan Pueblo, NM
 Pueblo of Sandia, Bernalillo, NM

Pueblo of Santa Ana, Department of Education, Bernalillo, NM
 Pueblo Santa Clara,
 Espanola, NM
 Pueblo of Taos, Taos Day School, Taos, NM
 Pueblo of Tesuque, Education Office, Santa Fe, NM
 Pueblo of Zia, Zia Day School, Zia, NM
 Pueblo of Zia, Zia Language Preservation and Enhancement Program, Zia Pueblo,
 NM
 Pueblo of Zuni, Zuni Public School District, Zuni, NM
 Puyallup Tribe, Chief Leschi School Bilingual Program, Puyallup, WA
 Rock Point Community School, Rock Point, AZ
 San Idefonso Day School, Tewa Language Program, Santa Fe, NM
 Sahaptin Language Department, Heritage College, Toppenish, WA
 Salish Kootenai College, Pablo, MT
 San Carlos High School, Apache Language and History, San Carlos, AZ
 Sanders Unified School District, Sanders, AZ
 Sealaska Heritage Foundation, Juneau, AK
 Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Seminole Language Curriculum, Wewoka, OK
 Seneca Language and Culture Program, Salamanca, NY
 Sinte Gleska University Lakota Studies Program, Mission, SD
 Sisseton Wahpeton Community College
 Dakota Studies Program, Agency Village, Sisseton, SD
 Waadookodaading Ojibwe Language Program, Hayward, WI
 Yup'ik Immersion Program, Lower Kuskokwim School District, Bethel, AK

Also, please find attached to this testimony a bibliography of materials discussing Native language immersion programs.

Views on H.R. 4766

NIEA strongly supports H.R. 4766 and urges the Committee to mark it up when it returns from August recess. Further, NIEA urges the Congress to enact this legislation this session. We realize that the legislative session is shortly coming to a close, but our languages are quickly dying out.

H.R. 4766 would assist in the preservation of our Native languages while also providing a resource to our Native students to help them stay motivated in school, achieve academically, and gain greater self-esteem and confidence. H.R. 4766 would do this by amending the Native American Languages Act to create a competitive grant program within the Department of Education to support Native language immersion programs called language nests and language survival schools. The language immersion grants would provide financial support to tribes, Native American language educational organizations, Native American language colleges, and other Native educational entities to create and/or continue Native language immersion programs for children and students under the age of seven and in elementary and secondary school.

Language immersion costs money, and most Native communities have very limited funds. NIEA believes that the cost for this new grant program would be in the range of \$8 million. Of course, if more could be appropriated, then the better. This funding would allow for firmer financial footing for existing language immersion programs and would provide encouragement for others to begin. With this federal support, we can slow down and hopefully reverse the loss of our Native languages and culture.

Currently, the Native American Languages Act is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Native Americans (ANA) and provides for a very broad grant program for Native language projects that span the spectrum from recording and compiling information on extinct Native languages to teaching Native languages. This grant program provides minimal support for language immersion programs. Over the past few years, ANA's funding has been flat-lined at \$44 million with less than 10% of this funding going toward language immersion programs, which include summer and seasonal camps, weekend retreats and seminars, and some year-round schools. This broad language grant program at ANA is one of several grant programs that ANA administers. At ANA, language grant applications must compete against ANA's other grant programs, including social and economic development, environmental regulatory enhancement, healthy marriages, and environmental mitigation. Further, the length of these grants varies from 1 to 3 years, which is not enough time to develop a successful language immersion nest or school.

NIEA believes that the language immersion grant program set forth in H.R. 4766 would be appropriately administered by the Department of Education in its Office of Indian Education given that it is the federal agency that administers Native edu-

cation and can provide stability for an immersion nest or school through its grant funding stream and other resources. Also, the language nests and survivor schools squarely fit within the purpose of Title VII of No Child Left Behind to provide for the "unique and culturally related academic needs of Indian students." As you know, No Child Left Behind is administered by the Department of Education.

For the demonstration program provision contained in Section 3 of H.R. 4766, NIEA recommends that the demonstration program participants be selected through a competitive grant process, such as the one set forth in S. 2674.

Conclusion

Saving our Native languages is synonymous with preserving our Native culture and identities. The rapid loss of Native languages affects not only Native people but also all Americans. Native people and their languages are an integral part of America's history and heritage. We urge the Congress to take immediate action to help us preserve our languages for future generations. Further, improving the academic achievement and personal growth of our Native children benefits all Americans today and in the future. We look forward to working with you to enact H.R. 4766.

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Chairman MCKEON. Thank you very much. Those were eloquent words. The problem is, if all of you take that much time, we are going to run out of time before we have time to finish. But let's hear now from Dr. Sims.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE SIMS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Ms. SIMS. [Introduction spoken in Native American language.]

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman McKeon and members of the committee. I am getting an echo for some reason. I will go ahead and go on. Mr. Chairman, I am thankful for the opportunity to come and speak before you today.

Chairman MCKEON. Try holding it back just a little.

Ms. SIMS. Now can you hear me? My name is Christine Sims. I am Assistant Professor at the University of New Mexico in the College of Education. I am one of six native faculty in our department. We are part of a growing institute called the Institute for American

Indian Education. We are dedicated to the promotion of indigenous leadership and research in education and we seek to increase the capacity of American Indian tribes with regard to the development, expansion and improving the delivery of instructional services that address the educational and linguistic needs of American Indian children.

I would like to acknowledge those folks that are sitting in the audience today, many of whom are not only from the University of New Mexico but as well many of our own tribal leaders, our elders, our parents are here, students are here. All of them are here in support of this very important meeting and also in support of the bills that are being proposed here.

I would like to also say that in coming to New Mexico, as Chairman Shije mentioned has before, we take great pride in knowing that our villages here are some of the oldest continuously inhabited villages in all of the United States and many of the language communities that you see represented here are representative of languages that have been here hundreds and perhaps thousands of years. And our concern for the survival of languages comes from the fact that many of our communities, as Mr. Shije alluded to, are still very much dependent on an oral-based tradition where many of the languages aren't necessarily written. But in carrying on an oral tradition, many of the values, the beliefs, our own indigenous forms of education, are transmitted through language, and so for communities like ours especially, we have a special concern that children continue to learn these languages, even throughout their school years.

I would like to note that this hearing comes at an especially significant time in our history for a couple reasons. First of all, it's noteworthy that the Committee is considering for the first time a number of education bills that would provide the resources most needed for Native American language survival. These bills at the same time, candidly speaking, being looked at with a little bit of skepticism and I will tell you why. Because throughout the history of education in this country, native people have always had their own indigenous form of education. It's an education rooted in language and culture. This indigenous form of education is what has enabled many of our tribes to survive in the face of historical events that Mr. Wilson alluded to just a few minutes ago.

This history of American education in this country is replete with examples of where they would deliver attempts time and time again, especially with Federal education policy leading the way, to undermine these very foundations of indigenous education.

So convening today's hearing in the context of what education can do to assist in the maintenance and survival of native languages is, therefore, especially significant to us today.

The second reason that this hearing is significant is because I believe that at no time in the history of this nation has the possibility existed as it does now for Congress to support a conscious movement among Native American people to define for themselves a vision of education for their children, reflecting what is of most concern to them.

The inclusion of language as an integral part of daily education that children could and receive and the potential benefits that chil-

dren derive from the experiences and provide such opportunities is a part of that education vision that native people have for their children.

Native communities want the best for their children. They want their children to do well academically and they want to see them develop as competent learners. Not just in mainstream societies but as members of their own tribal communities. The need for preparing future leaders of these communities rests on the kind of educational programs we provide to support Indian students as they come to appreciate and understand the value and the application of their ancestral languages to their daily lives as well as the life of the communities from which they come.

Unfortunately, this vision for education has never fully embraced or has never been fully realized in the history of this nation as Federal legislation has often tended to drive practice and policy away from the concerns of native people regarding the maintenance of language and culture.

Within the last decades, as we have seen language shift happen in many of our communities, the concern for language survival is driven by many tribes who want to see their children learn these languages. In New Mexico, as an example, there are a number of tribal communities who have established community-based language efforts as Senator Udall alluded to earlier, places like Tesuque, Santa Clara, San Juan, San Alfonso, Acoma, Cochiti, Zuni. These are all examples of communities, they are not all of them, but who have stepped to the plate and established their own initiatives as community-based efforts first.

Many of the circumstances though that we come up against has forced many of us to take these community-based efforts into that school settings and this is where we feel that the Committee can be especially helpful because we need that support. We need that support in terms of education bills that are going to make a way for children to learn these languages in schools.

The significance of these developments is that they have also set in motion a whole new set of precedents concerning the treatment of native languages in schools.

Consider that states like New Mexico, for example, now have in place statutory laws that not only support the establishment of heritage language programs as a new category of state-wide legal funding, but also acquiesced to tribes the development of their processes for certifying tribal members as language teachers in public schools.

MOUs that have been developed between local school districts and tribes have also begun to open the doors for native communities to develop their own programs of native language instruction. It follows that as these kinds of developments emerge at the local and at the state level, that there should also be a similar movement within Federal education policy that fully supports the intent of the original native languages act by making available the funding necessary for such initiatives. As well the need for teacher training resources to successfully initiate and maintain these efforts is crucially needed. Tribal communities who do not have the infrastructure nor the resources to provide these services can be assisted by having the means to access technical service from train-

ing centers such as what you proposed back in 2003 when the Senate Indian affairs Committee held their hearing in Washington.

I know I only have a few minutes, and I know that the full text of my testimony has been submitted to you all, but I would like to just—

Chairman MCKEON. The full text of each of your testimonies will be in the record.

Ms. SIMS. I would like to summarize my comments today by saying that for all of us here in this room, not just the communities from New Mexico, but all across this nation, language is at the heart of our survival. It's the heart of our sociocultural systems. It's the heart of our own systems of jurisprudence in governments that we had from time immemorial. Language is the means by which we pass on to our children the things that are essential for their socialization into the lives of our communities. It's the link by which we pass on values and beliefs.

For many communities, such as our own Pueblo tribes here in New Mexico, these languages are the primary and sole means for transmitting traditional knowledge, religious beliefs and practices. These aspects of language use all combine to form the essence of what has been for us the foundation for educating native children. And we hope as members of this Committee that you will take back to Congress and your colleagues in the House and the Senate the notion and the ideas and what has been expressed to you today of how critical these languages are and how critical they have been to our survival for thousands of years.

And in this room there are students, there are children that have every desire to learn these languages, and as part of the education for these children, there should be no question that language is a part of that and that language doesn't have to be something set aside or that it's something special or something additive; that language learning is just as important as learning other things in school. And we know from research that has been done, latitudinal research on one-way and two-way bilingual language programs, that benefits children derive from being in these classrooms where they are schooled in their heritage language, they go beyond just the fact of learning the language itself. They come with the added benefits that children derive from having lessons taught that reflect where they come from.

In essence, the things that they receive as part of language learning with their own community people teaching them, that is the foundation of learning that oftentimes when children don't have that, I'm afraid some of all these kinds of ills we see in terms of academics grow from that, from not having that opportunity.

So I would remind you all, gentlemen and ladies of the Committee, that as you have this discussion with us today, please don't forget that what's at stake here is the children that are out there and the children that are probably in the classrooms now that couldn't be here today.

So I will end my comments here, and I also want to just mention very briefly that I do also have additional letters of support that I would like to hand to the Committee that come from different organizations as well as the University of New Mexico and if I could submit that to the Committee, I would appreciate it.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Sims follows:]

Prepared Statement of Christine P. Sims, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies, Institute for American Indian Education, College of Education, University of New Mexico

Part I: Introduction

Mr. Chairman and Members of this Committee: My name is Dr. Christine Sims. I am an Assistant Professor at the University of New Mexico in the College of Education. I am one of six Native faculty in the Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies who represent professionals in the field of American Indian Education. We are part of a growing institute, namely the Institute for American Indian Education, based in the UNM College of Education. The Institute is dedicated to the promotion of Indigenous leadership and research in the field of education and seeks to increase the capacity of American Indian tribes in developing, expanding, and improving the delivery of instructional services that address the educational and linguistic needs of American Indian students. I would like to acknowledge many of my colleagues from the University who are here today in support of the important matters that will be discussed today concerning the recovery and preservation of Native American languages.

I am here today also speaking in the capacity of a tribal member from the Pueblo of Acoma, one of the 19 Pueblo Indian tribes of New Mexico. I have lived all my life in this Pueblo and have been involved in our community's language retention program as a language teacher trainer and an advisor to the tribe for its various language initiatives. I would like to acknowledge their presence here as well today. As you can see, there are many other members of various tribal communities also present with us. While I cannot name them all individually in the time I have been allotted, I do want to recognize these individuals who represent Native communities in their various capacities as tribal leaders, elders, Native language teachers, parents, and students all of whom are especially concerned about the issue of native language survival. Some of these individuals have brought with them letters of support for the proposed amendments and they would like to submit these at some point to this body.

On behalf of my fellow tribal people I would like to welcome you to New Mexico. We take great pride in knowing that here in New Mexico, our Native cultures and villages represent some of the oldest and longest sustained tribal communities in this nation. Many of our present-day Pueblo villages still exist in their original locations predating the entrance of Europeans to the Southwest. Your presence here today is therefore one that we have anticipated with great interest and concern about what is being proposed as amendments to the Native Languages Act. We hope that in your conversations with us today, that you will take back to Congress the essence of why these proposed bills are so important to all of us in Indian Country.

I want to thank this Committee for the invitation to speak at this hearing and while I recognize that the time allotted to me for my comments is short, I hope that the full text of my written testimony will provide you with information that will be helpful and insightful as you deliberate the various amendments to the Native Languages Act. Specifically I am referring to the following three bills that have been proposed by various members of the U.S. House and Senate: 1) the American Language Preservation Act (H.R. 4766); 2) the Native American Language Amendment Act of 2006 (S.2674); and 3) the Native American Language Amendment Act of 2006 (H.R. 5222). All of these bills which propose funding support for language immersion programs and assistance to language survival schools and language nests are amendments which we support. We are especially supportive of these same provisions included in Representative Heather Wilson's bill (H.R. 4766) but which also includes training services for native language instructors, demonstration programs and research in language policy based at the University of New Mexico.

Part II. Language and Culture, the Foundations for the Education of American Indian Children

I would like to note, that this hearing comes at an especially significant time in the history of American Indian education for several reasons. First, while it is noteworthy that this Committee is considering for the first time a number of education bills that would provide the resources most needed for Native American language survival, these bills are at the same time, candidly speaking, being met with a bit of skepticism from among many in Indian Country. Why? Because throughout all the thousands of years that our tribal communities have existed, there has always been a system of indigenous education for our children that is essentially rooted in

language and culture. This indigenous form of education is what has enabled many of our tribes to survive in the face of historical events and federal education policy that have attempted at various times to tear away at the very fabric of Native American life (Adams, 1995). The history of American Indian education in this country is replete with examples of how such deliberate attempts have occurred time and time again, often with federal education policy leading the way, in undermining the very foundation of what should have been for Native people, the rightful education of their children as members of unique and sovereign nations (Hinton, 2001). Convening today's hearing in the context of what education can do to assist in the maintenance and survival of Native languages is therefore especially significant, considering this past history.

The second reason this hearing is significant is because I believe that at no time in the history of this nation has the possibility existed as it does now, for Congress to support a conscious movement among Native American people to define for themselves a vision of education for their children, reflecting what is of most concern to them. The inclusion of language as an integral part of the daily education that Indian children could and should receive and the potential benefits that children derive from these experiences when provided such opportunities is a part of the vision that Native people have for their children (Blum Martinez, 2000; Sims, 2001). Native tribal communities want the best for their children. They want their children to do well academically and they want to see them develop as confident learners both in mainstream society as well as in their own tribal communities. The need for preparing future leaders of these communities, as well, rests in the kind of educational programs that support Indian students as they come to appreciate and understand the value and application of their ancestral languages to their daily lives as well as in the life of the communities from which they come. Unfortunately this vision for education has never been fully realized in the history of this nation as federal legislation has often tended to drive practice and policy away from the concerns of Native people regarding the maintenance of language and culture.

Within the last several decades as the growing phenomenon of language shift towards English has evolved in many Native communities this concern for language survival has driven many tribes to consider establishing native language initiatives in schools. Here in New Mexico, there are a number of tribal communities who have established community-based language efforts that work in conjunction with local schools to provide language immersion classes for their students. The intent of these initiatives has been to provide children the opportunity to learn their tribal heritage languages alongside their regular academic studies. Other communities have established entire schools that teach all school subject matter in the native language. Regardless of how different tribal communities have chosen to address the need for language instruction the bottom line for these communities has been the need for re-strengthening and revitalizing Native languages as spoken living languages.

The significance of these developments, therefore, is that they have set in motion a whole new set of precedents concerning the treatment of Native languages in schools. Consider that states like New Mexico, for example, have in place statutory laws that not only support the establishment of heritage language programs as a new category of state funded bilingual programs but have also acquiesced to tribes the development of their own processes for certifying tribal members as language instructors in the public schools. The development of local MOUs between local New Mexico school districts and tribes has begun to open the doors for Native communities in the development of their own programs for Native language instruction in public schools. Lastly, as educational institutions such as the University of New Mexico's Institute for American Indian Education have responded to tribal leaders' calls for the inclusion of Native language in the education of New Mexico's Native children, new multi-agency collaborations have begun to emerge that support this vision. This includes the University of New Mexico's College of Education working in conjunction with state level agencies such as the New Mexico Public Education Department and the New Mexico Department of Indian Affairs. In summary, it follows that as these examples of new collaboration at the local and state level emerge, there should also follow a similar movement within federal education policy that fully supports the intent of the original Native American Languages Act of 1990, by making available the funding necessary for such initiatives. As well, the need for Native language teacher training should also be considered an integral part of sustaining successful efforts in language maintenance. Tribal language communities who do not have the infrastructure nor the resources to provide these services to their own members can be assisted by having access to these services through a language teacher training center as originally proposed by this witness in hearings conducted on this same topic in 2003 to the Senate Indian Affairs Committee.

The skepticism I alluded to earlier lies in the fact that tribal concerns about the education of Native children may not always be appreciated in light of current federal education policy that drives mainstream educational practice. This is especially apparent when tribal priorities in education are inclusive of native language instruction but where mainstream education policy does not follow or omits any direct support for such initiatives. Support for language nests, school based and community based language immersion programs therefore also need to be considered in light of tribal priorities and how current federal education policy will need to change in order to fully support these efforts.

Part III. The Significance of Native Language Immersion Programs

For indigenous people across this nation, the issue of language survival is inextricably linked to cultural survival. Language is at the heart of our sociocultural systems of kinship and identity. Language is at the heart of our systems of jurisprudence and governance as is still carried on in many tribal communities such as the Pueblos of New Mexico. It is the means by which our children are socialized into the life of the community and our unique tribal ways of life. It is the link by which values and beliefs are handed down between and through successive generations. For many tribal communities such as the Pueblo tribes of New Mexico oral based foundations in the respective native languages, are also the primary and sole means for transmitting traditional knowledge, native religious beliefs and practices. These aspects of language use all combine to form the essence of what has been the foundation for educating Native children to take their place in our respective communities.

With the introduction of mainstream American forms of education in the lives of Native children at the turn of the 20th century, however, much of the elements of Native education began to rapidly erode (Adams, 1988). The legacy of federal education systems and policies carried out in the early decades of the 20th century were especially detrimental to Native tribes, often exacerbating the already painful experiences of forced removal from traditional lands in many cases. The continuing legacy of such circumstances continue to haunt us today, when we view the problems and issues that are often associated with the low academic performance of Native children, including high drop out rates, high rates of youth suicides, and low academic test scores. There is much that will be said here today concerning the efficacy of educational initiatives that provide funding support for Native language initiatives. My remarks about the benefits to native students when they are provided the opportunity to learn their heritage language in an immersion setting are provided in the following section.

Part IV. The Benefits of Language Immersion Programs

Much of what we know as successful models of native language instruction are based on models of language immersion approaches first introduced by the Maori and Hawaiian language initiatives. These models have been successful in revitalizing these languages especially among school age and pre-school populations where students have had the opportunity to hear the spoken language used in the normal everyday contexts of the classroom by their teachers and their peers. These models have also been the basis for several community-based initiatives here in New Mexico.

The Pueblo of Cochiti, for example, is a Keres speaking community in which a day care center was established in 2002 for toddlers and infants. It is a small day care center that provides a place for working parents to leave their children with fluent Keres speaking caregivers. In this way, young children who are at the critical stages of language development receive the full benefit of hearing the native Keres language spoken to them as they eat, play, nap, and engage in the normal everyday contexts of spending time in the care of Keres speakers. Once these children enter Head Start, it is very apparent when they participate in the community's summer immersion camps that they are a step ahead of their peers who have not had exposure to the Keres language. Their comprehension and receptive abilities in the native language are readily apparent in their response to questions and directions given by adult language speakers.

As these children matriculate to succeeding grades, they are given the opportunity to continue learning their language through daily immersion classes at the local elementary public school. For those groups of Cochiti children who have had successive years of participation in language immersion summer programs over the last 6 to 8 years as well as daily immersion classes at school the gains that they have made in learning the native language have been especially promising. These children are now at the stage where they are able to speak in the language and are able to use it as a means for communicating with peers, family members and their teachers.

Furthermore, they exhibit a confidence in learning that extends beyond the immersion classes and into other areas of their schooling where many of them excel in various academic subjects.

A similar model for an immersion class for Acoma Pueblo high school students was also recently begun in 2001. This initiative was developed as an extension of community-based efforts in the local Acoma community to provide language instruction in an immersion setting. Students receive high school credit for taking this elective which is provided through daily classes. Some of these students have also had the benefit of attending the Pueblo's summer immersion programs over the past six years. Many of them have also begun to use the native Keres language on their own. Some students have often noted how this learning opportunity has afforded them the confidence and the language skills that are necessary for participation in the community's traditional practices. This year was also the first time one of the Keres language students was able to deliver her high school valedictorian address in both English and in Keres. A recent external evaluation of the high school program found that many students were especially aware of this critical tie between language learning and its application to the traditional life of the community.

Thus, initiatives such as these reflect the nature of what I stated earlier as being the core and foundation for educating Indian students. In these contexts the students begin to acquire the ability to use the skills learned in the native language and apply them in their daily lives. The ways in which these students interact with their teachers who are from the community speaks to the high level of respect this students gain from the using the language in its rightful contexts as a language of respect. It is also reflected in other aspects of their academic work leading to successful completion of a high school education.

While these examples are but a sample of what children can gain from being instructed in the native language, the emerging results we see as language and culture are infused in the regular instructional program for American Indian students points to the important role that native language instruction can play in the daily lives of pre-school and school age children in our tribal communities. We therefore want this Committee to know that we fully support HR4766 proposed by NM Representative Heather Wilson and we wish to underscore the importance of providing appropriate levels of funding for language immersion programs whether they be in schools or in communities. We see as well the need for demonstration programs housed within an entity such as the Institute for American Indian Education here at UNM so that technical assistance in teacher training and program development can be provided to American Indian communities in the Southwest and across this country.

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Chairman MCKEON. We would be happy to accept those. Without objection, they will be included in the record.

Ms. SIMS. Thank you.

Chairman MCKEON. Dr. Cornelius.

STATEMENT OF CAROL CORNELIUS, AREA MANAGER, ONEIDA CULTURAL HERITAGE DEPARTMENT, ONEIDA TRIBE OF INDIANS

Ms. CORNELIUS. [Introduction spoken in Native American Language.]

I couldn't do that 10 years ago. I'm learning right with the kids. I said, "Greetings to all of the people here." In our language, my

name is Ga neka o lu, which means “a little bit of water, water is precious.” I am of the Turtle Clan of the Oneida Nation, which is a member of the Haudenosaunee. You would have heard of us as the Iroquois confederacy. I am also Muhhecanneuw, which is the people by the Hudson River who were removed to Wisconsin also. The last speaker of that language died in the 1950’s, so I know absolutely what it’s like for part of my heritage—there are no elders to go to. And I am also a little bit of mom-taught.

I wish—first I wish to extend a thank you to the Committee for having us here and having this opportunity to testify on this Act. The Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin is located near Green Bay, Wisconsin. Green Bay Packers. They need a little help right now.

Chairman MCKEON. A lot of help.

Ms. CORNELIUS. I stand by them. Our tribal membership is 15,591 with about 6120 living on or near the reservation, our 65,000 acre reservation. Our homelands is what is known today as New York State. Our homelands are down to 32 acres of land there. And we were removed to Wisconsin in the 1820’s.

History demonstrates we lost most of our speakers due to Federal policies prohibiting tribal boarding schools and public schools from allowing our languages to be spoken by the children attending those schools. Every Oneida family, including my own, has a story about why we don’t speak the language. When I was a child I asked my grandmother to teach me and she said, “The only way you make it in the white man’s world is to speak English,” and she refused to teach me. It’s taken us a long time to understand that she was doing that to protect us from all of the hurt that she had been through, and to be forgiving in that way. It took a lot of time to know that.

There are heart-rendering stories of how our ancestors were abused in boarding schools both physically and psychologically for speaking our language. The Oneida Language Revitalization Program has determined that we have only five tribal members who learned Oneida as their first language who are alive yet today. Two of those are over 95 years old and they have helped us in the past but they are no longer able to teach us. The other three remaining elders, and the youngest of those is 86, comes to work with us anywhere from two to 7 hours a week when their health permits.

The Oneida Language Revitalization Program has also determined it will take at least 100 people to speak Oneida to keep the language alive among our nearly 16,000 members. Unfortunately, to date there’s only one person who has become a fluent speaker of Oneida as his second language, and he did that with his grandmother, learning right from her. And now he is currently teaching our trainees. There are more details of our program and our tribal government support for our language in our written comments.

We have people who are still at the beginners stage, meaning they just know some basic vocabulary and they are teaching already, what they do know, at the daycare, the Head Start in our school system. We don’t have any teachers for the students in the public schools and they are asking us for language and culture teachers. We could impact 2036 children daily if we had enough language teachers.

While we continue to explore every possible way to keep our language alive, we have not yet found the key to producing fluent speakers. However, unlike previous generations, including mine, our youngest children attending Oneida child care, the Head Start, Oneida Nation School System, are exposed to the language everyday as part of their daily life.

Additionally, from 2000 to 2003 the tribe received a grant from the ANA grant. This provided two more trainees in multi-media capabilities. Our role is to produce fluent speakers who teach our language to the rest of the tribal members so once again you hear our language spoken on a daily basis.

In summary of the bill, I took the chance to look at it, and I know it's crucial for the survival of native languages. As our language was taken away by forbidding our children to speak, the revitalization of our languages needs to begin with teaching our children again to speak our languages. I applaud the authors of this legislation for recognizing that we must begin with the children and the families. I notice the strong component in there for families' involvement, and that's just absolutely critical to a survival.

There are several concerns I have with the legislation. Not major, but some. In Section 108 B No. 4, "Provide a preference in enrollment for students and families who are fluent in native languages." Since we do not fit this categories and many nations will not, this could be restated, if you are willing to do this, to say "preference for those families who are committed to speaking the native language," so that way you are involving the whole family. You know that the parents will support this when the children go home, and the parents will be learning also.

In Section 108 B 6, "ensure that a Native American language becomes a 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 received funding under this title." Should not the requirement be that Native American language is the dominant language from the beginning of the establishment of the language nest.

We have done some step-by-step immersion types of program, and we find that people will go flip back into English as soon as they are out of class so we need to do everything, everything from the minute you walk in the door, stay in the language.

Section 110, Demonstration Program B 3, said "demonstration programs is located in the state in which at least seven Native American languages are spoken." Could this be a regional consortium several states, if necessary. I don't know that all states have seven different native languages in them, so that would be more inclusive.

Without the enactment of this legislation, the prospects for native languages are dim, as we heard from other panelists. The grants awarded by ANA are so highly competitive, because they don't have that much funding, that we have not been able to receive another grant since 2003.

Additionally, the United Nations Education and Scientific and Cultural Organization has adopted a series of standards that will critically endanger the viability for future generations. This legislation rights the hope with the right resources we should keep our

native languages alive and spoken. Our language, Oneida language, is critically in danger, according to New Mexico standards, and we are working as hard as we can, but we really need the help.

I had a chance at the beginning of August to go to Cherokee, North Carolina and see the language nest. The children were—there were 2-year-olds in the room I went in and they had been in since they were 7 weeks old and everything said to them those children did exactly what they were told. They responded that way. They were even teaching 2-year-olds with flash cards of the Sequoia Sillabary. There was one boy who knew what it meant. It was beautiful. In the other room were about 1-year-olds to a year-and-a-half and everything they did that they told them in the language, they responded. That just made my heart soar, and passing this legislation will also do that for all of us.

[Conclusion spoken in Native American Language.]

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cornelius follows:]

Prepared Statement of Dr. Carol Cornelius, Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin

She.ku kawantyokwa.

I wish to extend a thank you to the Committee for this opportunity to testify on Native language.

I would also like to acknowledge two members of our government, the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin, who could join us today: Melinda Danforth and Paul Ninham

The Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin is located near Green Bay, WI. Our tribal membership is 15,591 with 6,120 living on or near our 65,000 acre reservation. Our homelands are in what is known today as New York State, and we were removed to Wisconsin in the 1820's.

We lost most of our speakers due to historical events such as the boarding school and public schools. Every Oneida family has a story that explains why they don't speak Oneida. My grandmother said, "the only way you'll make in the White man's world is to speak English." And, she refused to teach me. There are heart-rending stories of how our ancestors were abused, both physically and psychologically, in the boarding school for speaking our language.

We have only five fluent speakers left who learned Oneida as their first language. Two of those are over 95 years old and unable to assist us anymore. Three of those Elders who are over 86 years old, work with our 8 language trainees for 2-7 hours per week.

We currently have eight language trainees in our Language Revitalization program for our enrollment of 15,591 people. We need at least a hundred people speaking Oneida to keep the language alive. There is only one person who has been able to learn and become proficient in Oneida as a second language, and he learned from his grandmother. He is currently teaching our trainees.

The Oneida Language Revitalization Program began in the spring of 1996 when a survey found that only 25-30 Elders were left who learned to speak Oneida as their first language. A ten year plan was developed to connect Elders with Oneida Language/Culture Trainees in a semi-immersion process which would produce speakers and teachers of the Oneida language. We began with ten Elders and five trainees. Today we have 3 Elders left and 8 trainees. Our trainees are in language class from 8:30 am to noon, and from 1pm to 3 pm daily, and then they have 1 1/2 hours study time. They have just completed a two year program in basic vocabulary. These next two years they are moving into what we call conversational functionality, meaning they can understand when spoken to and respond to situational conversation in the language. The next phase will be the advanced, when the trainees can stay in the language and respond in a flowing manner, and they will be teaching the Nation. The Trainees utilize Oneida stories from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) from the 1930-1940's, and the Bilingual program (1970's) and are currently documenting the language by recording the Elders.

We have six people who are still at the beginner speaker stage who are already teaching basic vocabulary for our Child Care (100 children), Head Start (108), and our school system (350 elementary, and 125 high school students.) These teachers have not been able to attend classes to advance their speaking ability due to their teaching load. We don't have any teachers for the students in the public schools

(1,353 students) and these young people have asked for language teachers for their schools. We just don't have the language speakers/teachers to meet the needs.

We have tried, and are trying, every possible way to keep our language alive, but we have not yet found the key to producing fluent speakers, yet. What has changed in the current generation is that they are exposed to our language on a limited basis as part of their daily life if they go to Child Care, Head Start, and our Oneida Nation School system. The last two or three generations did not have that opportunity. Our goal is to produce fluent speakers who can teach our language to the rest of our tribal members so that we hear the language spoken on a daily basis.

We have the support of our government as evidenced in four resolutions since 1994 which declare Oneida as the official language of our Nation, and support all efforts to regain our spoken language. We have an Oneida language Charter Team which works on short, intermediate, and long range planning. Language nests and survival schools have always been part of our goals.

Our long range plans include: 1) Official recognition of our elders as National Treasures—completed in 2003, 2) Developing and implementing Oneida Nation Language Teacher Certification based on competencies in speaking, teaching, curriculum, linguistics, and teaching materials development, 3) Developing a career path for our youth to become fluent speakers and teachers, 4) Planning for summer immersion family language experience, 5) a radio station in the language, and 6) hearing Oneida language spoken throughout our Nation. As Oneida people, it is our responsibility to carry the Oneida language to the present and future generations.

The Oneida Language Revitalization Program has a WEB site that has the history of the program, a page dedicated to the staff, and on-line language lessons.

This legislation HR 4766 is crucial for the survival of Native languages which are critically endangered by UNESCO standards. Just as our language was taken away by forbidding our children to speak, so should the revitalization of our languages begin with our children being in language nests. I applaud the authors of this legislation for recognizing that we must begin with the children and their families.

There are several areas of concern in the legislation.

Sec 108, b # 4 "Provide a preference in enrollment for students and families who are fluent in a Native American language." Since we do not fit this category, and many Nations will not, this could be restated to: Preference for those families who are committed to speaking their Native language.

Section 108, b, 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 received funding under this title." Should not the requirement be that the Native American language is the dominant language from the beginning of the establishment of the language nest?

Sec. 110 Demonstration Program b, 3 "is located in a State in which at least 7 Native American languages are spoken" Could this be a regional consortium of several States if necessary?

We had an ANA grant from 2000-2003 which provided two more trainees and multi-media capabilities. However, because ANA has limited resources its grants are so highly competitive we have not been able to receive approval of a grant since 2003. This legislation provides the hope that with the right resources we could keep our Native languages alive.

Yawko, Dane.ho.

Chairman MCKEON. Thank you. Mr. Montoya.

STATEMENT OF SAM MONTOYA, LANGUAGE & CULTURAL RESOURCES, ADMINISTRATOR, PUEBLO OF SANDIA

Mr. MONTOYA. [Introduction spoken in Native American language.]

In my language that means, "How are you this afternoon"? My name is Sam Montoya. I am from Sandia Pueblo where I serve as the Tribe's Language and Cultural Resource Administrator. I work with other tribal members to support policies and procedures that will encourage the preservation of our language and culture at Sandia.

Chairman McKeon, Vice Chairman Petri, Representative Wilson and Representative Udall, I thank you for the opportunity to dis-

cuss native language programs in New Mexico. I hope this meeting will be productive step encouraging native language use in our communities. Thank you for introducing the proposed legislation.

Today I'm going to discuss briefly the state of languages at Sandia Pueblo, what we have done so far and suggestions for ways in which lawmakers here and in Washington can support our efforts and the efforts of our tribal groups. I grew up speaking Southern Tiwa at home with my parents and grandparents. Many other people of my generation went to Indian school in Albuquerque or Santa Fe but I attended school in Bernalillo. A lot of Indian-schooled people were punished for speaking native languages and told that English was the language of school and work. These people returned home and wanted to make things easier for their children, started speaking English more in the home. As a result, I am one of the youngest speakers of Sandia Tiwa. I am 60 years old.

Even though children in the Pueblo attend schools in Bernalillo and Albuquerque now, the missing generational link in terms of language transmission at home has meant that fewer and fewer people are able to speak our language. Community members speak English at work, return home, watch programs in English and listen to music in English words. Our language is one of the important connections we have to history, our culture, our land, and our future as Pueblo people.

During the last 20 years people in the community realize that the language was indeed passed down and have taken steps to promote language learning. Since starting to work on language preservation for the tribe, I have been working with other education staff to expand these efforts. Our approach has been to try to create as many different kinds of learning tools as possible while ensuring that the Sandia Tiwa language remains in the community.

So far we have developed an alphabet enabling us to write the language, finished the first draft of the Tiwa/English Dictionary, completed a 15-lesson dialog-based adult curriculum, developed materials for use in the Head Start classrooms and started a Master-Apprentice Program. In addition, we have just received word that money has been made available for tribal members from Sandia to teach the language to committee members attending Bernalillo County public schools.

We are especially excited about the Master-Apprentice program at Sandia. Because we have few speakers, it is difficult to create situations where total immersion can take place, situations where a large group of people are speaking nothing but Tiwa in order to teach the language in the way it was traditionally passed down—orally. The Master-Apprentice program pairs the speaker or a master with a language learner or apprentice for sessions where instruction in the language can take place anywhere—at home, walking around in the Pueblo, at the store. While these individual immersion sessions can take place outside of the classroom environment, which is the ideal learning situation, we still support making other written tools for learners to use. After the learner has worked with the teacher, written materials can help supplement language skills or can be used during times that the teacher is not available. It is our belief that because there are so many different types of learners, it is up to us to provide as many different materials as

possible, some written, some oral, to support learners and encourage them to speak Tiwa whenever they can.

Although writing is controversial in Pueblo communities, and many others, we are committed to implementing the change while preserving our right to control the written materials created for language instruction.

The benefits of encouraging indigenous language use in our community are numerous. For instance, many of the children at Sandia have recently been learning to use traditional greetings for adults, Nana and Tata. These titles indicate respect in the presence of family structure that extends beyond the nuclear model with all adults responsible for guiding children in the Pueblo and all children recognizing older people as respected elders. Similarly, people are using the Tiwa names for native plants used for medicinal purposes. As you can see from these examples, not everything about our culture that our language captures can be simply translated into English.

Another benefit in our community we have seen as a result of expanding our language program is language use is now something that people discuss, even individuals who are not currently active as teachers or learners. For example, people often avoided talking about the history of forced assimilation in boarding schools I mentioned earlier because of feelings of shame and regret associated with the experience there and the resulting language loss. After educating ourselves about language loss and revitalization and realizing we are one of the communities facing such issues, community members at Sandia are more likely to participate in language programs and talk about what should be done.

Finally, we believe that growing up in a bilingual community is an asset, not a liability. As psychologists and linguists have found, children who are able to communicate in two or more languages have an easier time learning additional languages and new skills. We would like to offer all the advantages of language learning, both specifically and generally, to our children.

In order to continue the expansion of the Sandia Tiwa language program and realize these benefits, I welcome the chance to make several suggestions regarding what can be done at the national level to support our community-based efforts of other tribal groups. For the last 4 years, we have been working with a linguist who helped us to develop our alphabet and other materials. She was fortunate enough to be the recipient of the National Science Foundation/National Endowment for the Humanities Documenting Endangered Languages Fellowship last year, which allowed her to devote her time to working with myself and other education staff on the language program and to train tribal members on using the alphabet and developing Tiwa materials. We strongly recommend increasing funding for this program and others like it so those that can offer technical support to tribes can apply for funding as well as tribal members could be compensated for the time spent participating in activities such as the Master-Apprentice program, or working on new language materials for the community.

I would like to stress all the materials documented as part of this grant are being archived at the Pueblo library. The absolute necessity of recognizing the native people should decide who has access

to language materials, and how to approach language revitalization in the individual communities must be part of the new program funding as well.

As I mentioned before, we have recently received word that there is an opportunity for Sandia Pueblo to choose a community member to teach Tiwa language in the Bernalillo County Schools. This is an important step for the State of New Mexico. We would also like to see, as part of this program, more instructional support to help such programs get off the ground. As many of you in this room who are from communities who have already participated in the program know, people who are fluent speakers do not always have classroom experience and have to develop all their own teaching materials. Providing training on curricular design, second language learning and teaching should be a part of this program which would allow new teachers to be supported during the first year of instruction.

Again, increasing funding opportunities for tribes participating in the process would be helpful. In terms of more intangible ways that we feel our elected representatives can support community efforts to promote indigenous language use, we urge you to withhold support for so-called "English Only" legislation which aims to establish English as the official language of the United States, and support bilingual education in general.

Although Native peoples are part of the individual sovereign nations, we also have a stake in the national language debate as decisions made about policies affect the schools we attend and our participation in the state and national programs.

Trying to establish English as the only official language in this country erases our hard-earned claims to sovereignty and sends a message to our children that our languages are not as valued or as important as English. This runs counter to all of our efforts as indigenous people to reverse language loss and take control of the language policy in our communities.

Thank you all so much for inviting me to talk a little bit about language at Sandia Pueblo, and I look forward to working with all of you to in New Mexico. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Montoya follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Sam Montoya, Language and Cultural Resource
Administrator, Pueblo of Sandia**

Hinu mam kima? In our language this means How is your afternoon going? My name is Sam Montoya. I am from Sandia Pueblo, where I serve as the Tribe's Language and Cultural Resource Administrator. I work with other tribal members to support policies and procedures that will encourage the preservation of our language and culture at Sandia.

Chairman, McKeon, Vice Chairman Petri, Representative Wilson, and Representative Udall, I want to thank you for the opportunity to discuss Native language programs in New Mexico. I hope that this meeting will be a productive step in encouraging Native language use in our communities.

Today I am going to discuss briefly the state of language use at Sandia Pueblo, what we have done so far, and suggestions for ways in which lawmakers here and in Washington can support our efforts and the efforts of other tribal groups. I grew up speaking Southern Tiwa at home with my parents and grandparents. Many other people of my generation went to Indian School in Albuquerque or Santa Fe, but I attended school in Bernalillo. While at Indian School, people were punished for speaking their Native languages, and were told that English was the language of school and work. These people returned home and, wanting to make things easier

on their kids, started speaking English more in the home. As a result, I am one of the youngest speakers of the Sandia Tiwa language.

Even though children from the Pueblo attend school in Bernalillo or Albuquerque now, this missing generational link in terms of language transmission at home has meant that fewer and fewer people are able to speak our language. Community members speak English at work and return home and watch programs in English and listen to music with English words. Our language is one of the most important connections we have to our history, our culture, our lands, and to our future as Pueblo people.

During the last twenty years, people in the community realized that the language wasn't being passed down, and have taken steps to promote language learning. Since starting to work on language preservation for the tribe, I have been working with other Education staff to expand these efforts. Our approach has been to try to create as many different kinds of language learning tools as possible while ensuring that the knowledge of the Sandia Tiwa language remains in the community. So far we have developed an alphabet enabling us to write our language, finished the first draft of a Tiwa/English Dictionary, completed a fifteen lesson dialogue-based adult curriculum, developed materials for use in our Head Start classrooms and started a Master-Apprentice Program. In addition we have just received word that money has been made available for a tribal member from Sandia to teach the language to community members attending Bernalillo Public Schools.

We are especially excited about the new Master-Apprentice program at Sandia. Because we have so few speakers, it is difficult to create situations where total immersion can take place—situations where a large group of people are speaking nothing but Tiwa in order to teach the language the way it was traditionally passed down—orally. The Master-Apprentice Program pairs one speaker or “Master” with one language learner or “Apprentice” for sessions where instruction in the language can take place anywhere—at home, walking around the Pueblo, at the store. While these individual immersion sessions can take place outside of the classroom environment, which is the ideal learning situation, we still support making other, written tools for learners to use. After a learner has worked with their teacher, written materials can help to supplement language skills, or can be used during times that a teacher is not available. It is our belief that because there are so many different types of learners, it is up to us to provide as many materials as possible—some written, some oral—to support learners and encourage them to speak Tiwa whenever they can. Although writing is controversial in Pueblo communities, and many others, we are committed to implementing this new change while preserving our right to control the written materials created for language instruction.

The benefits of encouraging indigenous language use in our community and others are numerous. For instance, many of the children at Sandia have recently been learning to use the traditional greetings for adults: Nana and Tata. These titles indicate respect and the presence of a family structure that extends beyond the nuclear model, with all adults responsible for guiding children at the Pueblo and all children recognizing older people as respected elders. Similarly, people are learning the Tiwa names for native plants that can be used for medicinal purposes. As you can see from these examples, not everything about our culture that our language captures can be simply translated into English. Another benefit to our community that we have seen as a result of expanding our language program is that language use is now something people discuss, even individuals who are not currently acting as teachers or learners. For example, people often avoided talking about the history of forced assimilation in boarding schools I mentioned earlier because of feelings of shame and regret associated with experiences there and the resulting language loss. After educating ourselves about language loss and revitalization and realizing that we are one of many communities facing such issues, community members at Sandia are much more likely to participate in language programs and talk about what should be done. Finally, we believe that growing up in a bilingual community is an asset, not a liability. As psychologists and linguists have found, children who are able to communicate in two or more languages have an easier time learning additional languages and accomplishing new tasks. We would like to offer all the advantages of language learning, both specific and general, to our children.

In order to continue the expansion of the Sandia Tiwa language program and realize these benefits, I welcome this chance to make several suggestions regarding what can be done at the national level to support our community based efforts and the efforts of other tribal groups. For the last four years we have been working with a linguist who has helped in the development of our alphabet and other materials. She was fortunate enough to be a recipient of the National Science Foundation/National Endowment of the Humanities Documenting Endangered Languages Fellowship last year, which allowed her to devote her time to working with myself and

other Education staff on the language program and to train tribal members on using the alphabet and developing Tiwa materials. We strongly recommend increasing funding for this program, and others like it, so that those that can offer technical support for tribes can apply for funding as well as tribal members who could be compensated for their time spent participating in activities such as the Master-Apprentice Program, or working on new language materials for the community. I would like to stress all materials produced as part of this NSF/NEH grant are being archived at the Pueblo library. The absolute necessity of recognizing that Native people should decide who has access to language materials and how to approach language revitalization in their individual communities must be part of any funding program as well.

As I mentioned before, we have recently received word that there is an opportunity for Sandia Pueblo to choose a community member to teach the Tiwa language in the Bernalillo Schools. This is an important step forward for the State of New Mexico. We would also like to see, as part of this program, more institutional support to help such programs get off the ground. As many of you in this room who are from communities who have already participated in this program know, people who are fluent speakers do not always have classroom experience, and have to develop all of their own teaching materials. Providing training on curricula design, second language learning and teaching should be part of this program, which would allow new teachers to be supported during the first years of instruction. Again, increasing funding opportunities for tribes participating in this process would be helpful.

In terms of more intangible ways that we feel our elected representatives can support community efforts to promote indigenous language use, we urge you to withhold support of so-called "English Only" legislation, which aims to establish English as the official language of the United States, and support bilingual education in general. Although Native peoples are part of individual sovereign nations, we also have a stake in the national language debate as decisions made about policy affect the school we attend and our participation in State and National programs. Trying to establish English as the only official language of this country erases our hard-earned claims to sovereignty and sends a message to our children that our languages are not as valued or important as English. This runs counter to all of our efforts as indigenous people to reverse language loss and take control of language policy in our communities.

Thank you all so much for inviting me to talk a little bit about language at Sandia Pueblo, and I look forward to working with you all to increase Native language use here in New Mexico.

Haweu.

Chairman MCKEON. I thank each and every one of you who attended this hearing today.

**STATEMENT OF KIMBERLY J. TABAHA, SENIOR, WINDOW
ROCK HIGH SCHOOL**

Ms. TABAHA. Ya'ateeh to each and every one of you who are attending this hearing today.

[Portion spoken in Native American language.] What that means in my language is, "My clan are Red Running Into the Water People clan." My maternal grandfather is Red Bottom People clan and my paternal grandfather is Water Edge People clan. I am 17 years old and currently a senior at Window Rock High School. My parents are George and Imogene Tabaha. I am second oldest of my siblings. I have one older brother who recently graduated and three younger brothers. All together, I have a family of seven. We reside in Coalmine, New Mexico. We moved closer to my mother's relatives because, as my culture usually says, the husband would have to move or the wife goes.

First of all, I would like to thank the committee and, of course, Darrel Begay for the opportunity of a lifetime for me to share with you my way of expressing my culture. Good afternoon to the hon-

ored guests, dignitaries and the audience who are present here on this fine afternoon.

I am here sitting in front of you all today to share how my Dine culture helped me through my life. I started out in a Navajo immersion program since my kindergarten days. I have been a part of many cultural events and I still continue today.

My Navajo tradition is important aspect of my life, my family, my friends and my fellows in the Nation. I joined a princess pageant during my Middle School year that required native talent and speeches written in Navajo. I was devastated to know that not even half of the contestants could speak their own Native tongue but they all were excellent and that is why I am here today to strongly support the Navajo immersion classes to continue that will benefit all the younger generations from here as long as we have your full support.

My language helped me obtain a title that I well deserved and am proud of. I was the Miss Tse Ho Tse Middle School princess and I represented my school well. To be honest, I was proud to know my knowledge of my language and traditions which gave me a strong self-esteem to succeed in school. To me and most of my peers, also some of the adults, say our language itself has many meanings symbolizing our way of life. My teachers, Ms. Lydia Fasthorse Begay and Lucy Antone and my parents agree with what I am representing to you all. Their support is what I have right now, including many other supporters. The grievance our grandparents go and still go through is knowing they couldn't really rely on their grandkids who don't know nothing of their native tongue.

Yes, we do have Navajo classes located in our schools but what of the other schools that don't? Not all Dine are learning their language and it hurts me and our parents, mainly our grandparents. Some say our language is on the verge of extinction and my generation has a chance to save our language. How can we if there's only two or three schools located in the country who have Navajo classes as one of their subjects? We need more Navajo language programs provided to us teen-agers and young children around.

I once saw a movie that said, "With great power comes great responsibility" and I strongly agree. Our weapon to society is our language and that gives us strength to go on and pursue our dreams. From experience I know my Navajo tradition has made me see beyond what I thought and wondered about my whole life. For example, I plan to attend college and major in computer science. Being a part of something that means a lot to more than one person is something I have foreseen a lot in my younger days but many students don't really have the same vision as some of us because they don't have the encouragement very few of us young adults have.

But the future now holds the truth of how our language and tradition can change the course of the future. I will maintain and balance my tradition, including my language, along with the Western way of life, and I leave that up to you all. If you do consider more schools with Navajo immersion classes, I'm sure we will have the chance to save our Dine language. Thank you all for your time and your strong support to keep our Navajo immersion class going.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Tabaha follows:]

Prepared Statement of Kimberly J. Tabaha, Student of Window Rock High School

Ya'ateeh, each & every one of you who are attending this Hearing today. First of all I would like to thank Congressman Mr. Rick Renzi, Mr. Daryl Begay for this opportunity of a life time to share with you my way of expressing my Dine Culture. And Good Morning to the honored guess, distinguish guess, dignitary guess and the audiences who are present here this fine morning.

(Introduction in Navajo but revised in English)

Hello my name is Kimberly Tabaha. My clans are Red Running into the water people clan, born for the Towering House clan, My Maternal Grandfather is Red bottom people clan, My Paternal Grandfather is Water Edge People Clan. I'm 17 years old and currently a senior at Window Rock High School. My parents are George and Imogene Tabaha. I am the second oldest of my siblings. I have one older brother who recently graduated and three younger brothers. All together I have a family of seven. We reside in Coalmine, New Mexico, we move closer to my mother relative because as the culture usually says the Husband would have to move where his wife goes.

I'm standing here in front of all of you today to share how my Dine Culture helped me through my life. I started out in Navajo Immersion Program since my kindergarten days. I've learned many of my Navajo Traditional value since then. I have been apart of many cultural events and I still continue today. My Navajo Tradition is an important aspect of my life, family, friends, and my fellow Dine Nation.

I've joined the Princess Pageant during my Middle School year that required native talent and speeches written in Navajo. I was devastated to know that not even half of the contestant couldn't speak there own native tongue but they all were excellent. And that is why I am here to strongly support the Navajo immersion classes to continue that will benefit all the younger generation from here as long as we get your full support. My language helped me obtain a title that I well deserved and most proud of. I was the Miss Tse Ho Tso Middle School Princess, and I represented my school well. To be honest I was proud to know my knowledge of my language and tradition.

To me and most of my peers also some adult say our language itself has many meanings symbolizing our way of life. My teachers Mrs. Lydia Fasthorse Begay and Mrs. Lucy Antone and my grandparents agree with what I'm presenting to you all. There support is what I have right now including many others supporters. The grievance our grandparents go and still go through is that knowing they couldn't really rely on there grandkids who don't know nothing of there native tongue. Yes, we do have Navajo classes located in our schools but what of the other school that don't? Not all our Dine are learning there language and it hurts me and our parents, mainly our grandparents. Some say our language is on the verge of extinction and my generation has a chance on saving our language. How can we, If there is only two or three school located in the country who have Navajo classes as one of there subjects. We need more Navajo language programs provided to teenagers and young children.

I once saw a move that said "With Great Power comes Great Responsibility * * *" and I strongly agree. Our weapon to society is our language and that gives us strength to go on and pursue our dreams. From experience I know my Navajo Tradition has made me see beyond what I have thought and wondered about my whole life. Being apart of something that means a lot to more than one person is something I have foreseen in my younger days. But many students don't really have the same vision as some of us because they don't really have the encouragement and the classes very few of us young adults have. But the future now holes the truth of how our language and tradition can change the course of the future. And I leave that up to you all, and if you do consider more school with the Navajo immersion classes I'm sure we will have the chance on saving our dine language.

Thank you for you time and your strong support to keep our Native Immersion class going.

Chairman MCKEON. We only have about 20 minutes left, so Ms. Wilson, would you please lead us out in the questioning.

Mrs. WILSON OF NEW MEXICO. Thank you Mr. Chairman. With your permission, I would like to enter into the record a resolution of support from All Indian Pueblo Council.

Chairman MCKEON. No objection.

[The resolution referred to follows:]

The National Congress of American Indians

Resolution #ABQ-03-026

TITLE: Reaffirmation of Tribal expertise on all issues pertaining to heritage language and cultural knowledge

WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, universities and colleges historically have been considered the education experts for the training of the teachers of our children;

WHEREAS, the public school system has historically determined the educational standards for our children;

WHEREAS, Indian people have been led to believe through the practices of this educational system that these standards are the best for our children;

WHEREAS, First peoples' languages are falling silent due to both past and present education and assimilation policies in the United States;

WHEREAS, our heritage languages are an integral part our cultures and identities and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of our cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values;

WHEREAS, languages are the means of communication for the full range of human experiences and are critical to the survival of cultural and political integrity of any people;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NCAI does hereby reaffirm the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby reaffirm that sovereign tribal nations are the sole owners of Native cultural property rights and sole experts of their heritage languages and cultural knowledge and shall be consulted in all matters regarding the conceptualization, development and implementation of any language/culture initiative, research or program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that no language/culture policy will be conceptualized, developed or implemented without the direct involvement of sovereign tribal nations; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

CERTIFICATION

The resolution was adopted at the 60th Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, on November 21, 2003, with a quorum present.

Adopted by the General Assembly during 60th Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from November 17-21, 2003.

Mrs. WILSON OF NEW MEXICO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dr. Cornelius, I have to say any class that can get 2-year-olds to do what they are told has more going for it than just language. I want to know what the secret is there. I really have one question of real-

ly the four of you: Dr. Cornelius, Mr. Ryan, Dr. Sims and Mr. Montoya.

That is, what are the characteristics of language programs or language recovery programs that make them successful? I know there are probably some that work better than others. What are the things that make a good or successful immersion or recovery program and so how do we make sure that this works? And what have you seen from your experience? If the four of you would comment on the question, I would appreciate it.

Mr. WILSON. That's the first time I have seen Chairman Shije give up a mike. What I believe is important in this bill is it creates a demonstration project, whatever that may be, to exactly extrapolate what are those elements that make that happen. What we have seen through visiting these programs in schools is what Dr. Cornelius said is complete immersion, for one thing. That's a critical element of it. It's that when you walk through those doors and you are around it, you are completely 100 percent immersed in that particular language of that tribal community.

We have spent millions of dollars over the years since this Native American Language Act was passed on programs, on activities, on camps, on cultural stuff that hasn't created fluent speakers. What we have seen that actually works to create fluent speakers and the young people that can complete academically in mainstream is the complete immersion. The ownership of the—the panel talked about this as well. It's a sense of validation, sense of ownership in the school. You talk to any young people all over. We don't have these big alumni associations to donate back to their schools because they never felt that they owned the school in the first place. That's not happening. There's incredible sense of pride from the students coming out of them.

Ms. SIMS. I think what I would like to add to that is some key things that we have observed in terms of language immersion programs that we have here in our own communities, and one thing that is very key is that you have people who are trained, who know something about language teaching. That's crucial. That is why we advocate so strongly and underscore the need for training native speakers who can teach language.

You must realize for many of our communities this is a fairly new thing to be actually teaching language. Because up to a certain period of time in our history, languages were strong. Now that we have generations who don't learn or know the languages as their first languages, then you need to have folks who understand the principles of how languages work. So training is an important one.

Beyond that, we know that the consistency and the long-term opportunity that children have to learn language is also very key. We are not talking about language programs that go from kindergarten and suddenly stop at Grade Three. We are talking about the need to develop language and let that language grow all the way through secondary school and beyond. So that's another key element.

The other key element I think that we find especially among our programs is—and I don't know how you quantify this, but it's an element of the teachers using curriculum, using lessons that come from the children's communities themselves. That provides the rel-

evancy of language teaching and it also provides a way in which children learn the context for how the languages are used so that ties in the link, the people who come from the community, who are trained, that link that comes from using the things that come from the community as the vehicles for language teaching, those are some of the most critical elements that we see time and time again.

Ms. CORNELIUS. We tried for a while—we had a program—our trainees were still learning but we sent them out to families. And the rules were that the family had to make the commitment they would all be there. They would turn off the T.V., turn off the telephone, the cell phones, everything. Everything was on hold for that couple hours. And what we found was that you would start with the family, like the nuclear family, and pretty soon grandma was coming and uncles and the aunts were coming and cousins would start. Of course, we would have to eat, so it was always around suppertime, but we found that to be one of the better ways to learn the language.

But in time, though, there has to be a way to structure around, like you are saying, curriculum and units of accomplishment because all the sudden the kids are in basketball and baseball so they have other activities, so if we could do it so the families make this commitment, say 2 months at suppertime everyday—once a week doesn't work, found that out—everyday we will do the language, be learning, and after 2 months take a break and start again for a little while, you know, for a period of time, that that may even help.

But that family commitment, having the whole family involved in the language makes a tremendous difference. I think that's the success of the family nest. That was the grandma who started that with the little ones, and was with them all the time. So I think that's critically important.

Also keeping the culture, the values. Last week our trainees went out berry picking. It's that time of year. But they did it in the language. So it's what you are doing. Then we have a ceremony that goes with that, so that the values and the traditions, our beliefs that I must say.—native words—what our mother earth teaches us is incorporated in everything we learn. There's a lot of ways and I have totally back-trained teachers. I think the lessons, too. That's very important.

Mr. MONTROYA. I think for successful program, it has to be community. You know, you want to have teachers, you want to have masters, apprentices, but it has to be something that is committed to by the whole community. Because the classroom is wherever you are and you create your own opportunities, and many times the teacher is looked upon as she is the one that's going to do it. In actuality, the apprentice has to take half the responsibility to say, hey, "Wait a minute, I am just trying to learn. Be patient." They have to learn to say, "Again"? They have to learn to say, "Slower," so for people like myself, one of the things that I had to learn was that we started with vocabulary. We started under the assumption that there was no embarrassment and no guilt on the part of the people that didn't know their language.

And many times I noticed that they were so busy trying to keep away from each other what they didn't know that most of their effort was toward that and it impaired trying to absorb the language.

So the culture has to be there to bring this thing together and everybody pulling toward wanting to learn. Everybody is a master and everybody is an apprentice.

So I think the other consideration that's very important, you have to spend time. Just because you are a fluent speaker doesn't mean that you are a teacher or you have the ability. There has to be curricular design. There has to be patience on the part of the master. Because I thought that somebody could say something ten times and the apprentice would be able to pick it up. Not necessarily so.

In reading other efforts throughout the world, not just in this area, it's not unreasonable to expect somebody to have to say something 350 times in order to get it right because they didn't hear it well enough, they didn't say it. They don't recognize things like *toa* which is meat, and *doa* which is hip. And they don't recognize the sounds that don't exist in English. In my language, there's 15 sounds that don't exist in English.

So in my efforts to teach vocabulary, I ended up having to back off of vocabulary and teach how to make sounds like *cha*, like *ta* like *pa*. Kind of silent sounds. So now we have characters for all of those in our alphabet. We have a 36-character alphabet. It has almost all of the sounds of English except C, J, X and one more letter. I can't remember what that is. But we do have 15 sounds that don't exist in English and if you are a nonspeaker, you have to learn to make those sounds before you can say a word because you might say a word and get slapped in the face. So you have to get down to some very basics and you have to get rid of the shame and get rid of the guilt and it has to be community.

Mrs. WILSON OF NEW MEXICO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MCKEON. Thank you very much. Mr. Udall.

Mr. UDALL OF NEW MEXICO. Thank you Mr. Chairman. All of you on the panel, I think, a very powerful testimony to support immersion programs, and I think it demonstrated for us how important native languages are to continuing native traditions. And we know from language experts, I think, a couple things that are important here that I want to ask you about.

First of all, when you have a newborn, a newborn knows and can recognize all the sounds needed for learning any language, and we also know it's much easier to learn languages at an early age, and if you learn two languages you are then able to learn other languages more quickly. So knowing that and looking at the bills that are before this committee, all of these bills create Native American immersion programs, which I think we are all in agreement that these are very important programs.

My question goes to the idea of you have what in the bills are called language nests which serve children under the age of seven and their families, and you have language survival schools serving students in elementary and secondary schools. Should we be putting our limited dollars toward the earliest stages or should we be spreading them out from the early ages on up? I am just wondering if you can comment a little, too, on the kinds of programs. I mean, I have seen at many of the Pueblo where they get the grandmas and grandpas into Head Start and try to get at those very, very early ages.

So what are the mechanisms that we should be utilizing that you know about to assist in moving language learning along as quickly as possible at the right age? Thank you. Any panelist that would like to jump in on that, please.

Ms. CORNELIUS. What we found is that we are teaching like just basic vocabulary with the little ones in the child care and the Head Start, but they learn a little prayer they say before they eat. It's just beautiful and I have taught the management people my age with that prayer because we don't want to be behind these little kids. They are doing so great.

But then after you get through Head Start they have the choice, they can go to five public schools or to our tribal school. The majority, about 400 and some go to the tribal schools, so there's another 1500 going to public schools, and then they lose it. So that's why I really liked in this bill that you were going to do the nest and really get them speaking and put them in survival schools so then keep on learning and speaking. Otherwise, I have parents come to me and say, "They used to be able to say all of that. Now in third grade they don't know it anymore." I said, "It's in there. It's tucked away. But they have gotten out of the chance to learn." So I think the emphasis on the little ones and the progression in the school they are going to is crucial.

Ms. SIMS. Limited dollars are always, you know, something that all of us, I guess, contend with, especially when you have limited resources in communities. From the example that we have here in New Mexico of one language nest actually that is the Pueblo of Cochiti. Many of the resources that we see are needed, yes, need to be put into programs where we provide children that very early experience in language development. When you figure that two and 3-year-olds are just right at the cusp of all kinds of learning, development potential, it makes sense that we start with providing funding for those kinds of programs.

But as well, if we are to realize that these children need that support and consistency in language learning throughout their school years, then we have to think about those resources also spread as well, not just elementary school but also through high school. I mention that simply because we see so much of the efforts that have gone into early language nests like, say, the Pueblo of Cochiti. We see the efforts that some communities put in organizing summer immersion language programs which are community-based efforts. Those should also be available for funding support. We also see the kinds of efforts that are taking place in the public schools where we find heritage language programs being implemented. And it's at that particular stage also, middle school, high school, where some of these first kinds of things are—children are developing in terms of their identity where that language becomes so crucial, and we see that in the high school immersion classes that we do have in two communities, two or three communities here in New Mexico, where secondary kids need that support because it really, I think, provides them the kind of foundation that prepares them for life-long language learning, not just in schools but also beyond. So when you ask where do we spread limited resources, I have to say from the earliest all the way up to the secondary.

Mr. SHIJE. Representative Udall and members of the committee, to answer that question I think my viewpoints are probably going to be a little different from what you heard. In my own experience, I believe when a child is born—because Pueblo themselves here in this region, some of them are—a majority of them, let's say a majority of them are very traditional. So when a child is born, that child receives a lot of attention. Not only from the parents but also from the grandparents and the close relatives that are nearby.

Where the child starts encountering some problems as far as the language barrier is not in the early ages but once they start going to school, because these children at that point in time are receiving a lot of pressure. They are under some tremendous pressure from not only the parents or relatives telling them that, "You have to learn your language first." They are told that and they try to do that to the best of their ability and a lot of them do succeed. But when they start going to the school systems, then the school systems is telling them, "You have to learn English. That is priority over your native language." And then all the sudden they are confused.

They are asking themselves, they are asking their parents, they are asking, "what are we supposed to do? Which language is more important for us"? And so my thinking is where the monies start coming in is right at that age where the students start going to school. That's where the limited funds, as you call it, should be sent to the school system. From that point on, I believe the child will learn from, as we did, those of us who grew up at my age group. We played together, you know, and we always stuck to each other. I mean, we don't see that anymore. These young people have cars and they can just jump in the car and go off someplace else, and be doing something other than what we grew up doing.

So my thinking is these funds should be immersed into once a child is entering school, from that point on you need to hire staff people that can teach these young people the language or anything having to do with their culture and tradition. That's what I talked about earlier regarding the Zia Elementary School where one individual was teaching it. That doesn't do justice to those kids nor does it do justice to the teacher because she also has other functions within the school system where she drives the bus or helps out with some of the other classroom at the schools. So that would be my answer.

Mr. MONTROYA. We are making a game of catch-up here. The community, in terms of its heritage language, is lacking in the community itself. So in my view, it's very important that it starts at infancy. But it needs to continue beyond the school level because our experience has been that children are going home, beginning to speak and ask questions, "pass the salt," so on at the meal, and the parents don't know what's going on. So we are trying to build curriculums that are responsive at all levels.

But it's very important that we start with infancy where they can recognize the sounds that don't exist in English and they need the exercise for the tongues to learn how to make those sounds. They are going to learn English. There's no problem with that. But they need to learn how to make the sounds that don't exist in English.

Ms. TABAHA. I have to say I have a little brother who is now 2 years old and I have been teaching him Navajo for I don't know how long now, and I agree that it should start from infancy because, like he said, they need to learn to adjust to the way it is taught.

So what the teachers have been doing and the principal at Navajo immersion has been doing is they have a program that is set from six to eight or six to eighth grade teaching Navajo immersion only, and another school that is English but it still has Navajo also as one of their subjects.

So what they are shooting for is a school for Navajo from K through 12, so students can have a choice of learning our full language fluently and also English fluently so we can know both languages at the same time. I think that's the way it should be, start from infancy, from kindergarten to 12th grade, so you have both languages.

Chairman MCKEON. Thank you very much. Mr. Petri.

Mr. PETRI. One quick question. I know we are about at the end of the allotted time and it's fascinating. The actual question, I know Dr. Cornelius or Mr. Wilson alluded to it in your testimony. Of the 300 languages roughly Indian languages that existed in North America, it's down considerably, are they in archived? Are they being lost or are they being—even if not spoken are they being preserved so people can use them and bring them back as part of their culture or are they lost forever. Do you know what the situation is? This might be another area that we should be taking a good look at.

Mr. WILSON. We did a couple surveys. One was funded by the Administration for Native Americans and we came up with that number after consulting with other people. When we say 300 primary languages pre contact, that's just the core languages. It's not including the different dialects of those as well, which could be over 1,000 different ones. When we did the survey what we found, we didn't ask how many languages are still spoken per se. We did find that out. To the best of our abilities we came up with a little bit over 100 are still used in tribal communities. But out of that, the scary thing we found is only 20 of those languages, give or take a few, were spoken by children. So we looked at the health of the language isn't how many languages you have, it's at what age groups is it and the generations and that's what was really frightening to everybody, this crisis.

When you talk about preservation, we understand that is a word that you can look at both ways. One is you preserve a language to revitalize it later, but what we have also seen is there's huge efforts on preserving recorded languages without reviving them and creating fluent speakers.

So there's a repository set up here at the American Indian Art Institute. There's also the Smithsonian Museum has done a lot with the Library of Congress as well, and there's early ethnographers that worked on recording that, too, and there's been a lot of money through ANA that's gone into recording the language.

But what we have also seen is this doesn't create fluent speakers. We don't want the languages in a jar on the shelf like a but-

terfly that's preserved or whatever. We want them used and that's what we really want.

Ms. CORNELIUS. They say native peoples are the most studied peoples on the face of the earth and we are. Our language has been—in the 1930's through WK Project they first recorded our language and linguists created a writing system for it. In the 1970's they took those tons of documents and started to translate them, so we have them in Oneida, and English underneath the Oneida, and then the English. They recorded those. So those were sitting in a box of reel-to-reels and cassette tapes and it was like fingernails on a chalkboard to me that I knew they were deteriorating so I reassigned one of our young folks—not that young, he is about fifty—to archive these. So what he has done is gotten everything from that medium and now they are digitalized. I say that word carefully. I had to learn how to pronounce it.

So we are making those steps but the bigger thing we had to do next is to put those—not only just preserved but put on a data base so anybody who wants to learn can go and find it on the data base. So we are applying for a grant for that, so I go back to grant writing after we are done with this.

So yes, we are looking at that. Like Mr. Wilson said, all of those documents and the studies of us, all the linguistic things have not produced a fluent speaker, so we know those are a tool, but to me, to be able to find a cassette tape of my great grandma telling a story, to hear her voice doing that is just phenomenal. So we are preserving. What we are doing with the few elders we have left is getting them to tell stories and recording that. So there are a lot of materials available.

Chairman MCKEON. I think that's very important. That was one of the questions that I was wondering about, too, because if you got just one person left that can speak, I know you don't want it in a jar but better having it in a jar than nowhere and you need to do some intervention there to do that. Sounds like you are doing that.

We have really come to the end, and I want to thank all of you. This has been most educational and most inspirational, I think, to hear your stories and most motivational, I think, to get us to do something.

You know, in this country it's sad but it seems like we think that we are only capable of learning and speaking one language. I remember when I took Spanish in high school. It was kind of a waste of time because I didn't really learn Spanish. But in Europe they speak six, seven languages. They don't think anything of it. For some reason we never have, as a nation, several nations, have felt or been capable of learning more than one language. I think that's a deficiency in our educational process that needs to be looked at.

Let me tell you, just in wrapping up just a little bit, about my family so you know that this is not something hopefully that I think that was mentioned, that you look at this a little skeptical that maybe this is a show that we are doing that we are not going to do anything after this. I want you to know my commitment to this.

I have three grandsons that are one-eight Quapaw. They are struggling now learning English. I don't know if there is a Quapaw language because their father only learned, only is just now trying

to engage and get back with his Indian heritage. They went to a pow wow—they live in Utah. They went to a pow wow down in Oklahoma. My daughter thought boy, these people are going to be so happy to see me. They didn't care about her. They were sure glad to see him and involved him in the tribal leadership. It's just a start for them to get back to that culture. So I have Indian grandchildren and I am proud of it and I am happy about it.

When I was serving on my mission here in New Mexico, a lot of the families that we visited, and as I said, I was working with Latino people, a lot of the families would not teach their children Spanish because they said then they will have an accent and won't be able to get a job. Now it's very important to know Spanish and English and especially in California where I am from, and I'm sure it is here in New Mexico and Arizona and Texas and many other places throughout the country.

It really saddens me to hear what the Nation has done, what this country has done to your nations with stopping you from learning the language. I am not concerned about Spanish. I am not concerned about French. There will be lots of people around the world speaking those languages. But I am concerned about losing your languages so I am committed to doing that.

I think there are a lot of ways to learn language. You have mentioned you have to have somebody that knows teaching, not just the language, but how to teach the language. There's a difference. But, you know, I was in China and I saw millions of little Chinese kids that could speak Chinese. The problem is that only now the grandparents know, so that generation was skipped so we need to teach the children the language. I know that we have through the military, and I know the FBI has language training schools in Santa Barbara and other places around the country that are very, very proficient at teaching languages, so we need to reach out to them and find out some of those skills. I know our church has a great ability to teach languages. We have language training centers where we send our young people and they learn before they go to foreign countries to speak lots of languages. I know there's skills that they have to reach out to them to try to get all of those.

This hearing, we very easily could have held this in Washington. That's where we hold most of our hearings. As you said, this is a momentous occasion to have this hearing here. It's at Heather's urging—Ms. Wilson's urging, her leadership, her work on the issue that we are here, and we will continue to look at her for continued leadership on this issue. She is not on the committee. However, I sat on Armed Services Committee with her for a long time, and I know what a tough proponent she is when she gets behind something, so I know that I will be hearing from her very often with this issue. I will be very supportive of all of that.

So thank you for being here. Thank you for being here. Do you want the last word?

Mr. SHJE. I just want the record to let you know that I'm going to request testimony submittals from the 19 Pueblo Governors, too, to be a part of the record so you will be receiving those also, and also before we leave, because this is a forum that we are talking about language and cultural values, as Pueblo people, we started the meeting with the call of the spirits to give us the strength and

wisdom to carry the meeting through. Now before we close we have to also release those spirits and send them on their way so they can take those messages back. So we will ask that you call on Governor Coriz when the time comes for him to give the closing.

Chairman MCKEON. I appreciate that. Thank you very much. We will hold the record open for you to—seven days? Fourteen days so you can add any additional comments. I hope that you will work with us as we go through the process. You gave some discussions today for changes in the legislation. That's the process that we work through, and we will continue to work on that. We have very little time left in the session. I can't promise we can get it done in this session, but we will do our best and see what we can do. Sometimes it's better not to hurry something, make mistakes. Sometimes we would drag things too long. So we will try to get a balance and get movement on this issue.

Again, thank you all for being here, and for bearing with us and listening through this and with your suggestion, Governor, could we ask you to give us a benediction here and the hearing will be closed.

Governor CORIZ. Thank you. Congress and panelists, we were discussing how important it is that our child's early language had begun. One of the things as a traditional Pueblo, I think the early age where the child is being in the womb of the mother. That's the earliest part of the thing. I think if we are going to promote education, it has to begin from a good, positive, caring loving care that our Native people, that we need to carry forth at the earliest possible age in the mother's womb.

When the child is born into this world he has to have love and care and the child has been loved by the mother when he comes into this world. Very innocent child born into this world. Thank you.

[Benediction spoken in Native American language.]

And have a good holiday.

[Whereupon, at 4:40 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[Additional testimony submitted for the record follow:]

[The prepared statement of Ms. McCollum of Minnesota follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Hon. Betty McCollum, a Representative in Congress
From the State of Minnesota**

I regret that I cannot attend today's field hearing—"Recovery and Preservation of Native American Languages." There has long been an urgent need to recover and preserve Native American languages and to reaffirm the Federal government's commitment to strengthening Native American education, and today's hearing is an important step in reinvigorating the Federal government's partnership with Native people and communities.

As a nation we must reaffirm our commitment to preserve, to honor, and to teach the living traditions, cultures, and languages of the First Americans who have and continue to contribute to the strength of our nation and communities as teachers, community leaders, business owners, artists, elected officials, and neighbors.

The National Indian Education Association, which speaks on issues on behalf of Native Americans, continues to identify the recovery and preservation of Native languages as one of their highest priorities. I strongly support their efforts.

As a country, I believe we have a moral obligation to live up to the commitment of the laws and executive orders that promise the incorporation of Native culture in education, such as Title VII. The facts cannot be ignored—decades of federal restrictions on the instruction and use of Native languages in everyday life led to a deliberate and regrettable decline in Native languages spoken. As a country we must commit the resources to recover and preserve Native languages and to ensure

that Native students receive the unique cultural education, including language, promised to them.

Unfortunately, if we continue down the path we are on—it is estimated that only twenty indigenous languages will be viable by 2050. This would be shameful.

Within the state of Minnesota, there are two tribal nations—the Dakota Nation and the Ojibwe Nation with eleven reservations. Across these different reservations, language dialects vary. While much more can be done to strengthen these languages, the Dakota language is doing fairly well. In fact, there are significant numbers of elders teaching language to youth—especially in Head Start programs.

But in Minnesota, it is only becoming more difficult to find elders to teach the Ojibwe language—the fourth most spoken Native language in North America, which has 10,000 speakers.

Like in other parts of the nation, there are additional, smaller indigenous languages across the state of Minnesota—but the efforts to recover and preserve them have been difficult because the populations are so small.

This cannot be the fate of any more indigenous languages.

While Minnesota has a variety of language resources available at area colleges, schools and organizations, these learning arenas continue to need our support more than ever.

In the urban areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul, American Indian language instruction and learning has been hindered due to the small and diverse number of tribes and languages represented in their community—but this should not hinder efforts to foster language preservation and revitalization. In fact, within the Minneapolis and St. Paul areas, community language tables are held and it is these types of efforts that must continue to be fostered and developed. These are the kinds of efforts that must be supported by the federal government. And Native Americans are right to request the help of Congress.

Unfortunately, it appears that despite treaties and laws and executive orders that call for the preservation and incorporation of Native language and culture into education—we are living at a time when Native American languages and culture are being eroded and neglected.

And, despite significant research that indicates Native children do better in all subjects when taught through the use of Native languages and culture—Title VII funding and other Indian education resources are being reduced or inappropriately assigned to Title I functions of the No Child Left Behind law.

I am concerned about recent policies put forth by this Administration that have weakened Native education through the weakening of Title VII—which will negatively affect the preservation and recovery of Native languages and culture.

Schools and Title VII administrations have felt pressure to focus Title VII resources—specifically set aside for Native children—on Title I goals—which have nothing to do with Native culture and language.

Schools should be able to focus Title VII resources on Title VII goals—this funding should not be siphoned off and diverted to support the other goals of NCLB—especially at the expense of Native culture and the children set to inherit it.

Native children are guaranteed the right to not only the highest quality education—but also a unique and culturally relevant education that includes Native language instruction.

It is for these reasons that I joined with several of my colleagues in sending a letter to the Secretary of Education requesting a clarification of the Department of Education's policy towards Title VII.

The response I received did not address the concerns I heard from the Native community—and I will continue to press the Bush Administration to ensure the unique and high quality educational opportunities Native children deserve—and have been promised.

I submit for the record both the letter to the Secretary and her response.

I commend the work of those who refuse to allow Native language and culture to disappear and who instead work to strengthen and preserve Native languages—such as the National Indian Education Association. Your efforts are important and necessary and I look forward to continued work with you on this critical issue.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Gregory follows:]

Prepared Statement of Dr. George Ann Gregory, Choctaw/Cherokee

I grew up without the benefit of either my mother or my father's Native languages. Not having those languages breaks me from the past of my peoples. Language represents reality, so I do not have that reality. And this is a loss to me. It

is a loss to my peoples. It is a loss to this nation. This country is losing its original languages and being completely supplanted by the colonial language of English. I would like to note that there has never been a time in history when multilingualism was more needed, and the US is losing that ability.

A year ago in May, I returned from New Zealand, where I spent four months as a Fulbright scholar studying Maori language revitalization. The Maori have been working on this for about 30 years now. Thirty years ago, the Maori language was spoken primarily by people over 50 years of age. It was a dying language. Today, there are young Maori entering graduate school, who started off in the immersion kohanga reo (language nests) and English is their Second Language. They are able to function academically in two languages now. As in the US, English is in little danger of disappearing. It is everywhere.

The revitalization of the Maori language has gone hand-in-hand with economic and educational development by Maori communities. By that I mean that regaining their own language has given many Maori the self-confidence to achieve more in both their own traditions and in the current technological, economic development of New Zealand itself. It has improved their citizenship and their contribution to both ways of life. Additionally, the non-Maori, the Pakeha, have also benefited because as one group of people advances so do all groups. Many non-Maori are learning to reo Maori (the language) and embracing it alongside English.

What could be more American than speaking an American language? (English, as you know, is the language of the UK and its former colonies.) US culture is a blend of many contributions by many groups, but at its core lie the indigenous peoples of the US. This is its foundation. Certainly better authors and authorities than I have pointed this out. Our brand of "democracy" is truly American: It comes by way of the Iroquois Confederacy. It strikes me as particularly unkind and ungrateful not to help the original peoples of this nation, who have contributed so greatly to its formation (through land cession is nothing else), maintain their own identities through language. As we live in a monetary age, this support should come in the form of increasing grants to Native communities for maintaining and revitalizing their own languages.

Yakoke and wado (thanks).

[The prepared statement of Ms. Wacondo follows:]

Prepared Statement of Elizabeth Wacondo, Librarian, the Laguna Public Library, Pueblo of Laguna

Many people my age have spoken the language fluently, but as the years have gone by our younger generation do not speak the language, because we are going into the modern age. Our young parents do not speak the language so they can not teach their children.

I believe that it is in the home where we need to teach our siblings. I myself was taught the language by my grandparents. I was also taught that while we are at the table eating this is the time when we need to teach our young children; in order for them to swallow the words and meanings we are teaching them as well as manners.

I grew up with parents who spoke the language and who taught me tales, that someday I might teach our young people. The tales that I was taught were winter tales, because we did not have electricity, no radios or television. When our school homework was done we would sit on the floor on sheep pelts, maybe in front of the fire place; if we had one. And one of the elders' would teach us and tell these tales. I have had "Winter Tales" book published.

I am sure the Laguna Schools have gotten Grants to pay for someone to teach our young children the language.

I have been the Director and Solo Librarian for Pueblo of Laguna for 31 years.

[The prepared statement of Eddie Tso follows:]

Prepared Statement of Eddie Tso, Program Director, Office of Diné Culture, Department of Diné Education, the Navajo Nation

Program

The Office of Diné Culture, Language & Community Services coordinates with teachers, schools and communities within the three state area of NM, UT and AZ to develop and implement Diné (Navajo) Culture Standards and Curriculum; Diné

(Navajo) Language Standards; Curriculum guide for Diné (Navajo) Government and History; Diné (Navajo) Language Assessment Instrument; and Diné (Navajo) language Certification with New Mexico Department of Public Education and Utah State Department of Education.

The Navajo Nation on July 22, 2005 enacted the Navajo Sovereignty in Education Act of 2005, amending Title 10 of the Navajo Nation Code to establish the Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education to confirm the commitment of the Navajo Nation to the education of the Navajo People and provides a vehicle for implementation of specific Navajo language and culture policies for the schools serving children on the Navajo Nation.

Proposed Amendments to the Native American Language Act:

1. Native Americans should be recognized as the owner of their Language. With this ownership, Native Americans should partner towards the goal of strengthening, revitalizing, or reestablishing a American language and culture as a living language and culture of daily life. (Native Americans are not recognized nor involve in these plans and development. Native government must be eligible to be involved in the revitalization of language and culture)

2. Applicants shall inform, coordinate and collaborate with Native Governments, Native Education Committees, Native Boards of Education and/or Native Department of Education in applying, implementing, monitoring, reporting, and the sharing of project information, etc. (Too often, schools will not involved Native organizations on grants or plans on Native language and culture).

3. Applicants should inform, coordinate and collaborate with other schools on their application. (Too often, schools receiving these grants don't want to share information, and best practices; and schools claim ownership of the materials developed).

4. Applicants who are considered as demonstration programs should become models for the Native area or reservation by informing and sharing their plans and successes with schools and Native governments. (Too often, demonstration program claim ownership on their language and culture projects and do not involve Native communities and government)

5. Applicants should be required to spend their award funds on specific Native Language and culture programs, not other school projects. (Too often, schools may use project funding to accommodate other needs)

6. Federal and State policies on Native American Education should be changed to incorporate Native teaching on culture, language, government and history in school curricula. (No Child Left Behind advocates English Only and Arizona Proposition 203 is an English Only proposition, not Native American language, culture, government or history)

7. Federal and State policies on education should be required that do not let local School Superintendent dictate their own policies and plans, leaving out the strengthening, revitalizing, or reestablishing of Native America language and culture. (Too often, School Superintendents leave out the teaching of Native language, culture, government and history)

8. The law should support the funding of the Institute of American Indian Education on the UMN campus to provide technical assistance to tribes and pueblos in strengthening, revitalizing, or reestablishing Native American language and culture. (Tribes and Pueblos need technical assistance in development of curriculum, policies, research, etc., as related to language and culture revitalization)

[Native American Review article follows:]

Native American Review Article by Jon Reyhner, Ed.D., Professor of Education, Northern Arizona University*

The National Indian Education Association and National Congress of American Indians are currently supporting legislation to help revive tribal languages in immersion programs where in the primary grades students are taught all day in their tribal language. Their goal is to stem the rapidly accelerating decline in the number of speakers of tribal languages, which some conservative commentators see as a good thing. John J. Miller, author of *The Unmaking of Americans: How Multiculturalism Has Undermined America's Assimilation Ethic*, declared in *The*

*Note: This article from "Native American Review" is adapted from a presentation on Nurturing Native Languages and Cultures in Schools the author gave at the National Indian School Board Association's Summer Institute in Denver in July 2006.

Wall Street Journal in 2002 that the increasing pace of language death is “a trend that is arguably worth celebrating [because] age-old obstacles to communication are collapsing” and primitive societies are being brought into the modern world.”

However, there are a number of reasons why all Americans, even conservatives, should support Native language revitalization. Conservatives like Arizona State Representative J.D. Hayworth promote assimilation into American society, including speaking only English, as the solution to America’s social problems. However, assimilation today for teenagers, whether it is for recent immigrants or American Indians, is all too likely to mean a television dominated world that is selfish, pleasure-seeking, and fattening.

The larger school-based immersion efforts to revitalize indigenous languages in New Zealand and Hawai’i and smaller efforts in the Blackfeet, Navajo, Mohawk and other Indian Nations are showing that language revitalization can help heal the wounds of colonialism and improve students’ behavior and academic success.

There is a need for healing because through most of the history of the United States the Indian way of life was considered “savage” and something to be replaced by English speaking civilization that would unite this country. As Joy Harjo (Muscogee Creek) notes, “colonization teaches us to hate ourselves. We are told that we are nothing until we adopt the ways of the colonizer, till we become the colonizer.” But even then Native people are often not accepted—a brown skin can’t be washed off. For most of history, schooling systematically devalued being Indian.

In 1869 after the Civil War (America’s bloodiest war where both the North and South spoke English), President Ulysses S. Grant’s Indian Peace Commissioners concluded that language differences led to misunderstandings and that “by educating the children of these tribes in the English language these differences would have disappeared, and civilization would have followed at once.” Teacher and Indian agent Albert H. Kneale in the early twentieth century found that “the Indian Bureau, at that time, went on the assumption that any Indian custom was, per se, objectionable, whereas the customs of whites were the ways of civilization.” As was noted on a sign at the entrance of the Ganado Mission School in the Navajo Nation in the 1950s, “tradition” was seen as “the enemy of progress.”

Well-meaning “friends of the Indians” did not realize the damage that assimilationist education could inflict on Indian people. In 1975, Dillon Platero, the first director of the Navajo Division of Education, described the experience of “Kee,” a typical Navajo student: “Kee was sent to boarding school as a child where—as was the practice—he was punished for speaking Navajo. Since he was only allowed to return home during Christmas and summer, he lost contact with his family. Kee withdrew from both the White and Navajo worlds as he grew older because he could not comfortably communicate in either language. He became one of the many thousand Navajos who were non-lingual—a man without a language. By the time he was 16, Kee was an alcoholic, uneducated, and despondent—without identity.” Students who are not embedded in their traditional values are only too likely in modern America to pick up a drug-filled identity of consumerism, consumption, competition, comparison, and conformity.

A second reason to support Native language immersion is to improve students’ behavior. In 1998 the National Research Council reported that immigrant youth tend to be healthier than their counterparts from nonimmigrant families. It found that the longer immigrant youth are in the U.S., the poorer their overall physical and psychological health. The more “Americanized” they became the more likely they were to engage in risky behaviors such as substance abuse, unprotected sex, and delinquency. There is evidence the same is true for Native youth, with those being less assimilated into the dominant culture doing better in school and in life.

The positive effects of Native language and culture can be found in schools that have given strong Native language support. Agnes and Wayne Holm reported that in the 1970s the all-Navajo Rock Point Community School Board felt “that it was the breakdown of a working knowledge of Navajo kinship that caused much of what they perceived as inappropriate, un-Navajo, behavior; the way back, they felt was to teach students that system.” Their answer was to establish a bilingual education program with an extensive Navajo Social Studies component that included the theory of Navajo kinship.

The Rock Point Program was modified and is continued today in the Window Rock Public School’s Navajo Immersion School. Marie Arviso and Wayne Holm found there that “More-traditional Navajo expectations of children were that they would work hard and act responsibly—in adultlike ways. Anglos [“white” people] tend to expect children to act in more childlike ways. * * * More-traditional parents tend to perceive such [childlike] behavior as self-indulgent and irresponsible. At worst, children come to exploit the gap between parental and teacher expectations.” In the

Navajo immersion school students tended to act more responsibly as that was the behavior that was taught and expected.

A researcher for Arizona State University's Native Educators Research Project observed at Window Rock that, "Navajo values are embedded in the classroom." A parent, "noticed a lot of differences compared to the other students who aren't in the immersion program. [The immersion students] seem more disciplined and have a lot more respect for older [people], well anyone, like teachers. They communicate better with their grandparents, their uncles. * * * [It] makes them more mature and more respectful. I see other kids and they just run around crazy."

Navajo elder and statesman Jack Jackson noted at the 2004 BIA Office of Indian Education Programs' third annual Language and Culture Preservation Conference in Albuquerque how at Diné College they are "in a search to create our future based on our past." Jackson emphasizes the importance of teaching Navajos their philosophy of "Ké," being a balanced person. This involves examining "beauty before me [where am I going?], beauty behind me [where did I come from?], beauty underneath [my relation to mother earth], beauty above, and beauty around" with the outcome of becoming a "balanced person."

A third reason to support Native language immersion schools is to improve students' academic success. Reviews of research on fluent bilinguals indicate they have some cognitive advantages over monolinguals and are thus more intelligent (See for example Colin Baker's *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, Multilingual Matters*, 2006).

A conflict between a student's home culture and the school culture can lead to academic problems for students. Mick Fedullo in *Light of the Feather Pathways Through Contemporary Indian America* (1992) illustrates a case of cultural conflict with a quote from an Apache elder who stated that students' parents had, "been to school in their day, and what that usually meant was a bad BIA boarding school. And all they remember about school is that there were all these Anglos trying to make them forget they were Apaches; trying to make them turn against their parents, telling them that Indian ways were evil." Instead of assimilating, "a lot of those kids came to believe that their teachers were the evil ones, and so anything that had to do with "education" was also evil—like books. Those kids came back to the reservation, got married, and had their own kids. And now they don't want anything to do with the white man's education. The only reason they send their kids to school is because it's the law. But they tell their kids not to take school seriously. So, to them, printed stuff is white-man stuff."

Unfortunately, efforts to reduce the cultural divide between schools and Indian homes is being hurt today by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that is driving education today in America. Its "Reading First" approach to teaching reading is just one example. Bruno Bettelheim and Karen Zelan in their book *On Learning to Read* write, "If, rather than concentrating on developing reading skills, educational efforts from the very beginning were concentrated on developing the desire to become literate—essentially and inner attitude to reading—then the final result might be that a much larger segment of the adult population would be literate. In our present situation, most adults are able to read but see little purpose in reading, beyond gaining some specific information in which they are interested or as a means for killing time through some trite diversion."

While it is rightly pointed out by critics of the "Whole Language" approach to teaching reading that this inner attitude" is not enough to produce good readers, it is a consideration that teachers would do well not to forget as they teach reading skills. As Jonathan Kozel pointed out at the National Indian School Board Association's 2006 Summer Institute, the US Department of Education's "Reading First" program that emphasizes phonics first tends to put reading comprehension last, and I would add pretty much ignores student motivation.

Student motivation is critical for their success. Nineteenth Century missionary Stephen R. Riggs who in 1852 published a *Grammar and Dictionary of the Dakota Language* found teaching English "to be very difficult and not producing much apparent fruit." It was not the students' lack of ability that prevented them from learning English, but rather their unwillingness. "Teaching Dakota was a different thing. It was their own language." Giving Indian students some choices about what they learn and curricular content that reinforces their Native identity helps them succeed in school.

As Indian languages are forgotten along with the values that allowed Indian people to survive for thousands of years, Indian people lose a critical foundation to build healthy lives around. As Mary Smith, the last speaker of her Native Eyak language, "It's sad to be the last speaker of your language. Please, turn back to your own and learn your language so you won't be alone like me. Go to the young people. Let go of the hate in your hearts. Love and respect yourselves first. Elders please

give them courage and they will never be alone. Help our people to understand their identity. We need to publish materials for our people. To educate the white people to us and for indigenous people.”

University of California Professor Leanne Hinton maintains, “Believing in the language brings the generations together. * * * If there’re any seeds left, there’s an opportunity to grow.” It is not just the language that gets revitalized in exemplary immersion programs, it is the values that have given Indian Nations the strength to survive five centuries of oppression.

[The prepared statement of the Washington State Tribal Leader Congress follows:]

Prepared Statement of the Washington State Tribal Leader Congress on Education on Recovery and Preservation of Native American Languages

Washington State Tribes reaffirm the sovereignty of Federally Recognized Tribal Governments in all areas, particularly in the transmission of native language and culture. Tribal Sovereignty requires that individual Tribal governments protect and perpetuate their native languages and cultures in a manner that honors the integrity of the original teachings. The Tribes acknowledge the considerable educational expertise, resources, and responsibilities of the United States Government, State legislatures, and local school boards in providing a meaningful education for all children. We are enthusiastic about building co-governance structures with federal, state, and local jurisdictions; however, the final responsibility for the education of Tribal members resides with Tribal governments.

In response to HR 4766 (funding for Tribal Immersion Programs), the Washington State Tribal Leader Congress on Education strongly supports the allocation of federal dollars to fund the revitalization of Native Language and the expansion of Native Language Programs. The Federal Government has treaty and trust responsibilities to fund education for our children. Allocating Federal dollars for language revitalization and program expansion honors this responsibility.

At the same time, we do not support mandates placed on the Tribes by the Federal Government or its agencies that undermine the sovereignty of Tribal governments in educating their Tribal members.

- HR 4766 places such mandates on Tribes by requiring specific methodology, contact hours, student-parent participation levels and outcomes, etc. as prerequisites for funding. With these eligibility requirements, HR 4766 fails to recognize the Tribe’s expertise in transmitting its own language and culture and compromises the Tribal government’s sovereignty in education.

- HR 4766 also places the responsibility for the evaluation of Tribal Immersion Programs with a major US University. In actuality, the final responsibility for program evaluation and success resides with the individual Tribal governments.

The Tribes are committed to high quality standards in all education programs and most emphatically in the transmission of language and culture. Tribal Governments want high quality standards for funding requirements, program evaluation, and program implementation, including such areas as curriculum development, pedagogy, and teacher training and certification. However, the Tribes themselves determine the standards that will impact the education of Tribal members.

The goal of the Tribal Leader Congress is to work with federal law makers and the Department of Education to craft legislation that brings new funding streams to culture and language education while utilizing Tribal expertise and respecting Tribal sovereignty. We also look forward to working together with government and other relevant organizations, such as research universities, in implementing language programs, evaluating these programs, and creating the requirements for federal funding.

The Washington State Tribal Leaders Congress on Education is a positive model of how Tribes, individually and collectively, can work with lawmakers, agencies, universities, local school districts, and the community to build co-governance in education and create language and culture legislation to benefit all children.

Thank you very much for your leadership in bringing funding to the revitalization of our sacred languages.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Cross-Maple follows:]

Native Language Initiatives Update

Introduction

The New Mexico State Legislature enacted the Indian Education Act in 2003. The purpose of the Act is to ensure equitable and culturally relevant learning environments for Native American students in New Mexico public schools through the study, development and implementation of practices that positively affect educational success. The Act, also sought to develop strategies for ensuring the maintenance of Native languages through partnerships with tribes for developing tribal standards and criteria for the certification of Native teachers to teach Native languages in the public schools.

Maintenance of Native Languages

As part of implementing the Act, the Indian Education Division (IED) of the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) has:

- developed Joint Powers Agreements with tribes and pueblos to create tribal and pueblo standards and criteria for licensing Native American language teachers; and
- provided funding to tribes and pueblos to develop native language instruction and materials for their community, using various language models for development of native language.

Successes

In 2005–2006, the IED secured the first-ever Joint Powers Agreements (JPAs) with nine New Mexico Indian tribes and pueblos to assist them in developing tribal standards and criteria for licensing Native American language teachers, and to implement revitalization and preservation of native language programs in their communities. The nine JPAs are with: Jemez Pueblo, Acoma Pueblo, San Felipe Pueblo, Santa Clara Pueblo, Pojoaque Pueblo, Zia Pueblo, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Cochiti Pueblo, and Laguna Pueblo.

For 2006–2007, thirteen JPA's are either continuing or in process with Ohkay Owingeh, Nambe Pueblo, the Navajo Nation, Santa Ana Pueblo, Santo Domingo Tribe, Jemez Pueblo, Acoma Pueblo, San Felipe Pueblo, Santa Clara Pueblo, Pojoaque Pueblo, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Cochiti Pueblo and Laguna Pueblo.

Currently, 10 Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) are signed between the NMPED and tribes and pueblos regarding Native American Language Certification. The ten are with: Jicarilla Apache, Santa Clara, Acoma, Laguna, Zuni, Navajo Nation, Santo Domingo, Ohkay Owingeh, Mescalero, and Santa Ana. These tribes have completed or begun the development of their tribal standards and native language teacher certification criteria and process. As a result, there are now 69 native language teachers who are certified by the New Mexico Public Education Department to teach in the native languages.

Support of HR 4766

The NMPED supports the passage of HR 4766 to provide additional funds for tribes to support their efforts in maintaining their native languages. Resources are needed for the development of instructional materials and language instruction by licensed native teachers both in schools where their children attend each day and in their own communities.

