

**EXAMINING EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN AND
REVITALIZE NATIVE LANGUAGES FOR FUTURE
GENERATIONS**

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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AUGUST 22, 2018
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CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held on August 22, 2018	1
Statement of Senator Cortez Masto	43
Statement of Senator Daines	4
Statement of Senator Hoeven	1
Statement of Senator Murkowski	6
Statement of Senator Schatz	5
Statement of Senator Tester	4
Statement of Senator Thune	7
Statement of Senator Udall	2

WITNESSES

Baird, Hon. Jessie Little Doe, Vice Chairwoman, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe .	12
Prepared statement	14
Hovland, Hon. Jeannie, Commissioner, Administration for Native Americans, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	8
Prepared statement	10
Hummingbird, Lauren E., Graduate, Tsalagi Tsunadeloquasdi, Cherokee Nation Immersion School	32
Prepared statement	34
Rawlins, Namaka, Director, Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration, Aha Punana Leo	18
Prepared statement	19
Sims, Christine, Ph.D., Director, American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center	25
Prepared statement	27

APPENDIX

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), prepared statement	61
Barbry, John D., Director of Development & Programing, Education Program, Language & Culture Revitalization Program, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Lou- isiana, prepared statement	58
Barnes, Nancy, Juneau, AK , prepared statement	65
Begaye, Hon. Russell, President, Navajo Nation, prepared statement	60
Bowman, Dr. Jolene, President, National Indian Education Association (NIEA), prepared statement	67
Burr, Terri, Ah'lidaaw Language Facilitator, Tsimshian Education Depart- ment, prepared statement	71
Cancuba Collective, prepared statement	54
Dawson, Desa, ACTFL Past President; Director of World Language Edu- cation, Oklahoma State Department of Education, prepared statement	54
Dewitt-Narino, Lisa Maria, prepared statement	60
Doak, Ivy, Ph.D., Denton, TX; Former Executive Secretary, Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas (2008–2017), prepared statement	57
Gettleman, Todd, Kealakekua, HI, prepared statement	81
Greymorning, Dr. Neyooxet, prepared statement	56
Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe, prepared statement	64
Hayton, Allan, Language Revitalization Program Director, Doyon Foundation, prepared statement	50
Hayward, Amber Sterud, Director, Puyallup Tribal Language Program; Zalmai Zahir Ph.D. Candidate, Linguistics University of Oregon, Lushootseed Language Consultant, prepared statement	50

IV

	Page
Heaton, Raina Ph.D., Linguistics, Assistant Professor of Native American Studies; Assistant Curator of Native American Languages, Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, University of Oklahoma, prepared statement	70
Kowalski, Sandra, Director of Indigenous Programs, Office of Rural, Community and Native Education, University of Alaska Fairbanks, prepared statement	72
Kroskirty, Paul V., Professor of Anthropology; Professor and Chair, American Indian Studies, UCLA, prepared statement	69
Macaulay, Monica, President/Kristine Hildebrandt, Vice President, Endangered Language Fund (ELF), prepared statement	56
Montler, Timothy, Distinguished Research Professor of linguistics, Department of Technical Communication, University of North Texas, prepared statement	79
National Council for Languages and International Studies, prepared statement	66
Response to written questions submitted by Hon. Tom Udall to:	
Hon. Jeanie Hovland	82
Dr. Christine Sims	81
Richards, Norvin, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Linguistics and Philosophy, prepared statement	68
Sam, Paula, Enrolled Member, Northern Paiute (Gidutikad Band) of the Fort Bidwell Reservation, prepared statement	70
Speas, Margaret, Professor Emerita of Linguistics, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, prepared statement	61
Thornes, Tim, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Linguistics, Department of English, Boise State University, prepared statement	79
Tuttle, Siri G., Ph.D., Director, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, prepared statement	53
Whalen, Douglas H., Chair/Board of Directors, Endangered Language Fund; Margaret P. Moss, Incoming Director, First Nations House of Learning, University of British Columbia; and Daryl Baldwin, Director, Myaamia Center, Miami University (Ohio), joint prepared statement	71
Whitaker, Tyler A., Linguist, Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, Language & Culture Revitalization Program (LCRP), Cultural & Educational Resources Center (CERC) Library, prepared statement	80
Wilson, William H., Ph.D., prepared statement	73

**EXAMINING EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN AND
REVITALIZE NATIVE LANGUAGES FOR
FUTURE GENERATIONS**

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2018

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

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m. in room 628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John Hoeven, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN HOEVEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NORTH DAKOTA**

The CHAIRMAN. We will call this hearing to order. I would like to thank everyone for attending and certainly thank all of our witnesses and, of course, the outstanding Vice Chairman of the Committee.

Senator UDALL. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. So, the Committee today is holding an oversight hearing to examine efforts to maintain and revitalize Native languages for future generations. Native languages are an ancient and distinct part of Native identity and culture and have played a crucial role in our Nation's history.

The Native Code Talkers of World War I and World War II helped save thousands of American and ally lives by using their language to send coded messages during several military campaigns. These codes were never broken by the enemy. Matter of fact, I saw the movie. It was a tremendous movie. It was written by a fellow I knew and grew up with, John Rice. Really a powerful movie about the Code Talkers; really amazing what they did.

Though these languages have been critical for Indian Country and our Nation, of the many distinct Native languages that have historically existed in this Country, over 200 have become extinct within the past 400 years. Without the initiatives created to preserve the remaining languages, more of them would become extinct over the next few decades.

Congress has identified this need to preserve and revitalize Native languages and has disavowed past policies designed to eliminate languages and cultures. Through the passage of the Native American Languages Act and the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act, Congress formalized the promotion of Native languages. These laws have helped facilitate op-

portunities for Native communities to learn, research, and preserve their languages, ultimately strengthening their culture and their traditions.

Now, turning to our witnesses, we have with us this afternoon the recently confirmed Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans, Ms. Jeannie Hovland. Welcome.

Do you pronounce it Hoveland or Hovland?

Ms. HOVLAND. I pronounce it Hovland.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. I thought so. I was misinformed. I won't say by who. But I have some very good friends and they pronounce it Hovland, and that's why I asked.

Ms. HOVLAND. It is kind of the Dakotas how we pronounce it, Hovland.

The CHAIRMAN. That is right. My name is Hoeven and nobody ever says Hoeven, it is Hooven and everything else under the sun. But I thought maybe it was Hovland because I do have a number of friends that have the same spelling.

So, this is your first time appearing before Congress since confirmed. Thanks for being here. We look forward to working with you very much.

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I want to welcome you and all of our witnesses today.

Before I do that, because we are going to have some different Senators doing some of the introductions, I am going to turn to Senator Udall for his opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TOM UDALL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW MEXICO**

Senator UDALL. Thank you so much, Chairman Hoeven. Really appreciate your working with me on today's hearing on Native languages. Native language revitalization has been a long-time priority for me, and I appreciate the Committee highlighting this issue.

I would also like to just recognize my former congressional colleague.

The CHAIRMAN. We can't allow that.

Senator UDALL. I will just say there is a good guy out there, Congressman Bill Delahunt, back there, who served in the House with me and probably several of the other members up here.

Before I begin, I would like to welcome Dr. Christine Sims of the University of New Mexico. Dr. Sims is a member of the Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico and a leader in Native language revitalization. Thank you very much, Dr. Sims, for being here today and thank you for your very important work there out in New Mexico.

I would also like to welcome Administration for Native Americans Commissioner Jeannie Hovland to her first hearing before the Committee. I look forward to hearing your plans for your term as Commissioner. I know that Senator Thune has said very nice things about you, but you probably already know that.

Native languages are not only crucial to the communities that speak them, but they also have played an important role in our shared American history. Like Senator Hoeven, I would like to honor the work of the Code Talkers.

One notable example is the Navajo Code Talkers of World War II. The Navajo recruits who arrived at Camp Pendleton were tasked with developing a secret code using their Native language. Without using any modern technology, Code Talkers were able to develop and implement a secret code that is attributed to saving countless lives of the allied troops and civilians and securing our victory in the Pacific.

Today, in my home State of New Mexico, 23 pueblos and Tribes speak seven major Native languages, each different and distinct and reflecting the beauty of diversity of New Mexico itself. The diversity of Native languages in New Mexico is a microcosm of the vast diversity of languages throughout Indian Country.

There are an estimated 200 Native languages currently spoken in the United States. Some others have gone extinct, but they are waiting to be brought back again. They all represent some of the greatest linguistic diversity in the world, coming from at least 29 different language families, and each serves the irreplaceable role for its community of speakers. The revitalization of Native language is crucial to the cultural identity and sovereignty of Native communities throughout Indian Country.

Today's hearing is a chance for us to highlight the diversity of Native languages that exist and to ensure Federal resources are supporting all aspects of Native language revival and preservation.

Our witnesses here today represent this range and different needs of four different Native communities on their unique paths to language revitalization and maintenance: the Cherokee language, the Hawaiian language, the Wampanoag language, and the Keres language. Each of these languages is unique and requires individualized resources, curriculum, and training to support revitalization efforts.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 74 Native languages will disappear within the next decade if we don't take significant action. This is why programs like the Esther Martinez Immersion Grants, which I have supported throughout my service in both the House and the Senate, are so vital.

The Esther Martinez program has helped revitalize 58 different Native languages and involved over 4,500 elders in preserving languages, and it has helped over 12,000 youth to maintain Native languages for future generations. The success of this program is why I have sponsored S. 254, the Esther Martinez Native Language Preservation Act, and that would reauthorize the program until fiscal year 2023.

Native languages hold within them the culture, the history, and the resiliency of Native communities throughout Indian Country. My hope is that today's hearing is an important step among many to support the revitalization of Native languages for all Native communities.

Thank you to the panel for your valued work, and I look forward to hearing the testimony, Mr. Chairman.

I see that Senator Thune has arrived, also. I said a good word about you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks, Vice Chairman.

Before we turn to Senator Thune, I am going to turn to Senator Daines for an opening statement.

**STATEMENT OF HON. STEVE DAINES,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MONTANA**

Senator DAINES. Mr. Chairman, first of all, thank you and Ranking Member Udall. Thank you for having this hearing on this important topic.

Native American culture and languages are cornerstones, truly, of our national heritage, and that is why, in the last Congress, Senator Schatz, Murkowski, Sullivan, and I authored an amendment, which was subsequently enacted into law, to study the benefits of Native language immersion education, a medium which today's witnesses highlight in their testimonies.

Like many Indian Tribes across our Nation, Montana Tribes are teaching their languages. The Crow, the Little Shell, the Salish Tribes, for example, have developed language apps that you can download on your smartphone. I often like to talk about how technology can break down barriers to geography. These innovative efforts are a way to harness technology to break down generational language gaps and support these Tribes' cultures.

It is also a real pleasure to welcome Ms. Jeannie Hovland to this Committee. It is great to have a confirmed Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans at the Department of Health and Human Services before this very Committee.

I will close by reinforcing just how important the topic of today's hearing is. The United States didn't always promote Tribes speaking their Native tongues; in fact, it was going the opposite direction for quite some time, and some tribal elders still remember firsthand that very dark time when the Federal Government indeed did the opposite, because, as my Tribes tell me back home in Montana, when you lose a language, you lose a culture. I am glad we are discussing not just preserving Native languages but revitalizing them for future generations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Tester.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JON TESTER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MONTANA**

Senator TESTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank all the folks who are testifying here today. I appreciate it. I look forward to this hearing.

It wasn't so long ago that kids were taken from their homes, put in boarding schools, forbidden to speak their language in an attempt to assimilate Native people into our Country. The legacy of this policy still lives on today through intergenerational trauma evidenced by generations of folks who did not have the opportunity to learn their Native language.

We have a responsibility to do something about that, and hopefully we will continue to assist in any way to repair the damage that was done so many generations ago.

We know that language is intricately connected to culture, tradition, ceremony, song. It is the lifeblood of people. Without it, much is lost, and that is why it is of utmost importance that we don't

let these precious resources slip away; that we do everything we can do to invest in preservation.

We see the staggering statistics coming out of Indian Country, and they are staggering; from high dropout rates to low test scores to high suicide rates. Language is a key piece to strengthen a people, and the Native American cultures around our Country need to be strengthened. Investing in Native language invests in that culture and it will help boost their self-esteem; it helps boost their ability to be successful in this world.

So, hopefully, especially you, Ms. Hovland, we can find out some good ideas on what has worked and what hasn't, and how we can move forward in a way that makes sense for Indian Country to make them all they can be.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Schatz.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN SCHATZ,
U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII**

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Chairman Hoeven and Vice Chair Udall, for your leadership in convening this hearing.

It is my honor and privilege to introduce one of the most respected leaders in the fight to preserve and revitalize the Hawaiian language. Her name is Namaka Rawlins, and we are lucky that she is able to join our distinguished witness panel today. Aloha, Namaka.

In 1982, Native Hawaiians were facing the imminent loss of their language. For more than 80 years, the use of Hawaiian in schools, both in conversation and as a medium for education, was prohibited. The number of fluent speakers had dwindled to just a few elders, combined with the isolated population of Hawaiians living on Niihau, less than 50 of whom were under the age of 18.

Inspired by the success of language nests overseas, a group of Native Hawaiian educators pulled together and put forth the idea of creating a preschool program that allowed Native Hawaiian children to be educated exclusively in their Native language. The first Aha Punana Leo preschool opened in 1984 and it was a success.

Namaka has been part of this incredible group of educators for more than two decades. Her leadership has ensured the successful navigation of State and Federal legal and policy obstacles to create an immersion program that educates students from preschool through graduate school.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to visit some of these schools and to see what is happening with my own eyes. What is happening in Hawaiian immersion schools is truly special. Students that would ordinarily be considered the most likely to fail are succeeding at an unprecedented rate.

Since 1999, students attending Nawahi, where Namaka sits on the board of directors, have an 85 percent college enrollment rate, with some seniors earning upwards of 36 college credits prior to graduation. These students are among the best and the brightest across the State.

I could spend many more minutes of unallotted time listing Namaka's many titles and accomplishments to maintain and revitalize the Hawaiian language. She has worked hard at home,

across the Country, and around the world to help Native communities maintain indigenous languages.

I thank you for being here today and for all you have done for Hawaii. Your work has changed lives by helping children to reach their full potential, and I look forward to learning more from the hearing. Mahalo.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murkowski.

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

Senator MURKOWSKI. [Greeting in Native language], Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

You all know me as Lisa Murkowski, Alaska, but my adopted Tlingit name is Aan Shaawk'i, a name that I am very proud of, Lady of the Land. I have come to have great respect for those who are not only sharing their culture, but sharing their languages, preserving their identity.

So being able to work with you and the Vice Chairman and so many on this Committee to ensure that we look to our Native cultural languages, our heritage languages with an eye towards revitalization, what we can be doing is so very, very important. We say it all the time, but I think when a Native person knows their language, they know their culture, they know who they are; it is part of their identity. We see that in academic performance; we see it in social indicators. We just see the value.

We, following Senator Schatz's comments, know what it means to lose languages at a rapid pace. The late Chief Marie Smith Jones was the last full-blooded Eyak. She was the last fluent speaker of the Eyak language. She was a fierce activist for Native American rights. But when she passed in 2008, the Eyak language went dormant.

Today, in Alaska, we have five ANA language grants. One that I would like to just address very briefly here is a preservation and maintenance grant that the community of Igiugig is implementing, and they have a project that they have entitled We All Speak Lake Iliamna Yup'ik. When they applied for their grant, they figured that there were only 23 fluent speakers of this dialect left that were still living.

In the past three years, this grant has taken apprenticeships that are starting in the preschools, a preschool immersion program teaching Yup'ik with the children there, taught by a master, taught by an apprentice. We, too, have the language nests, we call it Unglu, which is Yup'ik for nest. It is taught by a speaker, an elder by the name of Annie Wilson. Annie was born and raised there in Igiugig. She is currently one of the last 23 fluent speakers that are there.

But, again, what we are seeing in the young children, what we are seeing in the results coming out of the school, measurements of academic success have been really extraordinarily impressive. Igiugig School has a perfect five-star rating on our Alaska School Performance Index. Our Igiugig students perform at some of the highest levels in the State, and we think that much of this can be traced back to, again, a sense of identity, a sense of self, and truly a purpose.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the Committee hearing today and for those who work so hard to preserve and revitalize our Native languages.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.
Senator THUNE.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN THUNE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

Senator THUNE. Chairman Hoeven and Vice Chairman Udall, thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

I want to introduce Jeannie Hovland in just a minute, but thank you for the attention of this subject. I think preservation of our language and culture is such an important part of our Country's heritage, so I appreciate your focus on this and for giving me the privilege of being here today to introduce a former member of my staff and the current Commissioner for the Administration for Native Americans at the Department of Health and Human Services, and that is Jeannie Hovland.

Before I say a few words about Jeannie, I want to thank you both and your staff and the members of this Committee for your efforts during the confirmation process and getting her installed in this important position.

Jeannie Hovland is an enrolled member of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe. She joined my staff in 2005. That was a great find for our office and for me and for our staff. During much of this time, Jeannie led outreach efforts to Native American communities and with tribal leaders across South Dakota, and, with nine Tribes spread across the State of South Dakota, this was no small task.

I am sure, if you asked her, she could tell you the fastest route from Sioux Falls to Standing Rock or from Mitchell to Mission, but she spent many early mornings and late nights on those roads, putting miles on her car and sometimes spending time away from her children to ensure that folks living in tribal communities heard from us and, more importantly, that we heard from them.

Over the years, I consistently heard praise from tribal leaders about Jeannie's hard work, praise for her presence at tribal council meetings, visits to tribal programs, her oversight work on Federal programs that are operating in tribal communities. Over time, Jeannie also became an important policy advisor and helped inform my work on tribal issues here in the Senate. She left her mark on many important bipartisan legislative items of note, including the Tribal Law and Order Act and the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, just to name a few.

I think maybe most important, and the thing that often gets overlooked, were the words of thanks from individual tribal members who Jeannie helped: a tribal veteran needing assistance working through the bureaucracy at the Indian Health Service or the VA; a tribal program director in search of grant funding to keep the doors open; a tribal rancher looking for answers from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

For Jeannie, there was no problem too large or too small. She is undaunted by a challenge and believes profoundly there is a solution to every problem, and I can think of no better advocate for Indian Country than Jeannie.

As she continues carrying out her duties as Commissioner for the Administration for Native Americans, I have no doubt that the Committee will find that Jeannie is not only talented, hard-working, honest, diligent, but she is also passionate about finding solutions that will improve the lives of people in our tribal communities.

So, Jeannie, thank you for all your great work that you have done on behalf of Indian Country. I encourage you to keep it up.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and you, Mr. Vice Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to speak today. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

Did I miss any opening statements? If not, we will turn to our witnesses and we will begin with Commissioner Hovland.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNIE HOVLAND, COMMISSIONER,
ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you, Senator Thune. That means so much. I appreciate that you gave me the opportunity to have worked for you in South Dakota and to work with the great Nations of the Lakota, Dakota, Nakotas, so thank you. That means so much to me and I am glad you are here today.

Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall, and members of the Committee, it is my honor to testify before you about Native American language preservation and maintenance. I had the pleasure of meeting some of you during my confirmation process just over a month ago. I have been eager and grateful to visit our grantees and their communities. Seeing the diversity of tribal nations firsthand is the best way to understand their concerns and specific social, economic, and cultural contexts.

I attended our Native Youth Summit in Montana and visited grantees in Hawaii and New Mexico. Next week I will join Federal partners and nearly 150 experts and practitioners in Oklahoma at the fifth annual Native American Language Summit. Next month I will host my first Tribal Consultation for ACF and travel to Alaska for the secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee.

These visits promote ANA's mission and goal of self-sufficiency and cultural preservation for Native Americans. We provide discretionary grants, training, and technical assistance to Tribes, tribal organizations, nonprofits, and Native American communities, and support Native American languages, environmental regulatory enhancement, and social and economic development strategies.

Language revitalization is essential for continuing Native American culture and strengthening self-determination. Native American values and traditions, which are a source of resilience and cultural cohesion, are embedded in language.

Many of you are familiar with the important role Native American Code Talkers played in the United States' victories in World War I and World War II. Although these heroes were not allowed to use their language in day-to-day life, their languages were relied upon to communicate vital information. We need to honor their sacrifice by keeping their languages alive.

The use of Native American languages has declined, but a fundamental desire to maintain and revitalize Native languages remains.

In response, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act amended NAPA to specifically target grants for language immersion and restoration programs.

The three-year EMI projects have been funded for just over a decade. We continually refine our processes to elicit stronger applications and improve evaluation.

In fiscal year 2018, ANA strengthened its approach by requiring that applicants describe a feasible monitoring and outcome evaluation plan. In addition, all applicants must now achieve one of four project outcomes: increased language fluency, increased community member use of language learning resources, language teachers certified, or increased capacity to implement a language program.

Since 2010, ANA has held annual competitions for preservation and maintenance and EMI language projects. The funding we distribute for all program areas varies based on the number of projects ending. For example, the total funding for new EMI projects this year is just over \$2 million. With this, we are able to meet about 29 percent of new funding requested.

Congress requested that ANA support language funding at or above the minimum of \$12 million for Native languages overall and \$4 million for projects funded under EMI. We have met that target annually and, in fiscal year 2018, we will again.

One of our current EMI grantees, the Cook Inlet Tribal Council in Alaska, is operating a Yup'ik Language Nest. Language nests are for the youngest learners, and these children are in a full day, year-round Early Head Start setting. When they transition to the Head Start classroom, they continue to receive a minimum of 500 hours of instruction solely in Yup'ik. The project also provides weekly family-centered Yup'ik language instruction to parents and caregivers.

Another current EMI grantee, Sitting Bull College, received startup funding in 2012 to hire and train staff and recruit families for a Lakota immersion preschool on the Standing Rock Reservation. In 2015, they received EMI funding to develop language immersion classes and curriculum for children kindergarten through third grade. The project also includes intensive training for staff in language acquisition, immersion techniques, rigorous parent involvement, and language learning.

We thank Congress for the additional funding provided to ANA in recent years. These appropriations have funded five NLCC projects in four States to build upon the successes of ANA's short-term, project-based Native language funding and address gaps in community coordination across the Native language educational continuum.

During my tenure as Commissioner, I have three main goals to strengthen all language programs: using ANA resources efficiently without duplication; identifying and providing outreach to lower capacity Tribes and communities that have never had a language grant; and making materials more readily available to use as sample resources.

I am thankful for the longstanding support of this Committee. I look forward to working with Congress to reform NAPA, including amending the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hovland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNIE HOVLAND, COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION
FOR NATIVE AMERICANS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall, and Members of the Committee, it is my honor to testify before you on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services concerning Native American language preservation and maintenance. My name is Jeannie Hovland and I serve as the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) within the Administration for Children and Families. I had the pleasure of meeting with some of you and your staff during my confirmation process just over a month ago. As you may recall, I am a proud member of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe located in South Dakota and worked for Senator John Thune of South Dakota for nearly 13 years.

I am a proud proponent of our programs and I have been eager and grateful to visit our grantees and their communities. Seeing the diversity of tribal nations first hand is the best way to understand their concerns and specific social, economic, and cultural context. I have been able to spend time at our ANA Native Youth Summit in Missoula, Montana, to visit some of our grantees on the Big Island and Oahu in Hawaii, and in the Pueblos of Santa Ana, Cochiti, Isleta, and Taos in New Mexico. Next week, I will travel to Midwest City, Oklahoma to join our Federal partners at the Bureau of Indian Education and the Department of Education's White House Initiative of American Indian and Alaska Native Education in the fifth annual Native American Language Summit. This year's Summit theme is "Honoring the Gift of Native American Languages" and we expect nearly 150 experts and practitioners to attend. Next month, I will host my first Tribal Consultation for the Administration for Children and Families, meet with our Tribal Advisory Committee, and travel to Fairbanks, Alaska for the Secretary's Tribal Advisory Committee.

These visits are important for promoting ANA's mission and underlying goal of self-sufficiency and cultural preservation for Native Americans. We provide discretionary grants, training, and technical assistance to tribes, tribal organizations, non-profits, and Native American communities, including American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Native Pacific Islanders. We support three program areas authorized under the Native American Programs Act of 1974 (NAPA): Native American Languages, Environmental Regulatory Enhancement, and Social and Economic Development Strategies.

We believe that language revitalization is essential for continuing Native American culture and strengthening self-determination. Native American values and traditions are embedded in language. These values and traditions are a source of resilience and cultural cohesion that connects us with past and future generations.

Many of you are familiar with the important role Native American Code Talkers played in the success of the United States victories in World War I and World War II. Although these heroes were not allowed to use their language in day to day life, their languages were relied upon to communicate vital information. Unfortunately, most of the code talkers have passed away. We need to honor their sacrifice by keeping their languages alive along with their legacy.

The use of Native American languages has declined for a variety of reasons, including resistance to bilingual education in many states and the basic fact that a majority of Native American students attend English medium schools. However, there is still a fundamental desire to maintain and revitalize native languages. In response, Congress supported this effort by passing the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006. This law amended NAPA to specifically target grants for language immersion and restoration programs. These two methods show promise in creating fluent speakers who, in turn, continue to revitalize, preserve, and maintain native languages.

The three year Esther Martinez Initiative (EMI) projects have been funded for just over a decade. We continually refine our application and project reporting processes to elicit stronger applications and better ways to document grantees' progress in meeting their project objectives. With the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 funding opportunity announcements for the EMI Program and Native American Language Preservation and Maintenance Program, ANA strengthened its approach to funding rigorous immersion and language acquisition programs through the addition of the ANA Project Framework. In this framework, a new project monitoring tools section requires the applicant to describe a feasible monitoring and outcome evaluation plan. In addition, all applicants must now achieve one of four project outcomes: in-

creased language fluency; increased community member use of language learning resources; language teachers certified; or increased capacity to implement a language program.

Since 2010, ANA has held two separate annual competitions for the language projects, Native American Language Preservation and Maintenance Program and EMI. Between 2010 and 2018, ANA received 843 applications for all Native American language projects. Of those, 155 applications were for EMI projects. The amount of funding we distribute for all program areas varies based on the number of projects ending. For example, the total funding for new EMI projects this year is just over \$2 million. With this, we are able to meet approximately 29 percent of funding requested in new applications.

Congress appropriated approximately \$54 million to ANA for FY 2018, of which we awarded approximately \$45.7 million through competitive funding opportunity announcements. Congress has requested, in its explanatory statement accompanying the FY 2018 appropriations, that ANA continue to support language funding at or above the minimum of \$12 million for native languages overall and \$4 million for projects funded under EMI. We have met that target annually. In FY 2018, we estimate providing \$4.3 million for EMI grants, \$5.86 million for preservation and maintenance grants, and \$1.9 million for Native Language Community Coordination, for a combined total of over \$12 million in our language specific funding area. Approximately \$31.6 million was awarded for our social and economic development strategies, and just under \$2 million was awarded for environmental and regulatory enhancement grants. The balance of our funds was spent on contracts to support technical assistance and grantee support.

I would like to share information about the success of two of our current EMI grants. One is the Cook Inlet Tribal Council in Alaska. They are operating a Yup'ik Language Nest. Language nests are for the youngest learners, and these children aged birth to three are part of a full day, year round Early Head Start setting. When they transition to the Head Start classroom, they will continue to receive the minimum of 500 hours of instruction solely in Yup'ik. The project also provides weekly family-centered Yup'ik language instruction to parents and caregivers, and monthly referrals to cultural activities in the community. Our regional program manager of Tribal Head Start programs was able to visit them recently and was impressed with what they have been able to achieve. Tribal Head Start grantees have consistently requested additional resources to implement immersion, and ANA funding has been used to enhance Head Start services when resources are unavailable from the Office of Head Start.

In 2012, ANA provided start-up funding to Sitting Bull College for a Lakota immersion preschool on the Standing Rock Reservation. During the first three years, the college was able to hire and train staff as well as recruit families to be part of the immersion school. After the important progress of this project, they applied and received EMI funding in 2015 to develop language immersion classes and curriculum for kindergarten through third grade. They have chosen to follow the Montessori Method, and therefore, the project also includes intensive training for staff in Montessori methodology, language acquisition, immersion techniques, rigorous parent involvement, and language learning. In addition, the college is seeking North Dakota accreditation for a kindergarten through third grade school.

We thank Congress for the additional funding provided to ANA in recent years. With these appropriations, we funded five Native Language Community Coordination Demonstration (NLCC) projects to build upon the successes of ANA's short-term, project-based native language funding. The five projects are located in Alaska, California, Montana, and two in Oklahoma. The NLCC is intended as a demonstration that will address gaps in community coordination across the native language educational continuum. In 2016, ANA staff held the first cohort convening for team building, goal setting, and baseline measure development. In 2017, we developed both cohort-wide and project-specific indicators. Recipients were actively engaged in deciding which measures would be indicators of success for their community and across the cohort. We are now beginning the third year of this demonstration project and have worked with our staff and contractors to begin setting the stage for the Report to Congress which will be completed at the end of this demonstration.

Currently, ANA has four geographically focused technical assistance centers. This year, ANA awarded an additional contract to specifically support NLCC projects. The virtual NLCC Technical Assistance Center assists recipients in maximizing language revitalization efforts. The Center launched a website that connects the five NLCC recipients and provides native language resources, tools, and community engagement. The website is also available to all ANA native language grantees and the public.

During my tenure as commissioner, I have three main goals to strengthen our language program:

- 1.) Ensuring that we are using ANA resources the best we can without duplication.
- 2.) Making sure we identify and provide outreach to lower capacity tribes/communities that have never had a language grant.
- 3.) Making materials more readily available to use as sample resources by cataloging them, and, with the permission of the tribe or entity that developed them, sharing them more broadly.

We are thankful for the long standing support of this Committee in achieving the mission of ANA. We look forward to working with Congress to reform the Native American Programs Act, including the amendments to the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act to (1) authorize the transmission of products developed under Native American language grants to the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington D.C., (2) incorporate evaluation practices with current principles to measure effectiveness of outcomes or impact to identify, implement, and sustain effective programs and practices, and (3) eliminate duplicative and ineffective procedures related to publication of annual funding opportunity announcements that currently require ACF to engage in a rulemaking process under the Administrative Procedure Act prior to publishing annual funding opportunity announcements to the public.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Commissioner Hovland. Again, we look forward to working with you in your new capacity.

Next we will hear from the Honorable Jessie Baird, Vice Chairwoman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Indian Tribe, Mashpee, Massachusetts. Thanks for being here.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JESSIE LITTLE DOE BAIRD, VICE
CHAIRWOMAN, MASHPEE WAMPANOAG TRIBE**

Ms. BAIRD. [Greeting in Native language.] Chairman Hoeven and Vice Chairman Udall and honorable members of the Committee, on behalf of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, thank you for holding this hearing.

I am Jessie Little Doe Baird. I introduced myself in the language given to my people by Creator. I am the Vice Chairwoman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and come from a line of Women Chiefs. I have a Master of Science in linguistics from MIT, I was named a McArthur Fellow for my work in linguistics, and I serve on the American Academy of Arts and Science Commission on Language Learning. Most importantly, I am a teacher of the Wampanoag language.

Our people are direct descendants of first Indian Nation that helped the Pilgrims in 1620. My blood and bones come from the land you know as Mashpee. We were the first Indian Nation to adopt an alphabetic writing system in 1632, and the first Bible published in the New World was printed in Wampanoag language.

Nevertheless, pressure from non-Indian settlement of our aboriginal lands eventually robbed us of our ability to speak our own language. Seven generations later, we have used these written tools left by our ancestors to heal this wound.

In 1993, we established the Wopanaak Language Reclamation Project. Working with my colleagues at MIT, I worked to recover lost portions of our language and began teaching our language to other Wampanoag citizens.

We are the first Tribe to reclaim a language with no living speakers in history. We have trained two credentialed Wampanoag linguists and we have over 15 certified language teachers. We are developing a dictionary that currently holds over 12,000 entries and curriculum for language acquisition. We have immersion language camps, schools that teach in our language, and community language classes.

My Nation could not have accomplished these things without Federal assistance. ANA and Esther Martinez funding made it possible to develop a core team of fluent speakers and certified teachers who have developed language programs and services to meet the needs of our Nation. Continued funding is crucial.

The Federal Government also helped by setting aside a federally protected Reservation for us. Having a Reservation allowed us to open our own tribal school. Here, Wampanoag children attend a tribally-run preschool and kindergarten where they are taught in our language.

It would be nearly impossible in an off-Reservation public school to exercise this level of cultural sovereignty. We pray that our lands remain in trust so that we may continue this vital work.

The interconnectedness of our language and our land is more fundamentally explained by our word “nutahkeem,” which loosely translated means “my land,” but literally means “my land that is not separate from my body.” In our language, there is no other way to express “my land.” Another of our words, “nupunuhsham,” means two things: “I have fallen down” and “I have lost my land rights,” that my feet, part of my body, which is also my land, have also been removed from under me. Our land and our language are inextricably tied to one another and our ultimate survival as a people.

Our language provides our children with tools to live a productive and satisfying life. There is a correlation between language immersion and positive outcomes in graduation rates and protective social factors against addiction, depression, and suicide.

There are many ways that our trustee can help us improve and advance this vitally important work. In particular, I recommend several initiatives.

One, provide continuation funding as an extension of ANA and Esther Martinez funding pools; two, provide continuous teacher fluency funding so that we can continue to grow our immersion teacher pool; three, provide Federal funding to enhance cooperative relationships between LEAs and TEAs to help bring expert Native speakers into public school systems serving Native children; four, encourage both SAMHSA and IHS to incorporate mother languages into their toolbox as evidence-based treatment tools; five, leverage dollars from the ACF’s Child Care Development Fund to create immersion child care centers; six, provide funding for on-Reservation immersion programs to foster immersion teacher certification and curriculum development; seven, very important, create a national online curriculum clearinghouse to organize by language family; and eight, finally, enact Federal legislation giving Tribes the right to develop tribal education materials for Tribe-State education plans.

In sum, the story of America and how we became one great Nation is a story woven from many different peoples and many different languages. The Wampanoag language is an important thread in that history. For us, the preservation of our language is the preservation of ourselves, and we are now able to properly introduce ourselves to our ancestors once again when we leave this world.

Thank you, Committee, and I welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Baird follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JESSIE LITTLE DOE BAIRD, VICE CHAIRWOMAN,
MASHPEE WAMPANOAG TRIBE

Good Day.

I am Jessie Little Doe Baird. I introduced myself in the language given to my People by the Creator. I am the Vice Chairwoman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, and I come from a line of Women Chiefs. I have a Masters in Science Degree in linguistics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and in 2010 I was honored to be named as a MacArthur Fellow, which came with a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation fellowship in recognition of my efforts in reclaiming the Wampanoag language.¹ I am a teacher of the Wampanoag language and since 2014, I have sat as an appointed Commissioner on the Commission on Language Learning, created by The American Academy of Arts and Sciences in response to a bipartisan request from Congress to study the nation's language education needs.² Our people are direct descendants of the first Indian nation to reach out a hand to help the Pilgrims in 1620. My blood and bones come from the very land that you know as Mashpee. When I die, just like my ancestors, my body will return to the land, very literally returning home to join the bones of my Ancestors. This is the Mashpee way.

Chairman Hoeven and Vice Chairman Udall, and Honorable Members of the Committee, on behalf of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe I thank you for holding this hearing and for the focus you are bringing to the preservation of Native languages. We appreciate that you understand that our language is inextricably intertwined with our culture, our history, and our sovereignty. We know you understand that the story of the Mashpee Wampanoag is an integral part of the story of the United States, and that the preservation of our language is important not just to us, but to the preservation of the collective history of all Americans.

The Wampanoag was the first Indian nation to adopt an alphabetic writing system in 1632. The first bible printed in the New World was printed in the Wampanoag language in 1663.

¹“Jessie Little Doe Baird is a linguist who is reviving a long-silent language and restoring to her Native American community a vital sense of its cultural heritage . Through painstaking research, dedicated teaching, and contributions to other groups struggling with language preservation, Baird is reclaiming the rich linguistic traditions of indigenous peoples and preserving precious links to our nation’s complex past.” MacArthur Foundation website: <https://www.macfound.org/fellows/24/>

²In 2014, a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators and Representatives requested that the American Academy of Arts and Sciences undertake a study of the nation’s language education needs to answer two questions: (1) How does language learning influence economic growth, cultural diplomacy, the productivity of future generations, and the fulfillment of all Americans? (2) What actions should the nation take to ensure excellence in all languages as well as international education and research, including how we may more effectively use current resources to advance language attainment?— In response, the Academy created the Commission on Language Learning. The Commission’s final report, entitled *America’s Languages: Investing in Language Learning for the 21st Century*, provides recommendations to “improve access to as many languages as possible, for people of every age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background.” American Academy of Arts and Sciences website: <https://www.amacad.org/content/Research/researchproject.aspx?d=21896>



NEGONNE OOSUKKUHWHONK *AGOS*

Ne asowetamuk

GENESIS.

CHAPTER I.

The creation of heaven and earth
16 Of man in the image of God, by The
effluence of his seed.

1 P. 1.
13. 6.
17. 15.
18. 15.
19. 15.
20. 15.
21. 15.
22. 15.



1 Eke ketchick a syon
Gos Kesik & Oke.
2 Kah Oke m-
matta kuhkaruna.
3 Kah wutshewon kah
monequmona, &
pohkeum wotshew
mawdi, kah wot
Nishwanitawon
Gos poporohas wot-
kiche nippkoneu.

b 2 Cor.
5. 6.

3 Onk powas Gos, & Wequlaj, kah
nd wqul.
4 Kah wawetamun Gos wqul ne en
wawetaj: Kah wotshew chawbe jantamun
Gos nery wqul kah nery puhkoneu.
5 Kah wutshewetamun Gos wqul Kes-
kulod, kah puhkoneu wutshewetamun
Nakons kah nd wawonowok kah nd
mektonowog peryne kuhod.

c P. 1.
1. 16.
Jer. 10.
21. 6.
31. 15.

6 Kah wawon Gos e sepakhetawon
nery nippkoneu, kah chawbe jantamun
shawen nippe wutshew nippkoneu.
7 Kah wawon Gos sepakhetawon, kah
wutshewetamun wawonowog nippkoneu
jgwe, utshew jgwe sepakhetawon, kah
nawonowog nippkoneu utshew onkwon
sepakhetawon, kah nd nd nery.

d Jer. 17.
13.

8 Kah wutshewetamun Gos d sepakhe-
tawon Kesikulod, kah nd wawonowog
ok, kah nd wawonowog nd nd nery kuhokok.

e P. 1.
31. 7.
1. 16.
Job 38. 5.

9 Kah wawon Gos mektonowog nippe ut-
shew wutshewetamun wotshew, kah nd
kewonowog nery, kah nd nd nery.
10 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshew
Oke, kah nd nd nery wutshewetamun
Kehmeh & wawonowog Gos ne en wawonowog.
11 Kah wawon Gos d wawonowog nd nd
kiche, mektonowog nd nd nery, kah nd
wutshewetamun wutshewetamun wutshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.
12 Kah wawonowog nd nd nery, kah nd
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.

13 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.
14 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.

15 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.
16 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.

17 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.
18 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.

19 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.
20 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.

21 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.
22 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.

23 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.
24 Kah wawonowog Gos e wotshewetamun
nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery, kah nd nd nery.

The largest corpus of Native Written documents in North America are written in Wampanoag. Yet after relentless pressure from non-Indian settlement of our aboriginal lands and the pressure that came with it to interact with the non-Indian community around us in English, including assimilation efforts such as the Carlisle Indian Boarding School, we were robbed of the ability to speak our own language. For six generations we could not introduce ourselves, or speak to our ancestors, in our own language.

But today, seven generations later, we have used those written tools left by our Ancestors to heal this wound, as we are the first American Indians to have reclaimed a language with no living speakers. We started in 1993 when we created a long-term strategic plan that culminated in the establishment of the Wópanâak Language Reclamation Project. I initially worked with linguists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to begin the recovery of the language, learning from

the Wampanoag bible and other historical Native Wampanoag written documents, and drawing on correspondence with other related Algonquian languages and linguistic principles to fill in the gaps. As I reclaimed my own language, I began to work with other Wampanoag citizens to teach them the language as well. After 24 years of planning and hard work, we have succeeded in recovering our language—we are the first to reclaim a language with no living speakers. In the process, we created the only inter-tribal cooperative project for the tribes of the Wampanoag. We have trained and produced two credentialed Wampanoag linguists, and we have over fifteen certified language teachers. We are developing a dictionary that currently includes over 12,000 entries, and a curriculum for second language acquisition of adult learners. We have a three-week summer youth program for ages 5 to 13, and schools that teach our children in Wampanoag. We have a family immersion language camp, and community language classes that are currently held in Mashpee, Aquinnah, Plymouth, and Boston.

The Wampanoag Nation and Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project could not have accomplished these things without vital partnerships with the Federal Government. The Administration for Native American language funding and the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Protection Act funding have made possible our ability to develop a core team of fluent speakers and certified teachers who in turn have developed curriculum for a myriad of language programs and services to meet the needs of our Nation. Continued funding for these programs is absolutely crucial the preservation of first American languages that are at risk.

I want to underscore that the federal government also played a crucial role in helping us preserve our language when in 2015 it set aside a federally-protected reservation on which we are able to engage in true self-determination. Having a reservation allows us to provide a school setting under tribal law that provides appropriate culturally-based education for our children. Here, Wampanoag children are able to attend a tribally-run pre-school and kindergarten where our students are taught in the Wampanoag language and by means of curriculum and teacher certification as determined by the tribe rather than the State. This year we will be adding a first grade class. This level of language instruction would be nearly impossible in an off-reservation public school environment and we are praying that our lands remain in trust in order to continue this work.

The interconnectedness of our language and our land is even more fundamentally explained by our word “nutahkeem”, which loosely translated means ‘my land’, but is better understood as “my land that is not separate from my body”. In our language, there is no other way to express, ‘my land’. Another of our words—“nupunuhshâm” means both ‘I have fallen down’, and, ‘I have lost my land rights’, that my feet (part of my body/which is also my lands) have been removed from me. Our land and our language are inextricably tied to one another, and to our ultimate survival as a people.

When we teach in our language, we honor all of our Mothers and Fathers who came before us. We also are the Mothers and Fathers who are making a way forward for our own children. We are providing them with the tools to live a productive and satisfying Wampanoag life. Federal programs are absolutely vital to the protection of Native American languages, the initiatives they fund are the seeds than can be grown to mightier vines with some additional efforts.

We know there is a correlation between language immersion teaching and positive outcomes in graduation rates, higher education, and protective social factors against addiction, depression, and suicide. There are so many ways that the federal government, our trustee, can help us improve and advance the vitally important work of language protection. In particular, I would like to recommend several initiatives:

- *Provide continuation funding as an extension of ANA and Esther Martinez funding pools.* Those tribes who demonstrate effective work to their program funding officers should be able to continue the work. Especially for small tribes that lack robust economic development opportunities, outside funding is key to continuing the hard work of language staff. For example, the current ANA language funding cycle is no longer than three years. Without continuation funding, the work is likely to halt.
- *Provide speaker pipeline funding for language programs.* If we are to continue to grow our investment in a speaker population from K–12, we need fluent speaking teachers. I can tell you from my own work, this happens when a Master and Apprentice model is employed, where a fluent speaker spends a minimum of 25 hours per week with an apprentice speaker in an immersed language setting. This schedule yields a speaker that is at least an intermediate high speaker on the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) scale. These speakers then become our certified instructors and are able

to deliver core subject curriculum in the target language. Immersion schools can then reliably add grades with trained, fluent speakers.

- *Fund cooperative relationships between Local Education Authorities and Tribal Education Authorities where language is concerned.* The local school is one of the most effective tools to be leveraged as a partner in Native language maintenance and growth. Within a given local district, the expert speakers of local languages could enter the school system as tribally certified experts. This would ensure that youth are being provided with the best possible language instructors. This is exactly the case for my language where we have partnered with the local Mashpee School District and our language project staff provides tribally certified language instructors. Students in the Mashpee High School may take Wôpanâôtšâok to meet their world language requirement. Tribes need to be supported financially in these partnerships.
- *Encourage both SAMHSA and the Indian Health Service to incorporate Mother languages into their toolboxes as evidence-based treatment tools.* We are currently facing a massive opioid epidemic that is wreaking havoc on Native Community populations, both at the youth and adult level, as well as extremely high rates of suicide and alcoholism. Since we know that traditional ceremony and language provide strong protective factors against suicide, drug use, and alcoholism, and that language is being incorporated in Tribal Action Plans to address these issues across Indian Country, language must be incorporated into our treatment methodology paradigm and designated as an evidence-based tool in order to qualify for funding under many prevention and treatment grant opportunities.
- *Leverage a pool of resource dollars from the Administration for Children and Families current Child Care Development Fund.* A portion of the current program budgets to tribes could create immersion childcare nests with little additional effort on the part of the government and ensure that a wider number of babies have the advantage of heritage language as early as possible.
- *Encourage tribes to exercise the sovereignty provided by their trust lands.* Congress should provide funding to assist Tribes in developing their own immersion teacher certification processes and cover curriculum development staff in order to provide on-reservation immersion schools.
- *Empower national American Indian Language experts.* With your support and leadership, we could easily act to leverage national American Indian Language experts to create a national online curriculum clearing house organized by language family. This would be an invaluable resource of curriculum tools available to language teachers for all Native American Languages.
- *Provide federal legislation giving tribes the right to develop tribal educational materials for tribe-state education plans.* While States have the latitude to create tribe-state education plans, States have the ultimate authority over whether they enter into these plans, the tribes they consult, and what the plans look like. Federal dollars that require the Tribe to be the lead in crafting the tribal service portion of these plans makes good sense and would leverage both state education dollars that come from the federal budget as well as local education resources.

In conclusion, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and for your interest in the protection of Native languages. The story of America and how we became who we are today as one great Nation is a story woven from many different peoples and many different languages, all critical to our understanding of who we are. The study and preservation of our language is a critical thread, as important to the preservation and understanding of the fabric of American history as any other. And of course for us the preservation of our language ultimately is the key to preservation of ourselves. With our language, we are once again able to properly introduce ourselves to our Ancestors when we pass from this world into the next.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Vice Chairman Baird.

Next we will hear from Ms. Rawlins. She is Director, Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration, Aha Punana Leo, Hawaii.

The hurricane that was approaching Hawaii, have you heard what the status is?

Ms. RAWLINS. We were talking about that earlier with our Senator Schatz. We are watching, got up early this morning and start-

ed to kind of track the hurricane. I understand it was downgraded to a category 4 only because it is one mile below a category 5.

The CHAIRMAN. When I saw, they were saying cat 5.

Ms. RAWLINS. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. We will hope and pray for the best there.

Ms. RAWLINS. Yes. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Welcome.

STATEMENT OF NAMAKA RAWLINS, DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION, AHA PUNANA LEO

Ms. RAWLINS. [Greeting in Native language.] Greetings, Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall. Aloha, Senator Schatz and members of this distinguished Committee. Aloha. Warm greetings.

My name is Namaka Rawlins and I am a specialist for the Aha Punana Leo, and I will be sharing the efforts of our work from Hawaii.

The three entities that I represent here are part of a larger picture of Hawaii, and even a larger picture nationally for schools that are teaching in our Native American languages, that are teaching the subjects of math and science and reading and such, history.

The Native American language immersion medium schooling is the most effective method in language revitalization, and I want to say to all of you that I am so honored to be here to speak before this Committee. I also want to acknowledge the distinguished panel that I sit with this afternoon. I also want to acknowledge Senator McCain and his work in 1990 in establishing the Native American Languages Act that has been the piece of legislation that has helped us move our languages forward towards a living language, and I have to recognize that because it has been this body, this Senate Committee, very important Committee on Indian Affairs that has been helping us. I appreciate all of the opening remarks that the Senators provided from your States in supporting our work here, Senators. I really, really appreciate that.

So, I have provided my written testimony and I just want to kind of highlight a few things because I think there is more that can be done, and it can just be support from this Committee, because what we are finding is that while the immersion method is the best practice for language revitalization, there is insufficient understanding of its merits among mainstream educators, those that control the environment for our children's education.

So, one major misconception is that children attending immersion schools will not be able to speak English. This is not the case. As we have seen over the last many, many years, since 1999, all of our students at Nawahi graduate English proficient.

The majority of our Native language immersion schools are with our students that are identified as at-risk. So, for example, the enrollment at Nawahi is 96 percent Native Hawaiian, and 70 percent of our students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. So, in Hawaii's mainstream schools, at-risk children are likely to drop out or, if they graduate, not continue to post-high.

Native American language immersion medium benefits exceeds revitalization goals. Our parents are also learning, along with our children, and they were recognized by our State board of education as active participants in their children's education. It was due to

the efforts of our parents that the preschool to graduate school, the P20 Hawaiian Medium Education Program exists today.

There are 180,000 public school students. Twenty-six percent are Native Hawaiians, and yet only 9 percent of the teaching force are Native Hawaiians. However, at Nawahi, the student population is 96 percent Native Hawaiians and 97 percent of the teaching force are Native Hawaiians. So, growing your own teachers is very vital in language revitalization and maintenance.

The Native American Languages Act provides the framework to ensure and support the survival of Native American languages. It is the Congress that can help to assist us in supporting the efforts being done in communities, by allowing statutory flexibility to align and support best practices.

I am here to answer any questions. Mahalo nui.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Rawlins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NAMAKA RAWLINS, DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
AND COLLABORATION, AHA PUNANA LEO

Greeting

Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall, Senator Schatz representing my own home state of Hawaii, and all other Senators on this distinguished Committee on Indian Affairs, warm aloha to each and every one of you.

My name is Nāmaka Rawlins. I am one of twelve children raised on the Keaukaha Hawaiian Homestead, lands restricted for Native Hawaiians. I am the Outreach Specialist of the ‘Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc. and the Liaison of the state Hawaiian language college and its laboratory school. These entities work together and represent Hawai‘i’s only P–20 vertical alignment of the Hawaiian language medium education system.

P–20 refers to an educational pipeline from early childhood through to the doctorate all taught through the Native Hawaiian language. Our consortium is the oldest, largest and most developed integrated Native American language system. We are part of a larger effort within our state that serves over 3,000 students preschool to grade 12 totally through Hawaiian.

I am also Vice President of the National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs. Our National Coalition provides mutual support among immersion programs and schools operating in 17 states, with over 1,000 students in languages other than Hawaiian. There is a strong grassroots movement in Native communities nationwide to create more schools and programs of this sort.

Focus of Testimony Is Academic and Social Outcomes

Shortly after being elected Senator Schatz visited our program. He encouraged us to collect information on our outcomes beyond our successes in saving our language and culture. Here I will focus on the sorts of information that Senator Schatz has urged us to collect. I will provide an addendum later with more detailed information on our Hawaiian language and culture revitalization efforts and the National Coalition.

Definition: Native American Language Medium/Immersion

I want to state that the three Hawaiian entities which I represent are but part of a larger picture in Hawai‘i, and a still larger picture nationally of schools that teach through Native languages. That is my testimony will be on schools and programs that teach math, reading, history etc. through Native languages to both children who come to school knowing the language and those who enter knowing only English.

This approach is often called “Native American language immersion schooling” or “Native American language medium schooling”. Native American language medium/immersion is the method that linguists and other scientists have found to be the most effective in actually reversing the loss Native American languages as living first languages. Students who graduate from our Hawaiian language medium school are raising their own children speaking Hawaiian, something that had happened in our community since the early 1900s.

I am honored to be here with you and to sit on a panel with such knowledgeable witnesses. This committee has been the entity that has stood up for our languages.

I especially want to acknowledge the leadership of Senator McCain of Arizona who introduced the Native American Languages Act (NALA) in 1990, a landmark piece of legislation authored and approved in a bipartisan manner from this Committee.

I mention that history, Senators, because this committee has been the driving force to help restore our languages in a larger nation where there is little understanding of distinctive needs of schooling through Native American languages. This committee and its bipartisan outreach is the one that has the most access to understanding the distinctiveness of our needs and assure integration into the larger body of federal law.

English Acquisition

While Native American language medium/immersion education is best practice for language revitalization and maintenance, there is an insufficient understanding of its merits among educators and others influencing the learning environments of Native children. One major misunderstanding is that children in these schools will not be able to speak English. We have had students graduating with total Hawaiian medium education since 1999. All have been as proficient in spoken and written English as their peers graduating from total English medium high schools. Within our National Coalition, I have never heard of a student in a Native American medium/immersion school that has not been able to speak, read, write English upon reaching age 18 and moving to college or the workforce. Our methodology is similar to that used to teach English in Nordic countries such as Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, the Faroe Islands and Finland.

“At Risk” Students Core of Our Enrollment

The enrollment both in Hawai‘i and in the National Coalition schools is heavily skewed to “at risk students”. For example, in our P-12 laboratory school Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u, the enrollment is 97 percent Native Hawaiian with 70 percent free and reduced lunch eligible status. Almost all students use non-standard Pidgin English or Hawaiian in their homes—that is they fit the federal definition of “Limited English speakers”. In addition, our laboratory school is located in one of two districts in our state identified as having the most educational and social challenges. Most members schools in the National Coalition are located on reservations with large numbers of Native students who come from dire social and economic situations.

No High School Dropouts

In the local English medium schools in Hawai‘i, “at risk” students are those expected to drop out or if they graduate from high school do not pursue post high education. Senators, Native American language medium/immersion education has produced outstanding results relative to high school graduation and college attendance rates. Our Hawaiian language consortium’s demonstration school Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u has had a rate of 100 percent high school graduation from its first class in 1999. Its college attendance rate directly from high school is over 80 percent.

In our laboratory school, all students have the same curriculum regardless of their educational status. Our curriculum combines college preparatory courses taught through Hawaiian plus work on the land and sea that connects to our Native Hawaiian traditions. We value the student who decides to seek out a life career in traditional Hawaiian farming, hunting, and fishing or music just as much as the student who goes on to become a doctor or lawyer. All students are expected to serve their community through the Hawaiian perspective based on language and culture.

The results I have described above regarding English proficiency, academic achievement and community commitment is from the data we have collected over these many years. Similar results are being realized among schools and programs teaching totally or primarily through a Native American language throughout our National Coalition schools.

Early Reading Advantages

At the Pūnana Leo language nest preschools, we teach our 3 and 4 year olds to read Native Hawaiian starting with chanted syllables. Our pre-K children can read single unfamiliar words, sentences and short paragraphs the year before entering kindergarten.

Another factor to early reading is the Hakalama, the Hawaiian writing system. Like the writing system of other Native American languages, the Hawaiian writing system is highly systematic. One letter one sound. English spelling is highly irregular. Many sounds per letter; many letters per sounds. The early reading skills we can easily teach through Hawaiian or another Native American language cannot be easily taught in English until two years later in grade 1. Through our National Coa-

lition we are sharing best practices regarding reading instruction through Native American languages.

Members of the National Coalition are reporting the same results for early reading through their own languages.

Early reading is a huge advantage. Once a child can read in one language it is easy to learn to read in another language. A student who is a good reader in a Native American language can easily transfer that reading skill to English and other languages. We have evidence for that in our laboratory school where our students study in addition to Hawaiian and English, Japanese, Latin and the most recent addition of Mandarin Chinese.

High Bilingualism and the Brain—Cognitive Advantage

Scientists tell us that knowing two languages at a highly proficient level has a positive effect on the brain. That is students who are highly proficient in two languages have a cognitive advantage. This cognitive advantage affects the learning of mathematics, science, social science, third languages, and other academic subjects. Scientific research has also shown that they have a high level of “executive control” in their thinking process, that is they can concentrate better.

Senators, we know that maintaining and revitalizing traditional languages at a very high level of proficiency has positive academic and social effects. Also, maintaining and revitalizing our traditional languages contributes to distinct Native identities. However, that knowledge and awareness of best practices is not widespread among the mainstream educators who hold power over our children’s schooling. Our challenge is overcoming administrative and other institutional barriers. These barriers prevent the high level of proficiency in the Native American language needed to produce the cognitive advantage as the base for further learning including English.

Flexibility Key To Unleashing Power of Parents

One size fits all education is an obstacle to advancing and developing Native American language medium/immersion education. The key is flexibility that allows the parents and local language oriented community members to move the program forward. Parents taking on responsibility for its development is a huge aspect of a Native language medium/immersion educational effort. This is why Native American language medium/immersion education has resulted in major social change in communities. Every single parent and family member plays a crucial and important role.

In Hawaiian medium education we have witnessed families who are positively impacted by our program. Parents work to learn the language and become teachers. It is not possible to import teachers from out-of-state as we do for community schools taught in the medium of English. Our parents have to work together to fix and clean classrooms, operate fundraisers, and provide support for sports and cultural activities. Our parents have to figure out how to develop books and teaching materials on their own as they cannot be imported from elsewhere in order to support Hawaiian language learning.

The non-profit where I work, the Aha Punana Leo, was founded in 1983, the same year that Senator Andrews of North Dakota was able to establish a permanent Senate Committee of Indian Affairs. We began with no money. Our organization surveyed the number of children aged 18 and under statewide with fluency in our language. There were less than 50—37 to be exact. It was also illegal in Hawaii for our language to be used in school, a hold over from a 1896 law. We moved forward to establish language nest preschools and from there full preschool to high school programs and then a Hawaiian language college with its own teacher preparation program through Hawaiian. We started with parents laying cement, creating simple books, supporting teachers by bringing in different cultural plants and fish, by studying our languages and making the decision to go to college.

NALA Alignment Crucial To Moving Forward

The Native American Languages (NALA) policy that your committee established in 1990 has been a key tool in the growth of schools and immersion language programs. NALA helped propel our movement to reclaim and revitalize our indigenous language. Yet, the reality is that most federal educational and other key legislation affecting our Native communities are not properly aligned with NALA.

Senators, members of this important Committee, I ask that you continue your good work, your strong bipartisan leadership, on behalf of our Native American language revitalization and maintenance efforts. I urge that you use your unique strengths as a bipartisan group to move other committees to align their work and legislation to NALA, the Native American Languages Act. I urge that you inform them of best practices that have emerged from Native American language medium

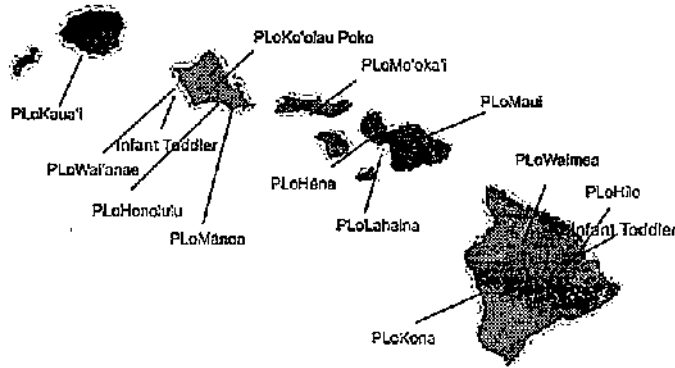
and immersion schools and that those best practices be referenced in legislation and policy as well.

Attachment

INTRODUCTION TO NATIVE LANGUAGE SYSTEM IN HAWAII

'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc. or translated as a "language nest organization"; the state of Hawai'i Hawaiian language college located at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and Ke Kula 'o Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u (Nāwahī) public k-8 charter school and 9-12 DOE school. Together, these entities represent the Hawaiian language medium education from a preschool through doctorate or P-20 model in the state of Hawai'i. This year, 2018 marks significant Hawaiian language milestones in our state to include 40 years as an official language status and 35 years since the establishment of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo. The P-20 model is the most developed education program in a Native American language and offers in the state of Hawai'i a Hawaiian language medium pathway, with special strengths in early childhood program delivery, secondary programming, teacher training and certification, assessments in our native language, and graduate education offered all through the Hawaiian language.

Pūnana Leo "Language Nests" Infants/Toddler/Preschoolers Statewide



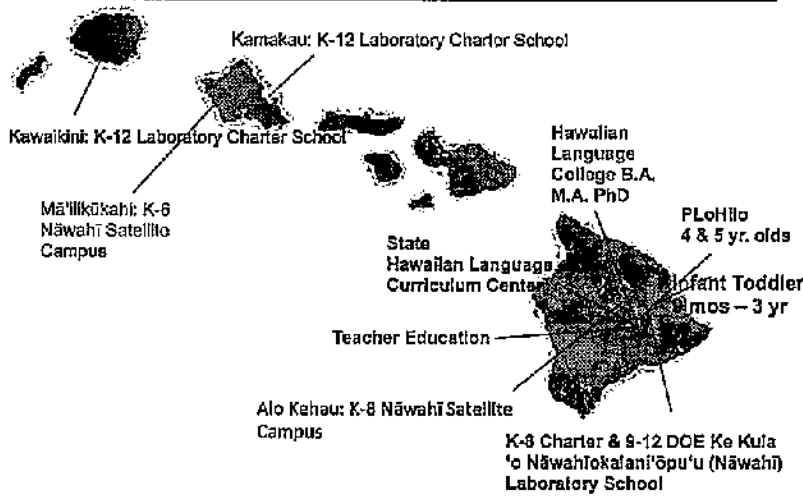
The non-profit 'Aha Pūnana Leo ('APL) administers 12 statewide early childhood education center based language nests for preschoolers as well as 2 Infant and toddler language nest centers with babies as young as 9 months. There are nearly 350 children and their families annually in our language nests program. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo's Hawaiian Language College provides B.A. M.A. & Doctoral degrees, an indigenous

teacher education certification, a laboratory school program including the k-12 Nāwahī, the state's Hawaiian language curriculum and testing center, Hale Kuamo'o and Mokuola Honua: Center for Indigenous Language Excellence a joint APL and language college initiative . The P-20 continuum is a promising model of Native American language revitalization, reversing language loss while exceeding the nation's Native student high school graduation rate and college admission rate.

EFFORTS FOR CONTINUUM IN EDUCATION

The children from the Pūnana Leo were in high school in 1996. With the support of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, we moved to a campus 11 miles from Hilo, in Kea'au, in the district of Puna in 1995. In 1997, the state legislature passed the law that established the Hawaiian language college at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. This college designation also established a teacher training and certification program and a laboratory school program of the college. Ke Kula 'o Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u (Nāwahī) was also named in the law to serve as a laboratory school and teacher training center. The law allowed for other sites to become laboratory sites as well. We were already training teachers at Nāwahī so this designation was appropriate. Two years later in 1999 we graduated the first cohort of high school students to have been educated entirely through the Hawaiian language.

P-20 Demonstration (Infant/Toddler/Preschool; K-12; Higher Ed)



Nāwahī is the demonstration site of best practices in Hawaiian medium education. Since 1999, we have a 100% graduation rate and an average of 85% college attendance rate. Our graduates are part of the program within the DOE high school 11 miles away. Nāwahī graduates have received distinguished awards and served as valedictorians, state

athletic champions and have been dual enrolled at the university of Hawai'i's campuses at the community college, arts and sciences and Hawaiian language college.

In 2017, the Board of Education passed its Seal of Biliteracy policy. The awards are given upon graduation to students who demonstrate a high proficiency in both of the state's two official languages (English and Hawaiian) or either of the state's two official languages and at least one additional language, including American Sign Language. In its inaugural year, only 36 seals were awarded statewide. Nāwahī students received 12 of those awards. Nāwahī students are multi language learners. We have been teaching Japanese language since 1994. We introduced Latin at the middle grades and recently experimented with teaching Latin in grades 1 - 4. This year we will introduce Mandarin language for grades 4 - 7. Our students have attended and graduated from prestigious colleges from Stanford, Loyola Marymount and our own University of Hawai'i and one is a professor of English at Oxford.

Continuum PreK-8 Charter & 9-12 DOE
Ko Kula 'o Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u(Nāwahī)
Laboratory School

- Pūnana Leo Infant Toddler and Preschoolers Enrollment = 42
- 2018-2019 Enrollment = 454
- Grades PreK-8 Public Charter
 - 2 satellite sites
- Grades 9-12 Enrollment = 70
- 70% Eligible Free & Reduce Lunch
- 96% Native Hawaiian
- 100% Graduation
- 85% College Enrollment
- 97% Native Hawaiian Staff and Faculty
- Seniors, Juniors & Sophomores dual enrollment 36+ college credits upon high school graduation
- Honor Roll; Valedictorian; Athletic Scholarships
- English Language a World Language
- Japanese Language Gr.1 - 6
- Chinese Language Gr.3 - 7
- Latin Language Gr. 2 - 4

HEALTHY FAMILIES; HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

In 2016 a new research linking positive health outcomes in Native American communities to native language revitalization holds promise and best practices for improving the mental and physical health of those who participate in these programs. There are data that shows a return to native spirituality that improves treatment results for substance abuse and addiction. The native language holds the key to the practices related to spirituality and identity. Daryl Baldwin, director of the Myaamia Center at Miami University and co-author in the research states that " Language transmission is a particularly effective means of reinforcing culture and identity within a community." He

further states that "language is also an efficient means of reinforcing membership or inclusion in a community." ("Healing through language: Positive physical health effects of indigenous language use" (F1000 Research 2016))

We have seen the ownership of programming as a positive outcome for our children and families. These are "our" schools. Pride, self esteem, self worth, self identity and identity to a community are reflected in the decision to be a part of a community movement to revitalize a language.

The Native American Languages Act of 1990 provides the framework to ensure and support the survival of Native American languages. Language survival comes from the use of the language or the will of the people. The congress can assist by allowing statutory flexibility to align and support best practice. We do not want to disadvantage our Native American language medium programs by creating barriers including measures of success similar to the very same measures for programs that continue to fail our children. The numerous research and studies on behavioral science lists several factors in promoting positive social behavior, academic success, emotional well-being, physical health and positive relationships for positive youth development. Native American language use is a best practice in promoting all of these factors for our children and even our families. Our own languages describe our world and our relationship to all our surroundings. It is our own languages that provides for a healthy mind, a healthy spirit and a healthy body.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Next, we will turn to Dr. Christine Sims, Director of American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Dr. SIMS.

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE SIMS, PH.D., DIRECTOR,
AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE POLICY RESEARCH AND
TEACHER TRAINING CENTER**

Dr. SIMS. Thank you. [Greeting in Native language.] Greetings from Acoma Pueblo. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee, for your invitation to come and speak to you about critical issues that affect not only our indigenous peoples of New Mexico, but throughout our Nation.

The American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center actually came out of support from this Committee I would say probably in 2003, when I came and testified for the first time before this Committee about the need for resource support for Tribes who were beginning to initiate some of the first language immersion programs in the Southwest.

Our Center came into being in 2008 and it still continues as a resource to Tribes by providing them technical assistance in program planning, but also teacher training for Native language teachers.

In my written testimony that I submitted, I included two areas that I think are really critical in terms of sustaining these efforts that began, as Namaka has mentioned, with the 1992 Native American Languages Act.

We have seen exponentially the growth of many of these programs; however, there still continues to be a shortage of funding resources, a shortage of technical resources, a shortage of training resources to be able to help sustain these efforts, so in my testimony I have included two key areas: the expansion of these lan-

guage efforts into school settings was, again, something that has been very new for some of our Tribes, and how the impact of educational policy, especially at the Federal level and State level, have impacted some of these efforts.

And the second area that I highlight in my testimony is the expansion of language revitalization efforts, especially among early childhood education. That is a growing focus that we see across our State, but also in many Tribes across the Nation.

In the interest of time, I am just going to highlight a couple of things.

In New Mexico, where we have both State and federally funded early childhood programs, for example, we have seen the emergence of efforts that have made to transform, if you will, some standard models of what we do in early childhood education.

The Montessori Keres Children's Language Learning Center, KCLLC, is one such program in the Pueblo of Cochiti. This is an independent initiative in which Keres is being taught in a full immersion setting for young children ages 2, 3, and 4, and in a dual language program for ages 5 through 8. These are very different initiatives that we have not tried before, but they are very critical in terms of continuing to support efforts like these.

Some of the educational policies that have impacted the work of Tribal Nations have come about, unfortunately, through policies like the No Child Left Behind Act, which was a real detriment to our languages in a couple of ways. One, it reduced instructional time, it placed unfair requirements for teacher credentialing. Many of these things undermined, actually, some of the efforts that were being made.

I would caution us to think about continuing Federal policies in education, such as Common Core, that are still English-based kinds of standards. We need to consider how those also impact our efforts to teach language in our schools.

Lastly, I would remind everybody here on this Committee how urgent it is because our elders and our fluent speakers are aging and, as those are our most critical resources, we need to replenish that supply of younger adults who are speakers, who have learned the language. I believe Ms. Hummingbird will speak about her experiences shortly.

But we need this kind of people to take the places of those who are now passing on, because, in order to continue any of these efforts in language revitalization, we need that pipeline of resources to be able to teach.

At the University of New Mexico, we try to do our best to do that, but we also need that kind of resource support so that these efforts will continue.

I would be happy to answer more questions in any of these areas, but, again, I want to just thank you all for this opportunity to address you today. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Sims follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE SIMS, PH.D., DIRECTOR, AMERICAN INDIAN
LANGUAGE POLICY RESEARCH AND TEACHER TRAINING CENTER

Introduction

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished members of the Committee, [Greeting in Native tongue.] In my native Keres-Acoma language, Greetings to all of you this afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and present my remarks on an issue that is critical to all American Indian peoples, that is, the survival of America's Indigenous languages and cultures. My name is Christine Pasqual Sims. I am from the Pueblo of Acoma in New Mexico. I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies in the College of Education at the University of New Mexico (UNM) and I also direct the American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center (AILPRTTC). My remarks today on "Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native languages for Future Generations" will address two key areas that I believe are critical to the sustainability and continued growth of language initiatives that have emerged over the last decade and a half. These are: (1) the expansion of language efforts into schools and the impact of educational policy and (2) the expansion of language revitalization efforts in early childhood education and the implications for continued support services for Native language initiatives. My testimony is based on my collaborative work with American Indian tribes, Native language teachers and practitioners, language program administrators, schools, and members of tribal communities. I understand that my oral remarks must be brief today, however, I have prepared my comments in more detail in my written testimony respectfully submitted for the record.

Part One: Background of Our Work

The American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center (AILPRTTC) is based in the College of Education at the University of New Mexico (UNM). The Center came into being in 2008 following the passage of the Esther Martinez Language Preservation Act. I testified before this Committee in 2003 regarding the proposed amendments to the Native Languages Act of 1990/1992, and again in 2006, before the U.S. House of Representatives Field Hearing on the *Recovery and Preservation of Native American Languages* (Sims, 2003; 2006). In both of my testimonies I advocated and strongly recommended UNM as a demonstration site for a regional technical assistance and teacher-training center to help support tribes in their efforts to establish community-based and school-based language initiatives. This was a direct outcome of cumulative work I had completed while a doctoral student at UC-Berkeley and my early work in Native bilingual education through a New Mexico-based non-profit training organization, the Linguistic Institute for Native Americans, which I co-founded in the early 1980s. My relationship over the years with various tribal language communities, listening to their goals and visions for restoring spoken languages, their challenges in implementing language initiatives and the need for support services to initiate and expand their language efforts, has continued to guide my present work at the Center.

With initial support from the U.S. Department of Education I was able to see our Center become a reality and today the AILPRTTC is still involved in the work of providing Native language teacher training and technical assistance to tribes. UNM is the only Institution of Higher Education in New Mexico that provides these services on a year round basis. We work closely with tribes providing training for speakers of Native languages through workshops, university courses, an annual Native American Language Teachers' Institutes (NALTI), language symposia and community forums. We have also had the opportunity to mentor and support seven Indigenous graduate students pursuing Master's and Doctoral degrees with a focus on bilingual education and American Indian Languages and Education. As resources are available, we are able to hire these students as Graduate Assistants in our Center working with us on outreach and language teacher training activities, gathering participant evaluation data, helping prepare training materials for workshops and summer institutes, and learning the technical aspects of materials development equipment used in training teachers how to produce their own language teaching materials.

While the majority of our institutional and tribal partners are located in New Mexico and the southwest, our annual summer institutes also attract participants from tribes and indigenous communities outside New Mexico expanding our outreach far beyond the state. We have had, for example, participants from Alaska, Arizona, North Carolina, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Ecuador. The Center continues to build and expand these efforts by bringing together the academic resources of the University's College of Education and veteran practitioners in the field of Native language teaching, tribal government leaders, and members of indigenous language commu-

nities. We consider the engagement of tribal communities as the critical resources and decision-makers in efforts to maintain their respective languages in the midst of rapidly expanding global influences. As well, the impact of national and local education policies that often place tremendous pressure on school-age generations to abandon their mother tongue and shift exclusively to English language use is a continuing challenge facing many tribes today.

In summary, the mission of the AILPRTTC is to serve as a local, regional and national center of outreach, service, advocacy, and collaborative research, examining policy issues affecting the survival and maintenance of American Indian languages.

Part Two: Growth and Expansion of Language Efforts and Impact of Federal Educational Policies

Over the course of nearly two decades, efforts to teach Native languages have grown almost exponentially across this nation since the dawn of a new century. In New Mexico for example, the first summer immersion programs that began in the mid-1990s as community-based efforts involving fluent language speakers from the community gradually expanded into school settings by 2001 so that children could continue to receive year round instruction in the Native language. In 2003, I spoke before this Committee about some of these early efforts in my own Pueblo of Acoma as well as other tribes such as the Pueblo of Cochiti, both of whom were embarking on language immersion initiatives in their communities for the first time (Sims, 2003). In anticipation of these new developments, we researched the most prominent and successful Indigenous instructional models that existed at the time, namely the immersion programs developed by the Maori, Hawaiian, the Akwesasne of New York and the Karuk people of California. We learned about their immersion programs and how they implemented this approach as an effective way to teach language. We trained each other, sharing the experiences of other tribes through community forums, institutes and conferences, gradually developing an informal network of fluent speakers, elders, parents and community members committed to seeing their children learn their Native language.

According to a 2018 report produced by the Language and Culture Bureau in the New Mexico Public Education Department most of the state's 7 major Native languages, including Tiwa, Tewa, Towa, Keres, Zuni, Navajo and Apache are now being taught in at least 15 different public school districts. Other tribes, such as the Diné Nation, have addressed language revitalization efforts by establishing Navajo language immersion schools in Arizona. These schools are in operation today, in towns and rural communities such as Ft. Defiance, Tuba City, Leupp, and Rough Rock, Arizona. More recently, in northwestern New Mexico, a Navajo immersion charter school, the Dream Diné Charter School and a Dual Language Program in the Central Consolidated School District are additional examples of alternative school-based language efforts. The New Mexico Public Education Department reports that approximately 5,800 children participate in Navajo language classes in various public schools (NMPED Language and Culture Bureau, 2018). Immersion schools in particular, have produced some of the more notable examples of the Navajo language rebounding among children who are becoming fluent once again in the language.

These developments over the past 10-plus years have not been without their challenges. There has been a concomitant pattern of federal rules and policies that have often threatened the very goals that tribes have set regarding the education of their children, including language and culture programs in schools. Some of these past policies are well-known such as the 2001 *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) which was so detrimental to Native language initiatives in schools on several fronts, including teacher credentialing requirements, standardized assessment requirements, prescribed curriculums and scripted instruction. Most notably, for Native language teachers and students, the heavy NCLB emphasis on English literacy, language arts, and mathematics meant a reduction in time and attention to Native language instruction. In New Mexico and Arizona, for example, we observed reductions in Native language instructional time, in some cases, to a mere 30 minutes two to three times a week in elementary schools. Native speakers were also eliminated as teachers of language in Arizona public schools due to the "highly qualified" requirements of NCLB.

In response, there were valiant efforts to push back on these policies from all fronts, including tribal leaders, expert academics (Beaulieu, Sparks & Alonzo, 2005; McCarty, 2003; Wilson, 2012;), Native language educators, and other language advocates. Additionally, in states like New Mexico where 22 different tribal nations exist, each with their own Native language, proactive movement was made towards establishing tribal oversight for verifying the Native language proficiency of their respective community members and recommending them for certification as Native language teachers through Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) with the New Mexico

State Department of Education. The New Mexico *520 Alternative Certificate for Native Speakers* was created in 2002 followed by the passage of the *2003 Indian Education Act* by the New Mexico state legislature. This Act specifically called for the development of strategies for ensuring the maintenance of Native languages in an effort to ensure equitable and culturally relevant learning for Native students in public schools. These represented major shifts in both policy and process where tribes exercised their sovereignty and self-determination concerning language and education issues. These MOAs are still in effect today with most of the 22 tribes of New Mexico having established their own individual agreements with the New Mexico Public Education Department.

As NCLB was phased out, a new federal education policy centered around *Common Core Standards*, once more set the bar for the nation's public schools. What was no different from NCLB, however, was the fact that these standards were once more English-based sets of standards, primarily relying on standardized on-line PARCC assessments to measure the academic progress of students. Various states, including New Mexico, remain closely tied to these assessments which often show American Indian students scoring at the lowest levels on these tests. As a result, the emphasis is once again placed on schools and teachers to raise test scores in order to avoid being labeled as failing schools and ineffective instructors.

A very recent ruling by the First Judicial Court of New Mexico, in the *Yazzie/Martinez Case (Yazzie, et al. v. State of New Mexico, et al.)*, however, found the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) and the Secretary of NMPED to be in violation of the rights of "at risk" students including Native American, English language learners, and other economically disadvantaged students. The Court ruled that they had failed to provide sufficient programs and services required by the state's constitution for these students' education. For Native American students specifically, their continued failure in reading, math, and science was determined to be a direct link to the failure of state education policies and a failure to implement the *2003 New Mexico Indian Education Act*. State resources to local school districts were also shown to be insufficient, hindering their ability to provide programs encouraging the use of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students. In particular, it was noted that "culturally relevant instructional materials" were also lacking (Chosa, C., Fairbanks, C., Pecos, R., & Yepa, J., 2018, p. 6). The implications of this case have been described as a "watershed moment" in the state's education history opening the potential for increased attention to Native language programs. Indeed, this was identified as one of the key priorities at a recent statewide Pueblo Indian Convocation held July, 2018 at Santa Ana Pueblo with specific recommendations such as:

- Increasing Native language teacher capacity;
- Providing professional development for Native language teachers that is closely aligned to local tribal goals for language instruction;
- Increasing the compensation of Native language teachers equal to regular teachers rather than educational assistants;
- Assessing language teaching and language development utilizing appropriate and more authentic measures to document these processes;
- Ensuring that federal policies that are supportive of language efforts (Head Start for example) are understood by program directors, administrators and school Principals, and implemented at the local level with appropriate input from tribal communities, tribal leaders and parents.

Part Three: Growth and Expansion of Language Efforts In Early Childhood Education

The challenge of cultural and linguistic survival for many tribes today has become an increasingly urgent focus in developing early childhood programs that support the maintenance and revitalization of Native languages. The legacy and outcomes of more than two centuries of dominant education systems aimed at assimilation of American Indian children (Adams, 1988) has specifically been associated with the loss and erosion of native languages across all tribal groups in the United States (Krauss, 1998). The impact such losses can have on the self-identity, self-confidence and academic success of today's Native youth are fundamental considerations for how Native children's development and learning are supported in their early years.

American Indian early childhood programs, including federal and state funded Head Start programs serving children from birth through age 5, therefore, play a critical role in supporting Native children at their most vulnerable and critical stages of sociocultural, emotional, physical, cognitive and Native language development.

The National Office for American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Programs reports that nearly 37,000 or 45 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native children were served in Head Start programs in Region XI in 2015 (2015 FACES Report). The 2019 version of the Family and Child Services Survey (FACES) is currently being updated to include more descriptive information about children's exposure and participation in Native language and cultural learning. I have been involved in this latest effort as well as joining the National Advisory Council for American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Programs. A positive sign in federal agencies such as Head Start is a growing recognition that local language revitalization efforts are important and critical in the development of children as well as strengthening family and community relationships through language. In New Mexico, we have observed the transition of one of these federally funded programs from an English-based program to a full Native language immersion program. In Jemez Pueblo, the Walatowa Head Start Program provides a Towa language learning environment for pre-school children. The Towa language is only spoken in the Pueblo of Jemez and is an unwritten language. Heretofore, this language has been a viable one, spoken across all generations of the Pueblo. Towa erosion however was increasingly evident, especially among preschool children and the concern among the community was the need for reinforcing and re-strengthening Towa language use among the youngest generations. Thus, the decision was made to revamp the entire program. This transition has been taking place over the last five years engaging tribal elders, parents, and educational leaders in the community in the process. Parents play an important role in making choices about how the program can respond to the Native language development needs of their children while also becoming involved in reinforcing language use at home.

In another Pueblo community, the Pueblo of Cochiti, another recent development focused on young children learning the Keres language has taken root in a Montessori school, established by an educator from this community. Ms. Trisha Moquino, a Native speaker of Keres, trained as a Montessori teacher envisioned a learning environment in which children would be exposed to fluent Keres teachers and begin to learn the language in an immersion setting. The school now provides a full Keres immersion environment for children ages 3-5 and a dual language program for children ages 6-8.

Home-based care is also another language initiative being implemented in one Pueblo community. In this program our Center has provided guidance to caregivers who are fluent speakers in how to support Native language development for young children while they are in their care. In this Keres-speaking community, young female caregivers have increased their awareness of how critical their role is in using the Native language in everyday home environments. All now actively use their language with children and plan activities in the home setting that engage them in play and creative experiences. Thus children are given a true "head start" in hearing and using the language with fluent speakers as an everyday part of their daily experiences.

In one community where a local Bureau of Indian Education school has transitioned to a tribal grant school, adults who are not fluent in their Native language are embarking on utilizing a Master-Apprentice model in order to learn language that they can in turn use with young children they will teach. Communities with fewer fluent adult speakers such as these often face critical challenges in how they will implement language instruction and this often necessitates different approaches to the problem.

In all of these initiatives, our Center's involvement has been to support these efforts by providing training for fluent speakers in strategies for language immersion teaching, planning, and materials development. We have also guided adult language learners in forming teams as a means for improving and strengthening their Native language in order to teach young children. The outcomes of these particular initiatives are proving to be encouraging as parents and community members report a growing number of children learning and using these languages at school and in the community as well as adult and parent engagement in language and cultural learning. As these initiatives grow and expand, however, so too will new questions and challenges arise. For example, how will the gains that children are making in learning their Native language be documented, considering that some languages such as Keres and Towa are unwritten? How will children's Native language development continue to be supported as they mature and transition to Kindergarten and elementary schools? How are parents to be supported when they are not fluent in their own Native language?

The implications for expanding language revitalization efforts in early childhood are especially significant when one considers that intergenerational transmission of Native languages has traditionally been the process for sustaining languages across

multiple generations. When that process is broken, alternative choices to standard mainstream models of early childhood education have to be considered in order to stem further language erosion. In New Mexico, where there is a current push to pour more dollars into early childhood programs, much of the emphasis is on mainstream English-based models. In response to this growing public discourse, our Center has recently developed a position statement on what early childhood education policies and state funding streams need to consider where Native languages are endangered. Our position is that early childhood programs must first ensure that tribal voices are at the forefront of designing and implementing programs that will help them achieve their collective vision for young children, encompassing the child and his/her family as members of unique cultural and language communities, and providing them rich linguistic and culturally appropriate early learning experiences.

Informed policy makers must also consider how public policies, funding resources, and programmatic decisions can impact the future survival of Native languages and cultures that are an integral and necessary foundation for the health and well-being of young Native children. In particular, such programs must be of high quality reflecting tribal goals for their children, as exemplified in their curriculums, appropriate instructional practices that support Native language and culture, collaborative family and community relationships, high staffing qualifications, and positive learning environments. We believe that these principles also extend to how program evaluations are conducted. They must be conducted through appropriate processes that are inclusive of tribal goals, family and children's strengths, needs, and learning experiences. In summary, we take the position that early childhood programs for American Indian children:

- must implement Native language instructional programs and provide learning environments that are consistent with tribal goals for their children including their sociocultural, emotional, physical, cognitive and linguistic development.
- must collaborate with children's families and their communities in order to foster children's development and nurture families as advocates for their children.
- must develop children's sense of belonging and developing their ability to contribute to his/her community by utilizing cultural and other resources that link their culture and language learning experiences to home, family and community.
- must develop Native children's sense of individual worth, while helping them to thrive and reach their full potential within the contexts of family and tribal community life.

Finally, in order to ensure that all Native language programs are successful in their planning, implementation, and sustainability, there must be:

- Funding resources allocated to sufficiently support the sustainability and growth of local leadership and staffing, provide appropriate facilities, physical environments, equipment and materials, and effectively implement high quality experiences for Native children's learning and language development.
- Funding resources that will sufficiently build the professional development and growth of a tribal language teaching workforce with the knowledge, sensitivity, and competencies necessary for working with Native children, their families and communities, as well as specialized knowledge and competencies in the Native language and culture of the children they serve.
- Funding resources that will create pathways for members of tribal communities who wish to pursue coursework leading to specialized degree programs in early childhood, elementary or secondary education at local tribal colleges or universities that offer an emphasis on working in tribal communities and their languages.
- Funding resources that sufficiently support pathways and mentorships for tribal community members who will work in collaboration with elders and fluent speakers and holders of cultural knowledge in order to sustain a viable culture and language teaching workforce in Native communities.
- Funding resources that will sufficiently support working partnerships between tribes, tribal language programs and universities in order to provide year round technical assistance and training for Native speakers, tribal members, and education administrators in their efforts to develop, and maintain their native languages.

Part Four: Final Conclusions

While my testimony has touched briefly on a number of issues related to current efforts to maintain Native languages for future generations, what I have presented

today has hopefully provided a window into the complex nature of language revitalization work in our communities. The nature of this work is challenging, yet deeply rewarding, when one sees the outcomes of local tribal choices and decisions that promote the revitalization of Indigenous languages. Without these critical linguistic resources we stand to lose cultural knowledge, our collective histories, traditions and spiritual practices. Working in collaboration with tribal communities, we are always reminded that thoughtful consideration must always be acknowledged for the inherent wisdom and knowledge about language that Native speakers possess. Their perspectives about the issues and challenges they face in maintaining their languages as well as the solutions they generate and implement to address language needs in their communities is paramount in our work. We are often reminded by our elders that our languages have been gifted to us by our Creator and in this sense we often speak about these languages with a sense of sacredness. It is also with a sense that sustainability of languages requires long-term commitment to Native communities and a willingness to learn from them and be guided by their wisdom and knowledge. My hope is that this will also be a consideration among legislators and policy makers when deliberations are made concerning the education of Native children.

Thank for giving me the opportunity to share my observations, thoughts and reflections with you today. I look forward to any questions that you may have for me as well.

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The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Dr. Sims.

Now, Ms. Lauren Hummingbird, Graduate, Cherokee Nation Immersion School in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Welcome.

STATEMENT OF LAUREN E. HUMMINGBIRD, GRADUATE, TSALAGI TSUNADELOQUASDI, CHEROKEE NATION IMMERSION SCHOOL

Ms. HUMMINGBIRD. Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall, and members of the Committee, [greeting in Native language]. I am Lauren Hummingbird, a Cherokee Nation citizen and a graduate of the Cherokee Immersion School, Tsalagi Tsunadeloquasdi, and Sequoyah High School, located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony about revitalizing Native American languages for future generations.

Preserving the Cherokee language is preserving our Cherokee identity. The heritage and traditions of our Tribe are rooted in our language. Our language allows us to pass along traditional Cherokee knowledge and values to our children and our grandchildren.

In 2003, a Cherokee Nation started the Cherokee Immersion School, Tsalagi Tsunadeloquasdi. At age 3, I was one of the first immersion students. I have many fond memories of the school which I consider less a school and more of a home.

At the immersion school, my teachers became more than instructors; they were and remain like mother and father figures in my life. Most importantly, the elder speakers in the school became my extended grandparents, providing compassion, encouragement, and emotional support. Each of the teachers and staff became an important part of my life and helped shape who I am today. I was guided by their teachings and I recently graduated from high school at the top of my class.

I believe that my success comes from my history and the support of my family and the knowledge of my Cherokee language and culture. I am proof that despite the historical ideals, bilingual children outperform their monolingual peers in school. The richness of the Cherokee language allowed my mind to focus and understand difficult concepts and graduate at the top of my high school class.

[Speaking in Native language], which means it is hard for Native Americans to talk about just their language. That is because a Native's language is so much more than just their language. [Speaking in Native language], which means it is the foundation of their culture and it is the foundation of my culture.

Native languages, including Cherokee, have faced many adversities over the years. Our ancestors were removed from our homelands in the Southeast United States on the Trail of Tears. Not only did we lose precious family members on the Trail; we also lost connections with plants, animals, culture, and language in that area.

Our bond was with the land, and we lived together in that ecosystem. Our language is woven into the culture just as river cane is woven into a basket.

Likewise, after removal from Indian territory, our ancestors were placed in boarding schools to be normalized. They were punished for practicing our traditions and speaking the language, and that pain has been passed down through generations and their language was suppressed. Today, the Cherokee Nation has 360,000 citizens, but only 1,200 speakers left, and their average age is 65.

Language preservationists at the Cherokee Nation indicate that we lose 12 speakers each month, and history shows that, without intervention, the historic oppression of native languages means the loss of identity and extinction of a culture.

I commend the leaders of the Cherokee Nation. After seeing the continued decline of Cherokee speakers, the Government took the initiative to develop the immersion school. The Cherokee Immersion School is the first and only school to be chartered by a Tribal Government in Oklahoma. This means that students follow the same learning objectives as other students in public school districts, with the curriculum being translated into Cherokee.

In the last academic school year, there were 135 Cherokee students enrolled in preschool through the eighth grade. Today, the Cherokee Nation Government contributes more than \$2.3 million to the school's overall budget of \$2.7 million. The Cherokee Nation has also developed and funded the Master-Apprentice Program to provide language bridges between generations of speakers. Without the dedicated support of our Tribal Government and our businesses, the future of the Cherokee language would be in jeopardy.

We have started with the working language preservation, but there is much more work to be done. Without additional support, we face a slow and tortuous loss of language, culture, and identity.

[Speaking in Native language] again for the opportunity to share my testimony, my story, and my future. I am happy to answer any questions that you may have for me.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hummingbird follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAUREN E. HUMMINGBIRD, GRADUATE, TSALAGI
TSUNADELOQUASDI, CHEROKEE NATION IMMERSION SCHOOL

Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall, and members of the Committee:

Osiyo, my name is Lauren Hummingbird, and it is my honor to provide testimony for this oversight hearing entitled "Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations".

It is also my honor to represent the first graduating class of Tsalagi Tsunadeloquasdi School, Cherokee speakers, and the Cherokee Nation, the largest federally-recognized tribal government in the United States with more than 360,000 tribal citizens and headquartered in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Preserving the Cherokee language is preserving Cherokee identity, as the heritage and traditions of the tribe are rooted in our language. For generations, our language has allowed us to pass along traditional Cherokee knowledge and values to our children.

The United Nations estimates that across the world more than half of the 6,000 globally spoken languages will disappear by the end of this century. I am proud to say that will not be the story of the Cherokee language. When languages are in jeopardy, there is more at stake than meets the eye. Our Native languages hold inherent cultural and social knowledge. That knowledge is embedded within our words, in the stories we tell, and the way we communicate with one another.

My testimony will cover three points. First, a Native language is not just a language; it is the foundation of a culture. Second, the revitalization of Native American languages is happening, it is happening now because it must happen now. Third, the generational pain suffered by past federal policies practices has brought us to this painful point. It is time that we, you and me, must act to support programs that preserve our Native languages.

Personal History and Story

In the 2003–2004 school year, the Cherokee Nation started the Cherokee Immersion School, Tsalagi Tsunadeloquasdi. I entered the school as a 3-year-old in the inaugural class 15 years ago, and I graduated from Sequoyah High School¹ in May of this year. As I advanced through the immersion school year after year, the school continued to add new enrollees each year. Last year, 135 students were enrolled in pre-school through the 8th grade. The Cherokee Immersion School was the first and only school chartered under the Oklahoma Charter Schools Act of 2012, and reauthorized in 2016. Students follow the same state learning objectives as public school districts. The materials and content are converted into the Cherokee language. In 5th and 6th grade, students split their time between Cherokee and English, and transition to all English curriculum in 7th and 8th grade, except for Cherokee language classes.

In order to understand why it is important for Native American languages to be revitalized, it is important to know something about Native American people. Native Americans today are still coping with federal policies and decisions that negatively

¹ Cherokee Nation operates Sequoyah High School, a Bureau of Indian Education funded boarding school located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. With an enrollment of 360 students representing more than 24 tribes, it is regionally and state accredited for grades 7–12.

impacted our ancestors. I experience many difficult emotions when I envision our ancestors as young children. They were told they would be punished for practicing our language and beliefs. It is difficult for me to understand that time and those practices because I envision a world where Native people were hated and looked upon as a lesser people. I do not understand what it was like for our elders to be physically brutalized for simply speaking their language. The mental and emotional scars remain today. I do not think anyone can understand what it was like. The mental and physical abuse of the past caused my people to become scared of the world, and it nearly cost me my culture.

Many of the Cherokee speakers became silent and quit speaking our language for fear of retribution. There are some courageous elders that continued to speak our language, and because of their courage, a small part of my language survived. I do not know where my people would be today if it were not for those who had the courage to practice our traditions and speak our language, no matter the punishment. I know many people who CAN speak our language, but refuse to do so due to the trauma caused by a Native American boarding school experience. A language is not just a small part of our culture. . . it is everything to us.

As a young Cherokee woman, knowing how to speak my language not only gives me the opportunity to keep my culture and language alive but it also shows the world that we are still here. We are not remnants of a past culture, but we are a thriving people. I started as a three-year-old in the Cherokee Immersion School. The school helped teach me who I am and the ways of my people. The Cherokee Immersion School helped raise me. As students, we never felt like we were in school because school was a second home. The teachers were and continue to be mother figures and father figures to the students. Our elder mentors are like our grandparents.

There are differences between a Native American language immersion school and a traditional English speaking public school. My experience is that immersion students did not learn anything in English and we did not have individually assigned textbooks. The immersion teachers had the additional responsibility of translating every textbook lesson into Cherokee. This happens well before classes begin. Public school teachers do not have this added responsibility. While public school students have libraries full of books to read for research or leisure, my Cherokee immersion class had no more than twenty children's books available in the Cherokee language. That was seven years ago, and things have greatly improved since then. Even though Immersion teachers have previously developed materials that they continue to use, we still do not have access to individual textbooks. There are more Cherokee children's books about our traditional stories, and some books are now being published in Cherokee by a few publishing companies.

As a young student, I did not realize that I would grow up differently than other children. We did not just learn about the normal everyday school subjects. We were taught about the traditional foods of our people and ways of life. On field trips, we would visit one place multiple times, but we would always learn something new about our way of life or a new word. Those are memories and knowledge that I would not trade for a public English speaking school experience. I believe that I understand my identity and I am happier because my parents took the risk of enrolling me into a new program that had no promise of success or sustainability.

As our education progressed, some parents became concerned that the immersion students would fall behind before entering into an English speaking high school. They believed that students would not understand the basic subjects of math, science, and geography. However, when my sixth grade class graduated in 2012 these parents witnessed that we were not behind. My classmates and I comprehended all of the required subjects. The only thing we did not know well was English, and we spoke what most call "broken English". However, with the assistance of a few summer classes we caught up with the traditional English-based public school students. We did struggle with the desire to learn English. We knew that our identity came from the Cherokee language and not the English language. We felt like we had to become someone different. Today, I find that I have to say something in Cherokee because I do not know how to properly convey the meaning and emotion in English.

I graduated from the Cherokee Immersion School in 2012, and graduated from high school with many of my immersion classmates in May 2018. We all graduated in the top of our class. Some classmates even completed numerous concurrent college credits. I am one of two immersion alumni that are still immersed in the language. I am currently a student in the Cherokee Nation's Language Master Apprenticeship Program for adult participants.

Immersion programs have far reaching effects on communities. Studies connect language loss to higher levels of substance abuse and poor health habits, both of

which are heightened in Native communities. I believe those who speak their language or learn their heritage can reverse this trend of poor health and decision-making. Research also shows that bilingual children outperform their monolingual peers in school. On average, bilingual students show twice the progress in reading and math levels than that of their monolingual peers.

There is such a visible gap between the elder generation of fluent speakers and the children that are attending the Immersion School. Eight years ago, no child was being taught their Native language on a daily basis. But today we have more than 130 students enrolled in the Immersion School. These are Cherokee children who know how to speak our language, not only to each other, but to the older generations as well. Our elders are such an important resource for immersion students. They know how our people lived and the skills we shared with the world. Our elders also teach about the pain and difficulties our ancestors faced during federal removal and forced assimilation practices. This new generation of Cherokee speakers is providing our elders hope and strength. The students learn from the elders that their ancestors overcame difficult times, survived and prospered. These lessons teach the students that they too are strong and can succeed in life.

When I entered the Immersion School, I did not know that Native American languages were dying or that some were already gone. I did not know my people were punished because they were Native American and Native language speakers. And I did not know that we, as Cherokees, were forced from our homelands. I did not understand that my people's rights and land were taken over lust of land and money. That lust and greed for land and money came at the expense of Native people, the language and culture.

It is hard for a Native American to talk about just their language. That is because a Native's language is so much more than just a language. It is the foundation of our culture. If I did not know my Cherokee language then I would not have such a great love for my people and our ways. I would not know my identity. I see people who do not know their Native language and they seem lost. I believe this is because they do not understand who they are without the knowledge of the language. I have been told there is a big hole in their heart because they know nothing about their culture.

Language programs similar to the Cherokee Immersion School, which was created by the Cherokee Nation tribal government, are long overdue. There are several tribes that have only one fluent speaker left. That means their language is nearly dead already. Some tribes are attempting to create their own Immersion School system, but they will face many difficult challenges without adequate support. Immersion schools are not fully funded by the federal government, and it is not a common practice. Immersion schools require a lot of courage and commitment from the tribe, teachers, parents and students.

In my home, although my parents are not Cherokee speakers, my maternal grandparents are fluent speakers, as well as their siblings. I enjoy speaking Cherokee with our elders. There are numerous occasions where I will sit with a group of elder speakers that do not expect me to understand their Cherokee spoken conversation. When they realize that I understand and answer them in the Cherokee language, it surprises them. Their facial expressions quickly turn from surprise to relief. I know our elders fear that our language will not survive, but immersion students like me provide hope for the future of our language.

One may ask, "Why should I care about the revitalization of the Native American languages that are left?" My answer refers to today's most commonly known Native American language story. It is the story of the Navajo Code Talkers. As most are aware, the United States enlisted the help of Navajo speakers as "code talkers" during World War II to relay coded messages in Navajo. Without these Navajo speaking patriots, our history would be different today. Cherokee Nation also had code talkers that served the United States valiantly in WWI and helped our allies win.

Native American languages typically go unnoticed in United States. Our Native languages add vibrancy to America's identity and culture. Without additional funding and commitments to preserve Native languages, our languages and identity will slowly die.

It is difficult for me to express the pain in my heart when I imagine the slow disappearance of our languages. Now is not the time for my generation to be complacent, and say it is simply "okay", because it is not "okay". The generational pain from federal policies that led to boarding schools and the Trail of Tears are still felt today. I feel it. Despite that pain, I want to learn more about my culture and who I am. I am steadfast in my beliefs, and I know I am not alone. No matter how difficult or time consuming or the resources needed to sustain language immersion programs we must preserve our languages.

Multigenerational Efforts to Preserve and Revitalize the Cherokee Language

The Cherokee Nation estimates there are only 1,200 fluent speakers, and the average age is 65. Our language experts estimate that we lose 12 fluent Cherokee speakers each month. The Tribe developed the Immersion School, the Master-Apprentice Program and the 14th Generation Master Apprentice Program to address this growing decline of Cherokee speakers.

The Master-Apprentice program is designed to immerse adults in the Cherokee language by requiring more than 4,000 contact hours with Master speakers. Similar to the immersion school, enrollees spend on average 40 per week studying and speaking only Cherokee. This program has graduated six adult fluent speakers since the effort began in 2014. The 14th Generation Master Apprentice Program is designed specifically for high school students who want to continue their language education after school and during the summer. This program has about a dozen Sequoyah High School enrollees and interest is growing.

These multigenerational programs help preserve and promote the use of the Cherokee language for generations to come and fill the gaps between Immersion School, high school, and home. The youth, who have been educated in the Immersion School, are among the most valuable Cherokee language assets going forward. The Cherokee Nation has made significant investments in these children, and we must keep exposing them to language learning opportunities. Without the aggressive commitment from our tribal government and our businesses, the future of the Cherokee language would be in jeopardy. I am proud to say that is not the case.

Conclusion

I have provided personal testimony and stories as a young Cherokee language speaker and learner. I have also shared my personal perspective and concerns. I provided a brief view into the monumental work the Cherokee Nation has undertaken to keep our language flourishing.

Creating new speakers, and in turn letting them pass along what they have learned, will keep Native languages flourishing for generations to come. Supporting cultural education and growing the language curriculum will help the children succeed on their lifelong journey and allow them to reach their God-given potential in school, in life and as Native speakers.

I ask that you remember my stories and information as you consider future initiatives and funding. Thank you for again for this opportunity to testify. Wado.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. Hummingbird.

Okay, we will turn to questions, and I would like to begin with Commissioner Hovland.

In your written testimony you discuss three main goals to strengthening language programs at the Administration for Native Americans. One goal you mentioned was to provide outreach to Tribes that have never received a grant. You talked also how the ANA is continually refining the application process.

How do you go about doing that? How do you balance granting funds to the strongest applicants, while also reaching out to some of the Tribes that have never gotten a grant?

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you, Chairman Hoeven. That is an excellent question and a balance that can be difficult to find.

I am in my seventh week, and I am learning a lot, and I have a lot to learn. As I spoke to some of you through my confirmation process, often what I heard was Tribes that didn't have the capacity or the funds to hire a grant writer often didn't receive grants; and that is one of my priorities, is to ensure that they are not overlooked, to make sure that our underserved Tribes and lower capacity Tribes have that opportunity to be not only successful at writing a grant and receiving one, but implementing it.

Actually, ANA has some fantastic tools online and training offered to our Tribes at no cost, and I think part of it is just getting

that information out, especially to the more rural communities coming from North Dakota.

We are very experienced with rural communities, and getting information out there sometimes can be a challenge, so I think just making more awareness about it. But also, at ANA we really need to identify the Native communities that haven't ever received a grant, or haven't for a long time, or possibly don't have the capacity for a grant. We need to help them build that capacity.

Starting with identification, visiting with what their barriers have been, while continuing to fund the grants based on the process, but seeing how we can try to capture funding for those underserved.

The CHAIRMAN. How much will you be able to get out and actually get around to the different Tribes? Are you going to be able to do much of that, meet with them?

Ms. HOVLAND. Personally, I would love to be able to do it, but, realistically, it is not possible.

The CHAIRMAN. Pretty tough?

Ms. HOVLAND. It is tough. We do have four regions in the United States, Alaska, and the Pacific Islands, and they are able to get out, have boots on the ground, but I want to get out there personally to as many as I can. I have been able to get to Hawaii, to New Mexico, and to Montana, and I will get out there as much as I can, but definitely want to get to those communities that haven't had a visit from the Commissioner in many years and just kind of hear, gather the thoughts and insights on how we can try to reach them.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Hummingbird talked about how studying her Cherokee language really helped her in school with her other studies. Are you seeing that and is that something that you can promote to try to help these young people with their academics?

Ms. HOVLAND. Absolutely. I think the mission of ANA, the testament of the positive outcomes is Ms. Hummingbird, and I am so glad she is here today.

I am so proud of you. You did a fantastic job.

Yes, I think the best testament to the difference ANA can make is witnesses like Ms. Hummingbird. Again, I have only been here for under two months. I had the honor of being invited into the Native communities in Hawaii and New Mexico, and the Keres program, all of them were amazing. Not only are the younger generations learning their language, but there is interaction with the elders and intergenerational activities; and it is building communities, and healthy, strong communities help with academics, help with the substance abuse and other issues that we face in our communities, so there are a lot of positives that come out of it.

The CHAIRMAN. So, Ms. Hummingbird, your being here, your presentation was very impressive. Are you able to get other young people to take the language, learn the language, be diligent? How do you do that? How much do you use your Native language and so forth? How do you interact with others using your Native language? Can you just give a sense of that?

Ms. HUMMINGBIRD. The best way I can put it is that I use it on a daily basis. It is not just something that I would use with my fellow classmates that I graduated with from the Immersion School; I have family members that know and are fluent in Cherokee, so

I know that they would much rather speak their Native language than English. It makes them feel a lot more comfortable. My little brother is currently going through the Immersion School as well, and he started at six months, so I continue teaching him even when he is outside of school.

People think that it is something that we wouldn't use on a daily basis, something that just doesn't ever get used, but, in reality, we use it on a daily basis. It is a very important part of our lives.

The CHAIRMAN. I would think your elders would enjoy it, when they are able to visit with you in Cherokee.

Ms. HUMMINGBIRD. Yes. I have had a few elders and interactions with them where they start having a conversation in Cherokee, and they kind of assume that we don't know what they are talking about.

[Laughter.]

Ms. HUMMINGBIRD. So, when we are sitting there, nodding yes, they kind of think, oh, they are just lost. No, we know what you are talking about. And when we answer them in Cherokee, it just surprises them. And it is not so much a surprise as it is relief that they know there is a generation coming up and learning our language.

The CHAIRMAN. I would think so. Absolutely.

Vice Chairman Udall.

Senator UDALL. Thank you so much, Senator Hoeven, for pursuing this hearing.

Let me say to you, Lauren, what you have done, I think, and what the Cherokee Nation has done, is a really impressive move forward in terms of Native languages.

You have talked a little bit here about how it has impacted your life and your community. Can you tell us how it has changed your educational and career goals now that you are able to be a fluent Cherokee speaker?

Ms. HUMMINGBIRD. It affected my education because I am a bilingual person, so I can understand complex situations a lot easier than monolingual peers at school. But knowing my language and knowing the history and the culture of my people has created this desire within me to learn more, as much as I possibly can. In doing that it has made me want to teach children, adults in any way I can, even if it is just a word or two on the street, or if that means going back and getting a teaching degree and then going back to the Immersion School to teach or the Master-Apprentice Program to teach. I would do anything for my culture and my people, and I know that learning my language is one of the most important things to them.

Senator UDALL. Do you see one of the things that happens with young people your age, if they learn Cherokee fluently, they feel more motivated to succeed, to interact with the community, to make sure that you grow a stronger community?

Ms. HUMMINGBIRD. It has definitely created this stronger person within them because learning their language has created such a pride within them; they know who they are. They know who they really are and who their ancestors were and how they lived, and they are so very proud of it.

So, when they learn it and they go out into these communities, they are so much more comfortable and the communities accept them a lot easier, because sometimes they get a little scared if somebody doesn't know their culture very well. But when they come in, they learn Cherokee, they learn the ways of our people. They get a sense of pride, and you can see that when you walk up on them; you won't even know that they know their language, but they have that pride and then they tell you about I know my language and I know my culture.

Senator UDALL. That is great. I know that your parents who are here and behind you are very proud of you, but your little brother went to sleep during your testimony, so I don't want to wake him up.

[Laughter.]

Senator UDALL. Dr. Sims, could I ask you a little bit about, in your testimony you describe the importance of establishing community-based and school-based language initiatives?

Dr. SIMS. Yes.

Senator UDALL. And you specifically highlight the importance of funding to support growth of local leadership, staffing, facilities, materials, mentorships, and a tribal language teaching workforce, among other things.

Do you believe the Esther Martinez Program administered by the ANA is helping to create this infrastructure for language revitalization?

Dr. SIMS. Thank you, Mr. Vice Chairman, for the question. We have had quite a bit of support in terms of implementation from ANA, implementation of new programs. In some instances I think there could be more done to actually help build that teacher workforce that we need. I would say that if there was a way, in the ANA program planning that is done, that there is some mechanism or some way in which we make sure for every local program that is developed, there is attention paid to providing the kind of professional development and training that our community people need in order to implement these programs.

We have done that on our own somewhat through the work of our Center at UNM, but you know the need is there when every summer, for example, in our summer institutes we continue to get Native speaking members of communities who come and who ask for help. What are the best strategies to use when I am doing an immersion program? So those are continuing needs that I think we could probably do better on and find more resources to build that teaching force capacity that we need.

Senator UDALL. Great. Thank you.

I am going to come back to Ms. Hovland to ask about your suggestions you made in addition, but yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, each of you, for your testimony here today, your leadership in so many areas.

Ms. Hummingbird, I will repeat the praise that you have received from the Chairman and the Ranking Member. You have articulated not only a sense of purpose and place, but if there is anyone who would doubt that the benefit of these language immersion

programs goes beyond just what happens in the classroom, you have been able to outline it in living and beautiful color, and I just so appreciate that.

Ms. Hovland, did I hear you correctly that it is \$12 million in ANA grants overall? Is that the right number?

Ms. HOVLAND. Yes, that is correct, for languages specifically.

Senator MURKOWSKI. I think about what it is that we try to advance through our appropriations process. To think that through these grants we are achieving outcomes like we are seeing Ms. Hummingbird articulate here, it is not just, again, about keeping a language alive; it is a culture, it is an identity, it is a purpose, a sense of self, and that, to me, is priceless. So, I think you know I am a fan of what we have seen with the ANA funds, and we are proud that, in Alaska, we are grant recipients of a couple of these and seeing them move forward.

I appreciate what you said, Ms. Hovland, to the Chairman about the efforts to try to assist those smaller Tribes who are daunted by the prospect of these grant applications, who don't have paid grant writers; who just really don't even know where to start. So, it is a challenge to try to make sure that you are covering all your bases here, but I would just encourage you, if it is a way to streamline the grant process, whether it is training, whether it is some form of assistance to provide for this level of capacity, it is so important that we don't overlook some of these smaller Tribes.

I thank you for coming to Alaska. I understand you are visiting Fairbanks here pretty soon for this consultation. I do hope that you will have an opportunity, when you are up there, to get out into rural Alaska, as well. It is a beautiful time of year to be out there, and if you need any recommendations as to where you might want to go on your trip, we are happy, happy to help with that.

I am glad, though, that you are going up there with this consultation purpose. The U.S. Department of Ed got themselves in a little bit of trouble; they invited Alaska tribal leaders to a national tribal consultation in Kansas City, Missouri, but it was to discuss a very specific Alaska program, and it was complicated further by the timing, the advance notice that was given. Cost and conflicts with subsistence activities really limited the ability of many to travel to that conference.

But it was also complicated by the fact that the Alaska Native organizations and the rural tribal consortiums, they also run federally-funded education programs, and Department of Ed had unwittingly excluded Alaska Native educational leaders from this tribal consultation. So, as you go up there to do your consultation, I just want you to keep some of those things in mind.

In the minute that I have, I would ask for you to perhaps give me some background here in terms of how you plan on engaging in consultation with these rural tribal communities, as well as the Native corporations and the regional nonprofits to make sure that all the voices are being heard within your Administration.

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you, Senator Murkowski. I am looking forward to the trip and I will get in touch with you and your staff for suggestions, so thank you.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Great.

Ms. HOVLAND. I am working on a strategy for outreach, and there are going to be different prongs for it. One will be where I am able to do outreach, but also consultation. As Commissioner, it is a dual role. I am also Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Administration for Children and Families, so I ensure that ACF is holding their consultation every year with our Tribes, for the recognized Tribes. So, that is one portion of it. I will be at those and I help facilitate the tribal consultation for that.

But I also want to do, beyond that, as much meetings. I really strongly believe in getting to the communities and meeting with grassroot folks all the way up to leadership, and I want to do that as much as possible. Realistically, I won't be able to get everywhere, so I also want to have meetings where we can have like a consortium of Tribes come and visit, so I want to do that throughout the United States, Alaska, and our Pacific Islands.

Whenever I am going up north, I will be sure to let you and your staff know, and I would love to have you come along and work together to try to address some of these issues.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Again, I appreciate that, and we are happy to help sketch out any part of a schedule that you are willing to work with, so I thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Schatz.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you to all of the testifiers.

I will start with Ms. Rawlins. One of the things that really amazed me when I first visited was that the quality of the education is extraordinary, and I mean that in the very conventional sense. I think we all understand intuitively what Ms. Hummingbird talked about and what we all kind of understand, which is that language is necessary for culture to thrive, and language and communication is necessary for families to thrive.

So we all understand intuitively the reason for Native language education, but I think what may have set what you do apart is that because of the obstacles that you encountered at the State Department of Education, the Federal Department of Education, and just about everywhere else, you had to prove in very kind of Western conventional terms that the outcomes were as good or even better. I am wondering if you can talk to that side of everyone's brain to talk about how positive the outcomes have been.

Ms. RAWLINS. Yes. Mahalo for that question. I want to start off by addressing that in the attitude that we took in the very beginning in working together with one another, in addressing the obstacles that came when we saw that the language was banned, so we had to change the law. So, working with families to work with our State legislature and with the Department of Education to allow us to move from the Aha Punana Leo language nest into the public school was one way of advancing that.

The conventional way of looking at education, what we saw is, at our preschool, our children were reading already. So, from before leaving the language nest, before entering the kindergarten, compulsory education, our children were reading, so we were teaching them to read the way our kupuna taught us, through a syllabary,

and having the children read, because our language is very regular, and taking it forward into conventional education.

We started to build off of the reading research that takes a really good reader in the first language that then transfers to the second language and other languages, and we have seen this evidence at Nawahi, where our children are able to read in Hawaiian and English, because we see English as a world language; it is approached as a world language for our students. And then from there to Japanese. We introduce Japanese language at the elementary grade; Latin in the intermediate and now back down into grades 4 through grade 7, Latin, and this year we are now introducing Mandarin Chinese.

Our students have gone into college, have graduated from college, and they report back to us. We had a student that continued into the Peace Corps after graduating from Stanford, attended the Peace Corps, enrolled in the Peace Corps, was assigned to Kyrgyzstan and was one of the students in his corps that learned Kyrgyz very easily. We have had other students that have graduated, gone on to college and received minors in French and Spanish.

So, we see the approach that we take as English as a world language becomes the desire for our students to embrace languages. They see, at first, our reading really, really well in our first language, Hawaiian, taking that, transferred, and that is all researched, the bilingual research that talks about transfer of language skill, reading skills. So, we have seen that evidenced at our Nawahi school.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you. It just occurs to me that what started essentially as a family and community and cultural and tribal movement now has been accepted by those who are conducting rigorous analysis of what actually works in the classroom. I think this is a really interesting instance of us not having to fight over what we feel is right in our guts and sort of traditional Western analysis of whether kids are hitting their marks.

What is really great about what you are doing is that all of the data shows that this is working in the non-traditional way and the traditional way. I think the State Department of Education, but also the Federal Department of Education needs to continue to provide that flexibility as we test against metrics, as we make sure kids can do their times tables and know basic science and basic American history; that we understand that this is actually one of the best approaches to do this, especially with this population.

I just want to thank every single one of you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. RAWLINS. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Cortez Masto.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEVADA**

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. I want to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for this hearing and for all of you for traveling here and then just talking about the importance and how we can work together to really maintain and revitalize languages,

Native languages for future generations. So, thank you. This is an incredible discussion.

Ms. Hummingbird, you are fantastic. It was so inspiring to hear you today, and I know your parents and family must be very proud. I know they are very proud of the other panel members; I can see it on their faces as well.

I come from Nevada, and I had the chance to visit with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe Museum in Nevada. The museum director, Billie Guerrero, spoke to me about the importance of language to the Tribe. She said that the language is the core of the Tribe's culture and identity, what you all have been saying. However, there are less than 30 tribal members who are fluent in the Tribe's language, and most of them are elders over the age of 60.

One thing that the Tribe is doing to revitalize the language is having song nights. One of these nights the Tribe gets together and they sing traditional songs in their language; and not just songs, sometimes they are prayers. These have been incredible opportunities for the Tribe to share their songs, their language with a new generation.

So, I am just curious, Dr. Sims, let me ask you, or if any other panel members have any thoughts on this, are there any other unconventional ways that we haven't talked about today for Tribes to engage their youth in learning and using their Native language that you have seen that has been successful?

And maybe let me open it up to the panel, but I will start with Dr. Sims.

Dr. SIMS. Thank you for your question. I can think of a number of things that have taken place, and they come from New Mexico examples. I mentioned the Keres Children's Learning Center in Cochiti, which is the Montessori School. There is also another example that I draw from Jemez Pueblo in which it is standard, mainstream, type of Head Start program, federally funded. They have transitioned that into a complete total immersion Head Start program.

While we might think of it as unconventional, actually, these are conventional ways in which children have always learned in these communities, which is to have those intergenerational linkages with elders and people in the community. So, in these two examples we see children learning by going back into the community. Some of these programs are right in the community, and there is no reason why those intergenerational opportunities for learning can't happen, because they are right there where grandmas and grandpas and aunts and uncles and other elders are right there as teachers.

So, I would hope that we continue to promote that, because oftentimes our elders, our fluent speakers have not been part of education. The historical legacy is you keep them away from schools, and the idea was always that schools knew best how to educate. And what we are saying is, no, our children are best educated first by having those intergenerational linkages. And, like I said, we might think of that as unconventional, but for us it is conventional, and we need to promote that more.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Anyone else?

Ms. RAWLINS. I will add a part of that. You are right about the conventional. It is a new day for us, and I will give an example. I also want to acknowledge, first, that I am also with the National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs, which representative in 17 States of these schools that are using language in education.

So, I will give an example of the Waadookodaading School in Wisconsin, whose children, the activities that the children are engaged in with elders as well is in the collecting of the maple sap, and that whole activity that is part of their culture in maple syrup collection—we don't have that in Hawaii—is a part of their curriculum.

So, there are many instances, I am sure, that that is even happening at the Cherokee language schools, as well as Jessie's school here, is that the children are actively involved in cultural activities in bringing through language in the actual based, the place-based education as conventional for us in language revitalization.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you. I appreciate that.

I know my time is running out. I have one follow-up question, if that is all right, and this is to Commissioner Hovland.

Thank you for the comments today. Congratulations. Excited to work with you.

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Additionally, the Pyramid Lake Paiutes just hired a cultural coordinator, and her name is Heidi Barlese. Heidi is a tribal member that had moved away, to Reno, but is now back home working to preserve the knowledge and history of the tribal elders and sharing that with younger generations.

She runs recreational camps in the summer where tribal elders come and teach the Tribe's children about their language and their history. She also visits with tribal elders to speak with them about their language and history so that she can record it and preserve that knowledge for future generations.

Now, I know not all the Tribes have the resources to hire a cultural coordinator, and you spoke about the great work that the ANA is doing and some of the great opportunities that exist through grant funding, so I guess my question to you is, are there existing grants within the ANA that could help Tribes that hire cultural coordinators for the same purposes? I know you talked about the \$12 million. Is that \$12 million that is appropriated, would that be considered funding that could go to something like that, a coordinator to help Tribes do the same type of activities?

Ms. HOVLAND. That is a good question, and I will answer it as best I can, being new to this position. The language grants are specifically to teach language. There are portions. The preservation and maintenance is the most flexible of the three, and there it can be used to develop curriculum, to establish repositories so that you can store materials.

But it is specific to teaching language, which the culture goes hand-in-hand with, but there does need to be language teaching in it. We have a social and economic development program which can help build capacity for projects, but the funding really is meant to be for projects versus programs, so there is a definite beginning date and an end date.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Okay. If there is a way we can, maybe we will work together, figure out as we explore further opportunities that might help preserve the language as well.

Ms. HOVLAND. Absolutely.

Senator CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

The CHAIRMAN. Vice Chairman, did you have some follow-up questions?

Senator UDALL. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Hovland, this is on the issue of the Esther Martinez Act. You mentioned several successes in your testimony; the Cook Inlet Tribal Council and what they have done there, the Sitting Bull College, Lakota Immersion. And then you have heard on the panel here some very strong statements about the Esther Martinez Act and the good work that it is doing.

What is your position on the reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Act?

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you, Senator Udall.

Also, thank you for your comments, Dr. Sims. We definitely want to know areas that are working well in ANA and areas where we can improve upon, so we appreciate your comments on that.

It was very important, the reauthorization of the Esther Martinez, and I have looked at the specific changes that have been proposed, and I would be happy to have a discussion with you, but, yes, we are excited to work with you and your staff on reauthorization of that.

Senator UDALL. So, on the whole, you are very predisposed to reauthorization?

Ms. HOVLAND. Yes. Yes, absolutely.

Senator UDALL. Okay. Now, let me ask you about you stated in your testimony that you have been traveling across Indian Country to consult with Tribes, and thank you for coming to New Mexico, and see how you can work with them in your role as Commissioner. Recognizing that different Tribes have different needs when it comes to language preservation and revitalization, what are you doing to ensure that your grant programs are tailored to fit the needs of Indian Country?

I recognize you are new, and if you want to supplement some of your answers when you get back, that would be great, too, if I get you in some areas that you are not that comfortable in.

Ms. HOVLAND. Thank you, I appreciate that. As far as your question, the preservation and maintenance program really is the most flexible of the funding, and it really allows our Native communities to develop their language program around what they feel their priorities and their needs are.

So, specific to language, that is the most flexible. The Social and Economic Development Program isn't specific to language, but there is so much flexibility in it, which is what I love about SEDs, that specific grant. Our Tribes and Native communities are able to identify their needs and their priorities and really build that program around it.

I would be happy to follow up with you and your staff on some of the great things that are happening.

Senator UDALL. That would be great.

You stated in your testimony that you are working on a new framework for evaluating grants for language preservation. How does the new framework differ from the previous framework and how do your changes impact the ability of languages at the beginning of the revitalization pathway to score highly enough to receive a grant?

Ms. HOVLAND. I have to look at my written statement, but we are working on IT infrastructure. Is that the portion you are talking about, about gathering data from our grantees?

Senator UDALL. Yes.

Ms. HOVLAND. So, ANA has had an older, antiquated IT infrastructure, which made it difficult to extract data that was required to report to Congress every year and also was beneficial for us to see the outcomes, so they started working on a new IT infrastructure which we hope to go live in the next few months, which will allow our staff, at site visits, to be able to enter data and comments onsite during the visits, and we are able to get that information and extract it immediately, which will be helpful for us in addressing the issues, as well as getting reports to Congress on our outcomes.

Senator UDALL. Thank you very much.

Vice Chairman Baird, you and your Tribe have quite a remarkable story. The language of your people was lost for many years, and with no living speakers you were able to use centuries-old materials to revitalize the language. You mentioned in your testimony that your Tribe received an Esther Martinez grant to support your revitalization work.

How did the Esther Martinez grant support your Tribe's work and what resources and programs were created by your Tribes because of this grant?

Ms. BAIRD. Thank you for your question, Senator Udall. So, we are currently operating Mukayuhsak Weekuw, which means the Children's House. We are operating a preschool and kindergarten under the Esther Martinez language grant currently. Prior to receipt of Esther Martinez, we did not have the preschool or kindergarten.

We started with the preschool and kindergarten. This year we are adding first grade. So, you could say that we took our ANA funding, we had prior ANA funding and we ran a Master-Apprentice program where I spent a minimum of 25 hours per week in complete immersion with our speaking team, and our next project was to take those fluent speakers, after I made a pool of fluent speakers, we developed curriculum that would cover 180 days of public school in the classroom, immersion curriculum.

After we finished that piece of work, we then moved on to implementation, which is Esther Martinez. So, we have children coming in in preschool and kindergarten that are being taught using, again, Montessori methodology to deliver curriculum to children, and we already have preschool and kindergarten children that are going through reading readiness and kindergarten children that write their names.

The curriculum that they are using is also CBE, or culturally-based education, where the lessons that they are learning and the STEM, science, technology, engineering, and math, components are

mapped to traditional hunting, fishing, growing, family structure, math, and actually the children work on world geography and local geography as well.

So, in a very real sense, Esther Martinez has given us a program where children are learning in the language and they hadn't at that age level from fluent adults for a couple hundred years, actually.

Senator UDALL. Thank you very much.

Just one more question, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Sims, you mentioned in your testimony that Native students are not properly evaluated due to English-based testing and standards. You mentioned a set of recommendations to improve on this shortcoming and to ensure that Native students are evaluated fairly for future success.

How do we ensure fair and equal standards for Native students that are learning and speaking from their Native language? With an increase in immersion schools in tribal communities, what can we do to make sure Native students are not left behind?

Dr. SIMS. Thank you for your question. I think this is a very critical one and it comes at a time when we are seeing kind of the emergence of more of these models of immersion that obviously are very successful in producing children who now speak these languages.

I would also mention that what we have not done enough of is to also understand not only the linguistic benefits that come from these kinds of experiences, but the extra linguistic kinds of benefits that come from children learning in these languages. What I mean by that is as these children and these students are learning Native languages which have no commonality with English, they are two different kinds of communication systems.

The cognitive benefits that come with young children, as young as 2, 3, learning these languages and becoming fluent, we don't know enough about the value of what they are learning in a different communicative system. This is why, when we use English-based tests for Native children, especially those learning their Native language, it doesn't do justice to them in terms of what they are acquiring in their own Native ways.

That is not just about the ability to speak the language, but it is all the cognitive things that are developing in young brains, young children, when they are able to communicate, when they are able to express their ideas.

Along with that, they are also learning what we call cultural literacy. It is not just the ability to read and write, but all the kinds of ways in which young children learn how to read from being able to communicate with elders, with parents, when they participate in different community events and become parts of those communities actively involved, they are learning the kind of literacy that we don't give enough credit to.

So, one of the ways that we try to talk about doing assessment properly and doing it more authentically is to look at what the goals that language communities have set for their children in terms of learning these languages. What do they expect children to be able to use that language for? And, on that basis, are in fact

children using that language in the ways that are appropriate to a particular culture?

Are the children being able to use these languages in ways that are promoting not only their own individual growth, but also how it affects their academics? You have heard Namaka talk about how that principle of language transfer is an essential one and kids, when they are taught well, have that skill to be able to learn in any language.

Those are some of the things that I think we don't give enough credit for, so, when we gather data, when we look at what children are doing, it cannot be just solely on English-based kinds of assessments.

Senator UDALL. That, I think, is a tremendously important concept.

Let me, finally, just thank all the panelists here. You all bring a perspective from all over the Country, from various Tribes and the successes we have had. I am particularly encouraged hearing a lot of these, especially when we are looking at the reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Act and making sure that we take your input.

Several of the things I have heard over and over again is that the grant length for Esther Martinez should go to five years rather than three years and, also, the minimum class size should go from 10 to 5. Those are things that have been proven out through, I think, all of you talking about them and in your communities.

Ms. Hovland, I think the more you travel, the more you are going to hear about these.

So, thank you all very much. Really appreciate your dedication here to language revitalization.

Dr. SIMS. Thank you.

Ms. BAIRD. Thank you, gentlemen.

The CHAIRMAN. All right, thank you, Vice Chairman Udall.

Again, thanks to all of our witnesses.

The hearing record will be open for two weeks and, again, I just want to add my thanks to you as well.

Commissioner Hovland, great to have you on board.

Thanks so much. We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:05 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALLAN HAYTON, LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR, DOYON FOUNDATION

Sen. John Hoeven,

We are writing to provide testimony and share about our language revitalization efforts as you prepare to enter into an oversight hearing on “Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations” this Wednesday, August 22, 2018. Doyon Foundation is fully committed to the healthy future of the ancestral languages of our region, and supports Indigenous language revitalization efforts all across the United States.

The Doyon region in Alaska is the ancestral home to ten Indigenous Alaska Native languages. Those languages are Dihthâad Xt’een Iin aandëg’ (Tanacross), Nee’aaneëgn’ (Upper Tanana), Deg Xinag, Dinak’i (Upper Kuskokwim), Benhti Kokhwt’ana Kenaga (Lower Tanana), Holikachuk, Denaakk’e (Koyukon), Hän, Dinjii Zhuh K’yaa (Gwich’in), & Iñupiaq. We have been working diligently to create opportunities for learners, as well as supporting the efforts of speakers and teachers of these languages to share and document their knowledge.

Doyon Foundation is the recipient of two major language grants from the Administration for Native Americans, and U.S. Department of Education to create online language learning for nine languages. In addition to the opportunities created by these two grants, Doyon Foundation provides assistance to tribes and communities of our region in the form of small grants, workshops, training, and scholarship support for those involved in language revitalization efforts.

We are also seeing an increase in political support. In 2014 Alaska Governor Sean Parnell signed House Bill 216 into law, recognizing Alaska’s 20 Indigenous languages along with English as official languages of the State of Alaska. Half of these 20 Indigenous languages are within the region Doyon Foundation serves. We feel strongly that these languages are essential to the identity, well-being, and prosperity of the people of Alaska, and represent a vast wealth of knowledge, culture, history, and connection to the land.

We hope to see continued support for our work and for the work of our Indigenous brothers and sisters nationwide breathing life back into our languages.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about our work.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBER STERUD HAYWARD, DIRECTOR, PUYALLUP TRIBAL
LANGUAGE PROGRAM; ZALMAI ZAHIR PH.D. CANDIDATE, LINGUISTICS UNIVERSITY
OF OREGON, LUSHOOTSEED LANGUAGE CONSULTANT

Introduction

Honorable Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this important hearing on examining efforts to maintain and revitalize native languages for future generations. The Puyallup Tribe greatly appreciates the work of this Committee to empower Indian Nations and their citizens through the preservation and expansion of Native language. It has been said that Language is culture and culture is language. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on behalf of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. We encourage Congress to continue to supplement Tribal resources dedicated to expanding the use of Native language. It is an element of self-identity and a foundation for future success. We are seeing results now and want to accelerate our language programs.

Lushootseed

Lushootseed is the indigenous language of the Puyallup Tribe. It is a member of the Salishian language family, which is comprised of 23 North American languages that extend from Canada to Oregon and from the Pacific Ocean east into Montana. Lushootseed is classified as a Coast Salish Language. It is spoken within the Puget

Sound region of Washington, including all of its river tributaries, the east side of Kitsap Peninsula, Whidbey Island, and the Skagit Valley. Lushootseed is the native language of thirteen tribes. They are Upper Skagit, Swinomish, Tulalip, Snohomish, Sauk-Suiattle, Stillaguamish, Snoqualmie, Suquamish, Duwamish, Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Nisqually and Squaxin Island. These tribes make up a population of over twenty thousand.

Status of Lushootseed

Four years ago, there were no known speakers that used Lushootseed on a regular basis within the Puyallup tribal community. There were those that had taken language classes and knew words and phrases, but no one was using the language for communication. In 2014, the Puyallup Tribal Language Program implemented a new approach that focused on language use. This shift in methodology has changed the landscape of the Lushootseed speaking community and has produced promising results. The number of speakers within the first year started at 3 and has roughly doubled each year. We can now say that there are strong indicators that Lushootseed is being revitalized. The Puyallup Tribal Language Program uses methods in line with the UNSECO frameworks for language vitality as a metric for language revitalization.¹

We want to address just two of these metrics: the absolute number of speakers, and intergenerational language transmission. For the absolute number of speakers, we define a speaker as someone who uses Lushootseed one hour per day or more for communicative purposes. As of 2018, the Puyallup community has about 40 speakers. In terms of intergenerational language transmission, there are 6 children of these 40 speakers (15 percent of speakers) being raised in homes where Lushootseed is a primary language. This does not include the 600 children serviced in Lushootseed at Chief Leschi tribal school and Grandview Early Learning Center tribal daycare. In addition to the absolute number of speakers of 40, there are about 20 more speakers that average language use under one hour per day. Their use is increasing and indications are they will be speakers within a short time. The Puyallup Language Program is estimating about 60 new language students to begin instruction in the fall of 2018. This means that by the summer of 2019, we are projecting a language community of 100 speakers, and if language use continues to grow at its current rate where the number of speakers is roughly doubling each year, we are estimating over 1,500 speakers by 2023 (Figure 1).

Language Revitalization Impact

The impact language revitalization has on the Puyallup community has been invaluable. Teachers at the tribal school are beginning to note positive changes in students. Behavior changes are resulting in higher academic scores for the children where Lushootseed is used with English for classroom instruction. This is creating a change in language attitudes resulting in more educational events that involve community classes. These classes are proving to be very popular with high attendance. This includes the Lushootseed Language Institute, an annual two-week language institute that is cosponsored with the University of Washington Tacoma.

The higher number of speakers is increasing the frequency and function of the language used within the community. Over the past four years, there has been a positive increase in attitude toward use of the Lushootseed language in the community, schools, tribal events and social media. In the summer of 2018, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians hosted Canoe Journey² “Power Paddle to Puyallup,” where the Lushootseed language dominated. Thousands of people heard the Puyallup ancestral language upon entering our lands by canoe. This was the first time in decades that a high volume of language has been used and heard in our community. Council members, youth, community members and Language Program staff greeted over 100 canoes in the Lushootseed language, which in turn was reciprocated by incoming canoes in their ancestral languages.

On a personal note, the language revitalization efforts put forth by the Puyallup Tribe has impacted my personal life, and the life of my children. The model used in our office and throughout the community is the same model used in my home with my family. Over the past four years, Lushootseed language use has not stopped when work hours are over, but has carried through very intentionally into my home and into the lives of my children. The impact of this work had produced a language nest³ in our kitchen and bathrooms, hours of Lushootseed use and conversation in

¹ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/endangered-languages/language-vitality/>

² Canoe Journey: A Northwest Native gathering of canoes journeying from tribe to tribe and landing at a host tribe to celebrate a week of singing, dancing and gifting.

³ Language nest: a physical location that does not allow the use of English in its parameters.

our home. Our revitalization efforts have impacted our extended family and friends that enter into our home, as they too have been exposed to the language over the past four years. Our extended family are now able to understand and minimally communicate with us in the Lushootseed language as well as in Salish, my mother's tribal language. Because our home has been established as a language home, my children are learning the value of multilingualism by learning words and phrases in other tribal and non-tribal languages. We have incorporated tribal languages into our home from the Salish, Navajo, Crow, Blackfeet, Tlingit, Lakota, and Yakima tribes; non-native languages including Spanish and German. My children understand the importance of multilingualism and greeting people we meet in their ancestral languages. My children get to benefit from a well-rounded, traditional Indian education through the language. My family gets to experience our culture through Lushootseed eyes—our songs, dances, canoeing, pulling cedar, bone games, etc. The policies that are being adopted in Washington D.C. directly impact the work that we do in our community, in my home and in my children's schools and daycares.

Conclusion

For these reasons, we are asking that Congress take special consideration for indigenous language policy. National policies have a direct effect upon language attitudes across all levels, and language attitudes have a strong effect on language vitality (see UNESCO frameworks). In addition, we ask Congress to continue to support the revitalization and maintenance of Native languages and expansion of language immersion programs. We appreciate Congress appropriating \$2 million dollars in FY 2018 within the BIA's Education Program Enhancements for capacity building grants for BIA- and Tribally-operated schools to expand language immersion programs. Congress should make such grants recurring so that we may cultivate generations of Native language speakers. Language revitalization efforts across the United States rely on Federal appropriations to build foundational work, expand programs and sustain them. In addition, federal funding used in educational programs are a vital part of language revitalization. These programs require the development of a plethora of language curriculum, materials, and personnel that can use them. By funding such programs, Congress is part of an invaluable process that will shape Native minds and lives within Tribal communities for generations to come.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SIRI G. TUTTLE, PH.D., DIRECTOR, ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

The Alaska Native Language Center was established by state legislation in 1972 as a center for research and documentation of the twenty Native languages of Alaska. It is internationally known and recognized as the major center in the United States for the study of Eskimo and Northern Athabaskan languages. In this letter, I would like to emphasize the importance of language study—language learning and research—to the support of the indigenous languages of North America.

Language documentation, research and publication on language teaching are all vital to the support of communities that are working to preserve, revitalize and reclaim their languages. Even for languages spoken by millions, written language materials are crucial to education in both first- and second-language contexts. For minority languages, these materials can make the difference between possible reclamation (as in the case of Wampanoag, see Ms. Baird's letter) and loss through interrupted transmission.

Normal intergenerational transmission of these languages was intentionally disrupted through government-funded education, in a program that did not end the use of the languages, but did cause deep harm to indigenous communities and families that continues to surface today. Both before and during the period of this intentional disruption, speakers of indigenous languages chose to record their knowledge, often in partnership with non-indigenous linguists. Their body of work stands today as a remarkable testament to the power, diversity and beauty of human language. They are the creators of dictionaries, teaching materials and recorded narratives.

At ANLC, we see every day the need to ask further questions, not just about word meanings and grammatical constructions, but about the linguistic context required to turn an English speaking indigenous person into a culturally competent speaker of their grandmother's language. As always, collaboration between people with different viewpoints can often provide insight: members of speech communities help academic linguists understand cultural context, while academics can help speakers and learners to communicate the riches of their heritage to a wider audience. The support of the National Science Foundation and National Endowment for the Hu-

manities has been crucial to documentation and sharing of the Alaska Native Languages.

The study of diverse languages deepens our understanding of what it means to be human as well as what it means to speak a human language. For those who are not members of indigenous language communities, the continuing use and study of indigenous languages is a gift to inquiry. When people ask me why they should study a new language, I ask them: "Why don't you want to know more about the world and the people in it?" The complex, elegant and poetic indigenous languages of North America should be among the many world languages available to American students as they prepare for lives in this new century. They cannot be accessed without continued study, continued learning in the communities of their origin, and continued care for historical recording and other documentation. All of this work is part of what is termed *revitalization*. Every part of it is needed.

It is incumbent on the United States Government to redress the harm done to indigenous Americans through the suppression of indigenous language and culture. Part of that redress must include support for the use, study and teaching of Native American languages. In particular, it must include support for the professional development of indigenous Americans as language teachers and language scientists.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE CANCUBA COLLECTIVE

Halito! (Hello!)

I am writing on behalf on Cancuba Collective, which is an arts collective out of Southern Louisiana that seeks to platform indigenous artists and traditional ways. We have been involved in the Houma people and language revitalization over the past year, and I'd like to share one member's story.

They are a Houma native who does not live in Louisiana, but has been involved in the community the best that they are able. They went down this past year to help work on a few native issues in the area, and along the way got involved in the Houma Language Project. In promoting it to the local powwow in the spring of 2018, they found that since the strong colonization of the French, the native language was most certainly sleeping. Many tribal members didn't even know there was a native language that was the predecessor to the cajun French that many older folks speak. Their mother has since also gotten involved, and they are using it as a way to bring themselves closer, as well as to the greater tribal community. In talking to tribal elders, they were excited about a younger person being involved in wanting to revitalize the old ways, both in language and in arts and physical historical ways like weaving and carving, and offered all they help that they could, but funding things is already a problem for the tribe. Many young people are involved in purely survival in the current state of the world. especially in Louisiana, and so they are moving away or just not involved in the tribal going ons. We deserve to have our language and ways come out of slumber. We deserve to be able to speak to our ancestors in our native tongue. Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DESA DAWSON, ACTFL PAST PRESIDENT; DIRECTOR OF
WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION, OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Below is information from Oklahoma about our Native American Language programs and our attempt to encourage the growth of programs in the state to support our Tribes efforts to revitalize their languages.

Oklahoma has 39 Federally-recognized Tribes that are sovereign nations within its borders. The Tribes are all at various states of language revitalization. All of the languages are on the endangered list, and some have only a few speakers left. Monolingual speakers are all but gone. In 2013 the Oklahoma State Department of Education worked with representatives of the Tribes to develop an alternative pathway for certification. A few Tribes did not participate due to a limited number or complete lack of speakers of the language or the unwillingness to have non-Tribal members learning the language; however, the State of Oklahoma felt like this was needed because most Indian students attend public schools since there are no reservations in our state. We very much value working with the Tribes in matters relating to education and wanted to find alternative pathways to certification in order to support tribal efforts as well as award students World Language credit for taking Native American Languages in school.

In 2017-18, thirteen Native American languages were being taught in the state as World Language high school graduation courses. A total of 31 schools offered programs taught by duly certified teachers. Additional schools still offered language

classes for elective credit. There were also some after-school programs as well as community programs which are not reflected in the numbers below.

Standard Certification

Cherokee Nation is the only Tribe to have developed a college preparatory track for standard certification and has the only immersion program for Native American Languages in the entire state.

Alternatively Certified Instructors since 2013

TRIBE	Number
Cheyenne-Arapaho	3
Choctaw	10
Chickasaw	1
Comanche	1
Creek	2
Osage	2
Pawnee	1
Potawatomi	1
Sac and Fox	2
Seminole	3
Total	26

Other languages utilizing adjunct instructors:

Kiowa, Otoe (World Language Credit)

Total NAL Students from 1991 to present:

Years	Number
1991–1992	22
1992–1993	19
1993–1994	273
1994–1995	312
1995–1996	879
1996–1997	955
1997–1998	472
1998–1099	313
1999–2000	1,115
2000–2001	508
2001–2002	439
2002–2003	659
2003–2004	807
2004–2005	720
2005–2006	790
2006–2007	1,007
2007–2008	1,130
2008–2009	1,136
2009–2010	1,073
2010–2011	1,053
2011–2012	1,355
2012–2013	1,174
2013–2014	929
2014–2015	950
2015–2016	1,249
2016–2017	992
2017–2018	964

I hope this information is helpful. If you would like additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Warmest regards,

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MONICA MACAULAY, PRESIDENT/KRISTINE HILDEBRANDT,
VICE PRESIDENT, ENDANGERED LANGUAGE FUND (ELF)

Dear Committee Members:

We submit this statement on behalf of the Endangered Language Fund (ELF). ELF is a 501(c)3 founded in 1996 with the goal of supporting endangered language preservation and documentation projects. Our main mechanism for supporting work on endangered languages has been funding grants to individuals, tribes, and museums. One of our grant programs funds languages world-wide (including in the U.S.) and the other is restricted to a subset of tribes in the U.S. We have funded a wide range of projects in this country, from the development of indigenous radio programs in South Dakota, to recording the last firstlanguage speakers of Ponca in Oklahoma, to the establishment of orthographies and literacy materials to be used by endangered language teaching programs throughout the country.

We recognize the inseparable link between language and cultural identity. Towards this recognition, our funding organization has had many positive impacts, but it can only effect so much change on its own, given the small size of our grants. We also recognize the critical role that the federal government has played, and must continue to play, in providing resources and empowering tribes to protect and to revitalize their native languages. In this statement, we echo comments made in the testimonies by the panelists at the hearing on Wednesday, August 22, 2018.

We strongly endorse the recommendations of the panelists, including: funding education programs, particularly those that include immersion and intergenerational participation; empowering tribal communities to train and make use of native language experts; and, promoting/creating legislation at the federal level to develop curriculum materials on-site, which brings into the fold lower-capacity tribes that have not yet had the chance to receive support for language promotion.

We are grateful for the opportunity to make this statement to you on behalf of our organization.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. NEYOXET GREYMORNING, PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENTS
OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

To members of the Senate Hearing on Revitalization of U.S. Languages,

By way of introduction, Nenee'eesi'inoo Neyooxet Greymorning and my involvement with language revitalization runs back some 25 years, when in 1993, I established the first language immersion preschool on the Wind River reservation, and also convinced Disney studios to release their copyright on the Bambi movie so it could be translated into Arapaho and distributed on the reservation. I further convinced Disney studios to not use their talent but to use Arapaho children and adults for the speaking parts; which was an historical first. By this point I'm sure you have heard the standard testimonies of how deeply connected our languages are to our cultures and identities as the Native Peoples of America so I will spare you that. What I will instead state is that we as a people did not ask for our languages to be in the state that they currently are in, which is on the brink of disappearing. We were pushed to this point by concerted efforts of the US government. A statistic you may not be aware of is in the Northwest four state region of the United States (Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana), from the late 1880s to the late 1930s, a fifty year time span, the United States government spent 250 million dollars, funneled through boarding schools, in an effort to "Kill the Indian." (see comment on Richard Pratt at http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/teach/kill-indian-and-save-man-capt-richard-h-pratt-education-native-americans_and_cultural_genocide_at_https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_genocide). These were clear acts of ethnocide (see "Understanding Cultural and Language Ethnocide. at <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/understanding-culture-and-language-ethnocide-native-perspective>). To put ethnocide in perspective, it is like a cobalt bomb, the idea of which was to destroy human life with minimal damage to the infrastructure of cities; buildings, roadways, bridges etc.. Ethnocide similarly leaves the physical structure of Native people's bodies intact, while, as Captain Richard Henry Pratt put it, killing that which is Indian; in this case the culture and language of Native American peoples. Another piece that may be new information stems from the following. Having returned from Australia on the 10th of August and Vancouver Island on the 18th of August, where I ran intensive Native language teacher workshops in ASLA (Accelerated Second Language Acquisition) see <http://www.umt.edu/nsilc/>, the governments in these two countries have understood the impact they have had upon Aboriginal languages and have established significant funding and resources to try to stabilize and revitalize, or rejuvenate as I prefer to

call it, Aboriginal and First Nations languages and cultures. Other countries are also following suit with such efforts, and by so doing may become acknowledged leaders in this area of Human Rights. In a final closing note, if the US had succeeded in killing all Indian languages by the 1940s then there would not have been any Code talkers to effectively use several different Indian languages that changed the course of the war to the United States' advantage. There is a debt owed Native languages, for the contribution and aid in winning a war, that has yet to be paid. The question left is, will the United States follow the lead of other countries who have established legislation and funding to safeguard Native languages and cultures, or idly stand by and continue to watch efforts that the government put in motion 130 years ago through boarding schools designed to decimate Native languages and cultures?

PREPARED STATEMENT OF IVY DOAK, PH.D., DENTON, TX; FORMER EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES OF THE AMERICAS (2008–2017)

To the Members of the US Senate Committee on Indian Affairs:

Language maintenance and revitalization are essential to the tribes whose languages remain in use by first language (L1) speakers or are well-documented enough to be restored to common use. The languages provide a point of shared identity and pride, enabling youth to move beyond the crippling effects of subjugation that befell their elders.

The Coeur d'Alene (Salish) tribe invited Jesuit missionaries to their homeland following a vision, perhaps affected by practical insight, by Circling Raven, a direct ancestor of the current tribal chairman, Ernest Stensgar. The missionaries arrived in 1865. By 1926, when linguist Gladys Reichard arrived on the reservation, she worked with one of the few remaining monolingual speakers of the language (Dorothy Nicodemus) and two bilingual speakers (Tom Miyal and Julia Antelope) to document its unique sounds and syntactic structures. In sixty-one years, use of the language had dwindled significantly.

Today, eighty years since Reichard (1938) published her description of the language, users of the Coeur d'Alene language have managed to keep it in the public mind and are working to promote its continued use in all aspects of daily life. While early efforts by the tribe were independent of government assistance, governmental support has enhanced their efforts in language preservation and its reintroduction to use by tribal members. Independent efforts by tribal members and their allies to preserve the language resulted in a dictionary and lesson books and tapes (Nicodemus 1975a, 1975b). An enterprising school teacher, Reva Hess, introduced the language as an elective in the local high school curriculum; many enrollees began learning the language from elders brought into the classroom for the students to interview personally. Tribal members exposed to the language at home and by these and other early efforts at language maintenance outside the home were inspired to continue their study. Support from the Administration for Native Americans has allowed tribal members to collect and archive an enormous corpus of words, sentences, and stories by interviewing bilingual elders. One of Hess's high school students, Audra Vincent, a granddaughter of an L1 speaker, now runs the tribe's Language Program, and has been involved in at least two research projects funded by the National Science Foundation that have resulted in an online catalog of historical language data (see Bischoff et al., 2009). Pride of ownership in the language has inspired tribal members to revitalize other areas of tribal history, from food collection and preparation to canoe building and racing.

Native languages like Coeur d'Alene that have been maintained or revitalized with assistance from governmental funding through the Administration for Native Americans, the National Science Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities provide a meaningful identity to the peoples who share the knowledge of those languages. For those who study languages and the human mind, maintained and revitalized native languages provide an incredible wealth of data on language structure, use, and change relevant to all people.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN D. BARBRY, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & PROGRAMING, EDUCATION PROGRAM, LANGUAGE & CULTURE REVITALIZATION PROGRAM, TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA

Heni (greetings) Senators:

The Tunica-Biloxi Tribe has no fluent speakers and is working to expand their Tunica language education efforts into a sustainable program that will develop more speakers and instructors for survival of the language. Like in so many American Indian communities, the effects of expansionism and assimilation have resulted in the dormancy of the Tunica language. Although there are no fluent Tunica speakers, there are currently 50 speakers with proficiency ranging from mostly beginner to two at intermediate level. The two intermediate speakers, who serve as instructors, learned Tunica as a second language with reinforcement of oral traditions passed down through their family. While they have a higher level of proficiency, they rely heavily on documented linguistic studies of the Tunica language. More support and sustained work is needed to grow the base of speakers.

For more than a century, the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana has witnessed its traditional language and culture slip deeper into distant slumber. Tunica language revitalization is the crucial link to preserving Tunica-Biloxi culture. Dr. Wesley Leonard describes the Miami Tribe's language reclamation efforts as a way to achieve a level of "cultural fluency," in which "proficiency in the language may ensue but in which proficiency is not the immediate target." In the same manner, continued use of the Tunica language would be a natural way to preserve cultural knowledge and a way of expressing it through the language.

Project success relies on programming that promotes Tunica language proficiency and usage through ongoing weekly language classes, cultural life-ways workshops, language camps, and outreach events. More development of linguistic texts, manuals, curricula, and pedagogical materials is needed to support and sustain language training. Development and maintenance of a language web site, along with online games and mobile apps will help reinforce learning and retain participants.

In her 1978 essay, linguist Mary Haas observed that the "Tunica, as their numbers dwindled, found it increasingly difficult to keep up the use of their language. Instead of adapting it to the needs of modern times (by borrowing if necessary), they simply adopted French. The Tunica people needed to speak French and English to handle their business in the local non-Indian community of post-18th century Louisiana." Haas noted that Sesostrie Youchigant, her Tunica informant from 1933-39, "had the additional burden of attempting to recall a language he had not spoken for twenty years." Prior to his mother's death in 1915, he preferred to speak French to her although she always spoke Tunica to him."

The decline in the Tunica language coincided with the decrease in tribal population from the late 19th into the early 20th century. Haas stated that the decline in the language started two to three generations before her work with Youchigant in 1933. Noted anthropologist, John R. Swanton estimated a population of 50 Tunica in the Marksville community around 1908 that still spoke Tunica fluently. Beginning in the 1920's individuals and families began to leave the Marksville area in search of work. Half, possibly more, of the village left since the total village population in 1933 and 1938 was estimated at around 30.

Tunica history and culture cannot be accurately reflected if the language is no longer spoken. Durk Gorter, writing on linguistic diversity, stated "when a language dies so does a medium through which a culture is transmitted." Commenting on loss of a language by a group of people, French linguist Claude Hagege says, "What we lose is essentially an enormous cultural heritage, the way of expressing the relationship with nature, with the world, between themselves in the framework of their families, their kin people. It's also the way they express their humor, their love, their life." Youchigant, the last known fluent speaker of the Tunica language, passed away in 1948 and took with him what few Tunica-Biloxi recall of their ancestors' intonations. Fortunately, Haas recorded Youchigant on wax cylinders which are archived in the Survey of California and Other Indian Languages at University of California, Berkeley.

The Ethnologue, an organization that compiles a global database of languages, categorizes the Tunica language at 9 (dormant) on EGIDS or its "Language Cloud" scale. This rating denotes a dying language where generally the only fluent users

are older than child-bearing age, so it is too late to restore natural integration transmission through the home. The Ethnologue suggests that a mechanism outside the home would need to be developed. Ethnologue editor Paul Lewis argues that if people begin to think of their language as useless, they see their identity as such as well, which leads to social disruption, depression, suicide, and drug use. And as parents no longer transmit language to their children, the connection between children and grandparents is broken and traditional values are lost. In February 2017, Ethnologue changed the designation of the Tunica language from dormant to “Re-awakening.”

Today, the Tunica-Biloxi community has shown negative social trends among its youth (age 6–17) population in the service area with disproportionately high truancy and dropout rates. The Tribal unemployment rate exceeds 7.2 percent which is higher than the state rate of 6.3 percent according to the U. S. Department of Labor Statistics. In years 2012–13 the graduation rate was 67 percent in Rapides Parish and 68.5 percent in Avoyelles Parish where the Tunica-Biloxi reservation is located. As a result, the dropout rate for Tunica-Biloxi students exceeds 33 percent. The Avoyelles Parish absentee rate was 8.9 percent or 22.5 percent higher than the state average at 6.9 percent. Truancy in Avoyelles is 37.5 percent or 35.7 percent higher than the state. In addition, over 12 percent of Tunica-Biloxi students face disciplinary actions such as in-school and out-of-school suspensions. The 2013 American Indian Population and Labor Force Report stated that 24.7 percent of family incomes in Louisiana are below the poverty level.

In 2010, Tunica-Biloxi Councilmember Brenda Lintinger approached Dr. Judith Maxwell of the Tulane University linguistics department for help with the Tunica language project. Dr. Maxwell assembled a team of linguists including Raina Heaton, Mary Kate Kelly, Patricia Anderson, and Craig Alcantara. Tunica language instructors, Donna Pierite and Elisabeth Mora, have participated actively in the project work group contributing knowledge of their family’s oral tradition in language and cultural heritage.

Working with documents left by non-Tunica researchers, the collaboration has produced an orthographic system, Tunica language classes and lessons, children’s books (with Tunica narration on audio CDs), Tunica songs and stories, a textbook with accompanying workbook, and an annual Tunica language summer camp. Tulane researchers gathered Tunica materials from extensive work done by John R. Swanton, Albert S. Gatschet and Mary Haas between 1886 and 1953. The group mostly works with materials from Haas, who worked with Youchigant from 1933–39 and with very thorough documentation published a grammar in 1941 followed by a book of Tunica stories (Tunica Texts) in 1950 and a Tunica-English dictionary in 1953, as well as Gatschet and Swanton. With these and other basic materials, the Tulane team reconstructed the phonological and syntactic structure of the language and is in the process of preparing introductory language materials. The group is updating the Haas’ Tunica grammar, Haas’ Tunica Dictionary, and other source materials making more accessible in the development of curricula content for training. In an initial project, Tulane transliterated and reconfigured texts from Haas’ published narratives related by Sesostrie Youchigant, the last known fluent speaker of Tunica. The first volume of stories adapted for children was illustrated by a tribal artist and published in May 2011. This work has laid a foundation for classes, workshops and summer language camps since 2012. The most recent language camp, held in June 2015, hosted 43 tribal children.

The Language & Culture Revitalization Program (LCRP) was created by the Tunica-Biloxi Council in 2014 to establish a structural support for language and culture education, as well as a noticeable presence of the language on the reservation and throughout the extended community. LCRP currently has four full-time staff members: two Language & Cultural Lifeways Instructors, a Program Assistant and a Director of Development & Programing. LCRP coordinates programs at the Tunica-Biloxi Cultural & Educational Resource Center (CERC), a 40,000 square-foot building that houses a museum exhibit hall, conservation and restoration laboratory, gift shop, library, auditorium, classrooms, distance learning center, meeting rooms and tribal government offices on the reservation. Programs include weekly language classes, live and recorded WebEx sessions, summer language camps, early literacy story time events, and cultural workshops.

The ongoing work of LCRP is producing an enduring repository of training materials that will be more accessible and available to tribal members. These materials will support training through classes, workshops, cultural events, or informal learning groups. Although quantity and quality of coordinated training offerings are impacted by funding levels, the tribal government, tribal members, and cultural traditionalists in the community will continue to support language preservation. As Tunica language learners progress in becoming proficient and fluent in their native

tongue, new generations of Tunica teachers will be born. As the language is re-awakened, it will again be a more visible and audible part of Tunica-Biloxi cultural identity.

Hita (take care)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LISA MARIA DEWITT-NARINO

Honorable Chairman Hoeven,

I have been learning the Tlingit Language off and on in my life, but only recently felt that my fear in sharing what I know is not enough to stay dormant in promoting indigenous languages. The call to revitalize our mother tongues of Alaska is a mission that needs any and all support.

There are many told and untold calamitous stories of how our indigenous languages came to the brink of extinction. Each language has their own story, their own hurt, their own silence, and more importantly their own power. Ketchikan is a familiar ear to all three of these languages Lingít, Xaad Kól, and Sm'algyax. Ketchikan continues to make efforts in restoring our language use—such as Ketchikan High School offering Xaad Kól classes, brown bag lunch sessions for our adults, evening classes for families, distance classes, use of language in dance groups, etc. What we are doing is great and sparks hope for indigenous language use, but it is not enough.

Please remember, Alaska's indigenous languages is much more than a practical tool—each one has a home land, has a culture, has a people, and has history. Our culture and our language depend on one another. It gives us a strong connection to our ancestors and their way of thinking and looking at the world. Tlingit for example, you hear 'gunalchéesh', most know this to mean 'thank you'. However, in Tlingit the breakdown of that word can mean, "Without you it would not be possible".

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RUSSELL BEGAYE, PRESIDENT, NAVAJO NATION

Dear Chairman Hoeven and Vice Chairman Udall,

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Navajo Nation's support for the reauthorization of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act (S. 254) sponsored by Vice Chairman Udall. As President of the Navajo Nation, I represent over 350,000 enrolled members, of which nearly 180,000 of our citizens live within the boundaries of the Nation. With such a large number of enrolled members, our children's education is a priority to promote lifelong learning, to ensure they are successful and that we retain our Navajo culture and language.

Navajo culture and language preservation is a top priority for the Navajo Nation because Diné Bizaad (Navajo language) retains our heritage legacy and individuality as Native people. As you are aware, our language has also played a vital historical role for the United States during World War II when the Navajo Code Talkers were utilized to communicate with an unbreakable wartime code helping the Allied Forces to win the war.

Today, nearly 68 percent of our Navajo citizens speak Diné Bizaad (Navajo language), which has drastically decreased from 80 percent in 1980. Language preservation funding like Ester Martinez has provided resources for programs across Indian Country to help our youth learn their Native languages to preserve our rich traditions and unique culture. On Navajo Nation, the Window Rock Unified School District in northeastern Arizona and the Central Consolidated School District in northwestern New Mexico, operate exemplary Navajo language immersion schools: Tseéhootsooi Dine Bi'ólta' and Eva B. Stokely Elementary.

These language immersion public schools and programs provide cultural environments that give Navajo students the opportunity to compete in Navajo spelling bees, science fairs, pow wow dancing, singing, weaving, and traditional teachings. With Navajo language and culture as the backbone of the learning environment, results show that these students are scoring above their non-immersion peers on standardized tests.

For these reasons, we strongly advocate that the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act be reauthorized at the proposed \$13 million levels for each fiscal year 2019 through 2023 to continue to provide funding for Native language preservation and immersion programs for the benefit of our children's educational development and success.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARGARET SPEAS, PROFESSOR EMERITA OF LINGUISTICS,
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS, AMHERST

When I began working with Navajo language scholars and activists in the mid 1980s, the extent of language attrition was just beginning to be measured, but it was clear that very few children were learning the Navajo language at home. This fact, which was part of the cumulative damage done to Navajo families by years of educational policy intended to wipe out their language, led me to be quite pessimistic about the likelihood of maintaining and revitalizing the language. However, due to the efforts of committed Navajo educators, families and scholars, impressive progress has been made, and in particular we can see what sorts of programs do the most to benefit Native American communities.

Research done since the passage of the Native American Languages Act of 1990 converges on two important conclusions:

1. Being bilingual gives a child a distinct cognitive advantage over monolingual children, in nearly every area of cognition for which studies have been conducted.

While in Europe, India and China, over half of the population knows more than one language, 75 percent of Americans are monolingual. Bilingual children have been found to score better on tests of cognitive skills such as attention, task switching and complexity processing.

2. Native American children who are educated in Native Language immersion schools perform better on standardized tests (including English language arts tests) and have significantly higher graduation rates than Native American children who attend English-only schools.

<http://www.res.org.uk/details/mediabrief/10503980/BILINGUAL-CHILDREN-DO-BETTER-IN-TESTS-US-evidence-that-speaking-two-languages-in.html>

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN
LANGUAGES (ACTFL)

I. Introduction

Chairman Hoeven, Ranking Member Udall, and Members of the Committee,
The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is pleased to provide testimony regarding the critical importance of revitalizing the use of Native American languages for instruction and promoting other means for increasing the number of speakers and users of these languages.

Over the years, ACTFL has committed to this effort by completing a number of projects in Indian Country in support of the rejuvenation of Native American languages through workshops and curriculum projects. The emphasis of these initiatives has been on building capacity among instructors, administrators, and tribal education agencies around:

- Using and understanding ACTFL Proficiency Levels (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced);
- Facilitating instructors' self-assessment of their own level of proficiency in Interpersonal, Interpretive, and Presentational Communication;
- Designing language learning experiences to guide learners to higher levels of proficiency;
- Implementing effective strategies and immersion techniques for language learning; and

- Integrating growth in the language into the existing culture-focused topics and content of language curricula, including assisting in finding ways to measure proficiency levels in the languages.

To this last point, we have conducted Oral Proficiency Workshops for two Mohawk Tribes (Canada and New York), the Cherokee Nation, the Squamish Nation, and the Seneca Tribe. This past spring, we also worked in a gratis capacity with the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma as part of their language preservation efforts to help them write a grant establishing an online language course and language teacher training program.

Since 2013, ACTFL has provided professional development and technical assistance to:

- Alaska Native Heritage Center (Anchorage): 2013 workshop on developing and assessing language performance
- The Aleut Foundation: 2014 consultation with Saint Paul Island language programs on developing proficiency with effective instructional strategies
- Eastern Shawnee: 2016 workshops on developing language proficiency to higher levels in learners and instructors
- Myamia Language Project (Miami University of Ohio): 2016 workshops on proficiency, unit design, and curriculum planning
- Native Hawaiian Programs (independent schools in Honolulu): 2017–18 assistance on curriculum planning and unit design for programs teaching Hawaiian language
- The Six Nations School (Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation reserve in Ontario, Canada): several workshops, book studies, consultation, and review on curriculum/units

II. Recent National Actions To Support Language Education and U.S. Capacity

Two important developments in the past 18 months have helped to build awareness and capacity for language learning in the United States, including the learning and preservation of Native American languages.

In December of 2014, a bipartisan group comprising members from both chambers of Congress, Senate and House of Representatives, wrote a letter to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) requesting that a study be conducted to answer the following questions:

- How does language learning influence economic growth, cultural diplomacy, the productivity of future generations and the fulfillment of all Americans?
- What actions should the nation take to ensure excellence in all languages as well as international education and research, including how we may more effectively use current resources to advance language learning?

AAAS formed a language commission made up of representatives from the AAAS membership as well as stakeholders representing national security, scholarly research, business, and the language education field. This Commission on Language Learning met during 2015–16 to gather data, collect testimony, and discuss opportunities for improving the U.S. capacity in non-English languages.

The resulting study, entitled *America's Languages: Investing in Language Education for the 21st Century*, sets forth a national strategy to improve access to as many languages as possible for individuals from every region, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background. By placing value on language education as a persistent national need, similar to education in math or English, the report makes the case that a useful level of proficiency should be within every student's reach.

As part of this study, the Commission was also tasked with identifying factors that can lead specifically to the revitalization and development of Native American languages. According to *America's Languages*, "Native American languages are distinct in political status and history, and are the object of school- and community-based reclamation and retention efforts aligned with the Native American Languages Act (NALA) of 1990."¹

The report also indicates that over the past 20 years, researchers have:

¹American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Commission on Language Learning, "America's Languages: Investing in Language Education for the 21st Century," 2017, https://www.amacad.org/multimedia/pdfs/publications/researchpapersmonographs/language/Commission-on-Language-Learning_Americas-Languages.pdf.

“discovered that instruction in indigenous languages yields a variety of benefits for Native American children. It has been linked to improvements in academic achievement, retention rates, and school attendance; local and national achievement test scores; well-being, self-esteem, and self-efficacy; and resiliency to addiction and the prevention of risky behaviors.”²

The report proposes five key recommendations for improving the state of U.S. language education as well as features examples of model language programs and profiles of people who have advanced their careers because of their communicative abilities in more than one language.

The five recommendations in America’s Languages include:

1. Increasing the number of language teachers at all levels of education so that every child in every state has the opportunity to learn a language in addition to English.

Currently, 43 U.S. states plus the District of Columbia face language teacher shortages.³ This is a critical issue for the future of our field and has prompted ACTFL to begin developing a program that encourages high school students to consider entering the language teaching profession. In this category, we also face the challenge created by individual states employing different methods of teacher credentialing; in turn, we plan to work with states to increase the number among them offering reciprocity in teacher certificates. We also plan to encourage maximizing the use of technology to deliver language programs—not as a replacement for teachers but as a means for enhancing student opportunities by implementing hybrid programs.

2. Supplementing language instruction across the education system through public-private partnerships among schools, government, philanthropies, business, and local community members.

When Congress made the initial request, it was not with the intent that the report make large financial demands of the government, therefore this recommendation was made to encourage innovative use of community resources to leverage support for language programs in our schools and universities. We need to involve business leaders to invest in creating a multilingual citizenry and those efforts begin in local communities.

3. Supporting heritage languages already spoken in the United States and helping to ensure that these languages persist from one generation to the next.

We know from U.S. Census Bureau data that heritage speakers who come to the United States generally lose their native language abilities almost completely by the third generation. Our country needs to view these heritage languages as an asset to building our nation’s language capacity and to offer courses for these students to continue to build their native language competence. An important element of this recommendation is also to build awareness among our heritage speakers that being fully proficient in two languages is an asset to their career advancement.

4. Providing targeted support and programming for Native American languages as defined in the Native American Languages Act.

As mentioned above, while there has been legislation and some funding to provide for the reclamation of Native American languages, the persistent danger of losing these languages remains. This report calls for supporting the use of Native American languages as the medium for instruction as seen in programs such as dual language immersion. It also calls for expanding the study of these languages beyond the tribal school areas and into other schools as well.

5. Promoting opportunities for students to learn languages in other countries by experiencing other cultures and immersing themselves in multilingual environments.

A very small percentage of U.S. students participate in study abroad programs. In addition to increasing awareness, we need to significantly improve the opportunities for international experiences offered to students. Too frequently student loan recipients are prohibited from studying abroad because they are required to pursue employment during the summer and other academic breaks. We need to remove the barriers that students encounter in pursuing study abroad oppor-

²*Ibid.*

³U.S. Department of Education, “Teacher Shortage Areas, Nationwide Listing, 1990–1991 through 2017–2018,” May 2017, <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/teacheshortageareasreport2017.pdf>.

tunities as well as international internships, where they can increase their job skills and their language skills simultaneously.

Immediately on the heels of the release of America’s Languages, ACTFL launched a national campaign, *Lead with Languages*, to build public awareness—particularly among parents and students, as well as among heritage speakers and their families—about the important benefits of learning another language.⁴

With approximately 20 percent of U.S. K–12 students and 7.5 percent of university students enrolled in language courses, we have a long way to go. We are hoping that this campaign, along with the implementation of the recommendations of the AAAS report, will promote a movement in the United States to create a new generation of young people proficient in languages beyond just English.

III. Conclusion

Our national capacity for languages in addition to English is important to the economic and diplomatic future of our country, as the AAAS report points out, but we also know how important it is for our students: Gaining the cognitive, academic, and social benefits of learning another language sets them on a path to personal and professional growth and success.

ACTFL is proud to support efforts to revitalize, maintain, and develop Native American languages.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HALIWA-SAPONI INDIAN TRIBE

Introduction

On behalf of the youth of the Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe, I respectfully submit the following written testimony in response to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Oversight Hearing titled “Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations.” The Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe is located in Hollister, North Carolina, and has over 4,000 enrolled citizens. One of the ancestral languages of the Haliwa-Saponi is Tutelo-Saponi, which we are currently working to awaken from its dormancy within our tribal community.

Current State

Revitalizing Native languages should be one of the highest priorities we have in this country. In countless Native communities across the country, languages are in danger of being lost forever due to lack of youth involvement or interest, lack of programs, or lack of funding for programs and initiatives that will promote, document, and preserve Native languages.

Under the work of Haliwa-Saponi scholar and Historic Legacy Project Coordinator, Dr. Marvin Richardson, Tribal Youth Services Coordinator Sharon Harris Berrun, and several other community members, the Haliwa-Saponi community has seen the Tutelo-Saponi language come into use more and more over the years. As a result of the increased use of our language, there has been an enhanced sense of self-worth and pride in our community among those that are embracing language revitalization. There has been a renewed interest in other citizens of our tribal community as well. This has been a tremendous opportunity to strengthen community ties and has deepened our collective connection to who we are as Indigenous people.

Recommendations

Tribal and community leaders of the Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe recognize that youth language learning is key to ensuring the continuation of our Native tongue. Consistently finding new and creative ways to engage and keep our youth involved is one tactic that will help preserve not just our language, but countless other languages that are subject to being lost. It is also critical that more resources be allocated to increase capacity and support around Native language preservation and teaching. The following list outlines brief recommendations for supporting tribes’ language revitalization and preservation efforts.

1. Invest in diverse tribal programs and services that teach, or at minimum incorporate Native languages throughout their curricula.
2. Support initiatives that make it possible for Native students to fulfill their public schools’ language requirements by studying their own indigenous languages, either in school or in the community. School systems should work hand-in-hand with tribes to establish and maintain mutually acceptable standards of indigenous language proficiency.

⁴ACTFL, *Lead with Languages*, LeadWithLanguages.org, (accessed August 22, 2018).

3. Increase local tribal capacity for language preservation by investing in scholars from the community who wish to learn and teach Indigenous languages. This includes, but is not limited to allocating funding for language teachers and researchers, as well as the establishment of apprenticeships to ensure intergenerational transference of language and cultural knowledge.
4. Support the increase of broadband access in rural or remote tribal communities so that language learning can be digitized, made more accessible, and shared virtually to expand reach.

Below are testimonies from Haliwa-Saponi youth who have taken initiative and demonstrated commitment to learning the language by taking advantage of one of more community programs that offer Tutelo language instruction.

“Learning my language means very much to me. It means carrying on the flame instead of letting it die out. I want to learn the language so that I can teach my children and hopefully, they will teach their children. I recognize the importance of continuing traditions, and I want to make sure that I do my part in ensuring that that happens.”—Cheyenne Daniel

“Learning my language means everything to me, the language is what makes a tribe or nation stand out in society. It is so easy in this day and time to not care about it, because you don’t hear a lot of people speaking it [in the Hollister community]. But, I believe that is going to change as time goes on because people like myself are realizing every day that the language is just as important as the dances, songs, and history of our people. As a result of this language revival that is happening in Native communities, you have people bringing the language back by incorporating it into our schools, different kinds of music, plays, and everyday situations. I hope it continues because now is the time, more than ever for us to re embrace our language and let the world know that we are still here and we will not be defeated.”—Jamie Silver

“I am so excited to be learning our language. It brings so much joy to my heart to see that our language is not dead, but being reawakened. If we do not do everything we can to continue learning, it will not be possible for the next generations to truly know who they are and exactly where they come from. I appreciate all of the hard work that is being put into revitalizing our language and I cannot express how grateful I am.” Zianne Richardson, elected Haliwa-Saponi Tribal Princess 2018–2019.

Conclusion

Thank you for your time and we hope that you all will consider the aforementioned recommendations and recognize the power that you all have in influencing the preservation and progression of Native languages across the United States and its territories. The Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe looks forward to working with you to sustain these efforts.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NANCY BARNES, JUNEAU, AK

Nancy Barnes d’ waayu, laxsheeg dpdegu. Tsimshian ada Alutiiq nu. Juneau dil wil dzogu. Wilaayu sm’algyax.

My name is Nancy Barnes, I am of the Eagle moiety. I am Tsimshian and Alutiiq and a sm’algyax learner—the language of the Tsimshian. There are very few sm’algyax language learners today. When the Russians and Americans came to Alaska, my ancestors were whipped for speaking their indigenous languages. The next generation—my mother and father’s generation—were not taught their languages because our grandparents did not want them to go through what they had to endure.

I live in Juneau, Alaska. I am an active member of the Juneau Sm’algyax Learners Group, along with my 19 year old niece I have raised.

We are indeed at a critical point for our Alaska indigenous languages, and all indigenous languages in the United States of America.

We started a Tsimshian talking circle in Juneau in 2003. A group of us would gather at my home, using a talking dictionary and other materials by sm’algyax teacher Donna May Roberts and her late husband Tony Roberts. Donna May came to Juneau in 2002 and taught a week long TPR class—the total physical response method. This was the beginning of our language learning journey. That week-long session was the catalyst for many of us to go on this amazing journey. Not only do we learn our language, we also sing our Tsimshian songs.

Donna May told us a story which her grandmother told her. She said:

My grandmother said there is a word in sm'alg yax called magwa'ala. It means deep winter—the time when food is scarce and it is difficult to get anything to survive. She cautioned us that our languages are in a state of magwa'ala now. No matter how much we prepare for this type of winter, it may not be enough to survive. At the end, she came close to us and in a whisper said, “I challenge you. Our language is in a state of magwa'ala now. What will you do?”

We were so taken with her words, and sense of urgency.

Today, a group of us practice language every Saturday. Sm'alg yax teacher Terri Burr with 92 year old elder John Reece has been teaching us via google hangout.

There are only six fluent speakers in Sm'alg yax in Alaska. However, there are amazing efforts by the Haayk Foundation and others in Metlakatla; David A. Boxley, Terri Burr in Ketchikan, Marcella Asicksik in Anchorage, and Dr. Mique'l Dangel and others in British Columbia.

I respectfully urge our elected officials to work together with our indigenous organizations to initiate and strengthen, as appropriate, legislative and policy measures that prioritize the survival and continued use of Alaska Native languages. If any members of the Committee on Indian Affairs (or their staff) would like to watch our Saturday language learning gatherings, we'd be happy to arrange it via google hangout. Please feel free to email or call me if I can provide further information.

T'oyaxsut Nuusum.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR LANGUAGES AND
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS) is honored to submit this testimony for the written record to the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, for the Oversight Hearing on “Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations.” Comprising more than 125 professional associations, research institutes, and companies in languages, NCLIS provides this testimony in order to highlight the fundamental relationship between biliteracy and bilingualism at the individual level, on the one hand, and the cultural, linguistic, and human capital gained by communities when that biliteracy and bilingualism is fostered and encouraged. In the context of our Native American, Alaska Native, and Hawai'iian Languages, the Native American Languages Act of 1990 (P.L. 101–107), the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006 (P.L. 109–384), and § 6133 of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–95) represent initial and long overdue steps to reverse the deliberate erasure of the linguistic identity of more than 5.2 million Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Hawai'ians.

The Commission on Language Learning of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in responding to a bicameral and bipartisan request from the Congress, commissioned several white papers detailing the impact of languages on the national interest as of 2015. Of these, “Language and Productivity for All Americans” summarizes more than 25 years of research on the impact of bilingualism and biliteracy for the individual. Drawing on research in cognitive sciences, neuroscience, psychology, labor economics, education, and other fields, the authors make clear that the bilingual individual in America enjoys lifelong cognitive, educational, and employment benefits, regardless of the language.

For the community, developing this at the individual level requires resources beyond simple willpower and persistence. While communities across the country, from Hilo to Bethel, Alaska to Santa Clarita, New Mexico, to Mashpee, Massachusetts, and many more, have taken the fate of their languages into their own hands, the resources available relative to task of revitalization are meager. Moreover, the Every Student Succeeds Act reinforces artificial barriers to the transmission and growth of Native American, Alaska Native, and Hawai'iian Languages, in particular with respect to requirements for standardized testing and teacher qualification, which are inappropriate for these languages.

The Congress should reauthorize the Esther Martinez Act, and should fund it fully; additional investments need to occur in Title VI of ESSA and in the Native American Languages Act. Finally, Congress must address the inherent conflict between Title I of ESSA and the Native American Languages Act, to allow standardized assessments in the languages of Native American, Alaska Native, and Hawai'iian schools.

Sources:

Kroll, J., and Dussiais, P. 2015. "Language and Productivity for All Americans." Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, https://www.amacad.org/multimedia/pdfs/KrollDussias_April%2015.pdf, last accessed.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. JOLENE BOWMAN, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (NIEA)

Dear Chairman Hoeven:

On behalf of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), I respectfully submit the following written comments in response to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs' oversight hearing titled "Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations." NIEA is the nation's largest and most inclusive organization advocating for comprehensive culture-based educational opportunities for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

Federal Trust Responsibility

Congress has a federal trust responsibility for the education of Native students. Established through treaties, federal law, and U.S. Supreme Court decisions, the federal government's trust responsibility to tribes includes the obligation to provide parity in access and equal resources to all American Indian and Alaska Native students, regardless of where they attend school. Resources and funding to preserve and revitalize Native languages are a critical part of the federal trust responsibility, an obligation shared between the Congress and the Administration for federally-recognized tribes.

Native Languages And Culture-Based Education

Native languages are at the heart of Native identity, interwoven into ceremony, tradition, and history of tribes and Native communities. When Native languages are integrated into and celebrated in the classroom, Native students are more likely to be engaged and succeed. Language preservation and revitalization programs are critical to ensuring that Native students have equitable access to culturally relevant educational opportunities.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 74 Native languages are on track to disappear within the next decade, and only 20 Native languages will be spoken by 2050 without immediate action. Tribes and Native communities are innovating to develop unique schools that pass Native languages to future generations through a rigorous academic program. However, resources and funding for such programs remain a challenge for many communities. Congress should strengthen and expand resources to support Native language revitalization, maintenance, and preservation to ensure equity in education for Native students.

Recommendations

Native languages and culturally responsive education are critical to student achievement and success in Native communities. NIEA submits the following recommendations to strengthen and expand federal resources and funding that support the preservation and revitalization of Native languages across the country.

- *Reauthorize the Esther Martinez Native American Language Preservation Act*—Passed in the Senate as S. 254, the Esther Martinez Native American Preservation Act reauthorizes 2006 legislation that funds language immersion and restoration programs for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students. Funding provided under this Act has supported the development of tribal curricula, language assessments, and immersion programs to support and revive Native languages in schools across the country. Though this legislation passed the Senate on November 29, 2017, a House companion bill has remained in the House Committee on Education and the Workforce since February with little movement. NIEA recommends that congressional leaders work to pass this critical legislation before the November 6 elections.
- *Support Assessments in the Native Language of Instruction*—Assessments are critical to understanding students' learning, growth and achievement. However, state and federal agencies have struggled to construct testing mechanisms that appropriately assess students in the Native language of instruction due to the number of unique Native languages and lack of technical expertise in state and federal agencies and outside of tribal communities. Tribes must have the flexibility to assess student learning and growth and ensure that Native students have access to excellent education opportunities. Consistent with the federal

trust responsibility, deference on Native language assessments should be provided to tribes that operate Native immersion schools across the country.

- *Expand Pathways for Native Language Teacher Recruitment and Retention, including Native Teacher Preparation Programs*—Despite tribal innovation and development, schools and immersion programs continue to face an ongoing shortage of culturally responsive educators that are fluent in Native languages. Federal support to address teacher shortages in Native communities through legislation such as the Native Educator Support and Training Act (S. 458) is critical to ensuring that Native students have access to highly-qualified teachers. However, immersion schools and programs require educators with specialized knowledge and fluency in Native languages. Some tribal communities have addressed shortages by creating teacher training and professional development programs that recruit fluent language speakers or train educators to speak Native languages. In order to revitalize Native languages, tribes must be able to certify teachers to ensure that Native students in immersion schools have access to equitable opportunities.
- *Replicate and Expand Native Language Schools*—Schools that teach students through the medium of language immersion are critical to revitalizing Native languages for future generations. Through language immersion, Native students build academic and cognitive skills for future success in a positive learning environment where they can thrive. Due to limited funding and resources, some tribes and Native communities lack the resources to replicate and expand successful models for language immersion and revitalization. Tribes and Native communities must have access to the tools necessary to exercise sovereignty in education through high-quality Native language schools and programs.
- *Increase Appropriations for Native Language Preservation and Revitalization*—Tribes must have access to the resources and funding necessary to exercise tribal sovereignty to support Native language immersion schools and provide Native students access to excellent culture-based education options. Federal grants through the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) and the Department of Education (Department), provide financial support for tribes to support Native students through language immersion. NIEA recommends that Congress increase appropriations for Native language preservation programs at ANA to \$14 million and National Activities, including Native language programs, at the Department to \$10 million in FY 2019.

Conclusion

Schools and programs that teach Native languages have the potential to ensure that Native students thrive. Tribes and tribal organizations must have access to the tools and resources to build and strengthen programs that revitalize Native languages for generations to come. NIEA looks forward to working with you to ensure equity in education for the only students that the Federal Government has a direct responsibility to educate—Native students.

Thank you for considering these comments for the record.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NORVIN RICHARDS, MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS AND PHILOSOPHY

To whom it may concern:

I have been involved in projects intended to help with maintenance and revival of indigenous languages of this country since 1999, when I began working with the Wampanoag people of eastern Massachusetts on their language revival program (a program which was started, and is still headed, by Jessie Littledoe Baird, who is scheduled to speak to you today). My department now has a Master's program intended specifically for members of indigenous communities who seek linguistic training that will be useful for them in working to ensure the survival of their languages.

This kind of work represents our best hope, I think, of rescuing the languages of this country from a currently ongoing wave of mass linguistic extinction. Most of the world's languages are endangered; at least half of them are expected to die in this century. All of the indigenous languages of this country are among the endangered majority; very few of them, for example, are being learned by children in the home.

Members of the communities affected by language endangerment can explain to you more eloquently than I can what the survival of their language means to them, and I hope you will have a chance today to hear them do so. One refrain I often

hear, as I work with these communities, is that by making it possible for young people to study their ancestral languages in schools, we allow them to see their languages and cultures, not as outdated relics to be discussed briefly in the early chapters of history books, but as living traditions in which they can participate themselves, maintaining their vitality into the foreseeable future. For young Native Americans, who must grapple with the many social and political problems that their communities face, that's a very powerful message, sometimes a life-saving one.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PAUL V. KROSKRITY, PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY;
PROFESSOR AND CHAIR, AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES, UCLA

I write to you as someone with a career long interest in the study, documentation and revitalization of Native American Languages. This academic year (2018–2019) will be my 40th year at UCLA where I have continuously researched, advised, and worked with students and Native American communities on issues of language documentation and revitalization. The actual beginning of my research with Native American Languages goes back another six years to when I was a graduate student in Anthropology at Indiana University and doing dissertation research on Tewa, as spoken on First Mesa of the Hopi Reservation, NE Arizona (aka Arizona Tewa, aka Village of Tewa). I am still working with that community 46 years later and developing a practical dictionary with them that will both preserve linguistic knowledge of the culture and the immediate environment but also provide a basis for Tewa language instruction. It is a fascinating community with great pride in its language. Like many Pueblo groups, the ancestors of the Tewa were living along the Rio Grande River at the time of Spanish invasion and colonization. They resisted Spanish oppression and participated in two Pueblo Revolts in 1680 and 1696. After the second Revolt, they left the area and moved, at the invitation of Hopis, to their lands in what is today Northern Arizona. Unlike nearly 100 other groups who also left their homelands in the wake of these revolts, the Tewa are the only one of these groups that continued to speak their heritage language—even under conditions that normally produce linguistic assimilation. My 1993 book, *Language, History, and Identity*, tells their story and helps us to understand how intertwined language and cultural identity are for this group and for just about all Native American groups. While the Village of Tewa has endured contact with Spanish and Hopi, contact with English has greatly undermined its use in Tewa homes where televisions broadcast only in English. No one in this community wants to remove English, they merely want to make sure that Tewa continues to have a place in community affairs, village and family life, and in connections to the pride of maintaining their heritage language.

As a scholar and mentor to many students of language revitalization, I know that the statements about the importance of Native American languages that were included in the original Native American Languages Act of 1990. Maintaining languages is very important for cultural continuity, the mental health and well-being of Indian youth, and for enabling Native American students to develop a positive cultural identity. Researchers have proven this time and time again. Maintaining these heritage languages does not compete with English. All Tewa youth know they need English proficiency to navigate their social worlds. But only the Tewa language allows them to also fully participate in their own culture, too.

In addition to long-term work with the Tewa over decades and also in addition to advising some 20 additional tribes about documentation and revitalization, I have also worked for a very long time with the Western Mono communities of North Fork and Auberry in Central California. This work has resulted in a practical dictionary of that language which my UCLA team along with more than 12 Mono people. The tribe now posts an on-line version of that dictionary for tribal members to use [<http://northforkrancheria-nsn.gov/home/showdocument?id=29>]. In another collaborative project, I worked with elder Rosalie Bethel to produce a CD-ROM (Taitaduhaan: Western Mono Ways of Speaking) that contains story-telling performances and a prayer which displays how one of the last highly fluent speakers uses her language to convey culturally important narratives. Many Western Mono use these materials in adult-ed courses and in grammar school lesson plans designed to introduce aspects of the language but many more materials are needed. As my Mono co-author Rosalie Bethel would say, “We need the language to know who we are.”

I hope you are aware that most Native American languages are not prospering. Partially in response to U.S. policies that were needlessly oppressive and provided little room for possible bilingual adaptations, language shift to English is more the rule than the exception. Like small languages throughout the world, experts like

myself will justifiably predict that without additional sustained support more than 50 percent of the existing languages will cease to be spoken at all. This would compound a disaster into a catastrophe since only half of the Native American Languages that were spoken in the 19th C. are alive today. These numbers help me make a case for the gravity of the current situation.

But more important is the human cost of not maintaining, documenting, revitalizing. Native groups associate their language with healing, religion, spirituality, morality, proper world view, and cultural identity. Given the historical abuse of US policy, it would be more than fitting to provide as much funding and support as possible. Failure to do so will surely have an impact on future generations. For those of you who are not speakers of a threatened language, I ask you what would the world be like if no one spoke your language anymore. Also for those of you who make comparison to the linguistic situation of immigrant groups who lose their heritage languages to a national language, please remember that there is no other place that Native Americans can go to, like contemporary European, African, or Asian countries, where they can find a place where their language is still spoken. Native American languages are from here-they preexisted the U.S. and our policies should do much more than symbolically honor them and their continuing importance not just to their own communities but to us all. We are indeed all richer for these languages to be known and used.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PAULA SAM, ENROLLED MEMBER, NORTHERN PAIUTE
(GIDUTIKAD BAND) OF THE FORT BIDWELL RESERVATION

My name is Paula Sam. I am submitting this testimony as an enrolled member of the Northern Paiute (Gidutikad Band) of the Fort Bidwell Reservation in Northern California.

I grew up in Fort Bidwell as a child, as my mother was enrolled here. My father was also Paiute, enrolled with the Agai Panina Ticutta Paiute of Summit Lake Nevada.

I grew up with the Northern Paiute language as a child, as my parents always spoke the language daily. So, I grew up understanding the Paiute Language. Although of different bands, the dialect was similar.

When I turned 18 years old, I was sent away to Los Angeles on the relocation program. I left the reservation at that time and worked at various jobs since 1968 through 2011. I finally retired from my job after 25 years with Southern California Edison Utility Company, located in California.

The drive to visit my mom was a long one, approximately 13 hours. So I did not get to see her too often.

My major problem is that I still understand the Paiute language I grew up with, but I am unable to speak the language. At this time, I am 68 years old. We have only two elders from our reservation that actually speak our Paiute language, one who is 83 years old and the other is 85 plus years. After they are no longer here, the language will probably be forgotten.

This is my reason for writing this letter to encourage the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs to stress how important it is to preserve tribal languages. Please present this information and let them know of this huge dilemma.

For me it was survival for me to leave the reservation at that time, I paid that cost as I lost a lot of culture, language, and history when making the decision to leave the reservation.

Thank you for your attention on this important matter of revitalizing tribal languages.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RAINA HEATON, PH.D., LINGUISTICS, ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR OF NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES; ASSISTANT CURATOR OF NATIVE
AMERICAN LANGUAGES, SAM NOBLE OKLAHOMA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

I am Dr. Raina Heaton, an Assistant Professor of Native American Studies at the University of Oklahoma, and the curator of the Native American Languages collection at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. I am a professional linguist who works with Native American communities to document, describe, and revitalize their languages.

I am submitting testimony in support of providing funding and other resources to help strengthen Native American languages. Recent data from the Catalogue of Endangered Languages demonstrates that ALL of the indigenous languages of North America are endangered (i.e. none of them are "safe"), and the proportion of

critically and severely endangered languages in North America (102/207, or 49.3 percent) greatly exceeds the ratio world-wide (806/3411, or 23.6 percent). Mainly due to Indian removal policies, Oklahoma has the greatest concentration of indigenous languages still being spoken anywhere in the United States. Many of these languages have only a handful of speakers left, which led Oklahoma to be designated a “hotspot” for language endangerment on a global scale:<https://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/langhotspots/hotspots/SOK/index.html>.

Tribes are doing everything they can to record and pass on the knowledge of these elders before it is too late, but language revitalization is a long road (e.g. Maori language revitalization, often touted as a successful model, started ca. 1982 and continues to this day), and it takes continuous funding and support to build successful programs. While ANA grants and other such programs provide vital support for language revitalization, this type of short-term funding leaves tribes that are unable to self-fund these programs after they are started without anywhere to turn. Evidence shows that effective language revitalization programs can be quite costly: Cherokee Nation for example not only runs immersion schools, but also had to create teacher training certification programs to support those schools. Okura (2017) surveyed different language nests and found that on average they require at least \$10,000 annually to run, and that is for a fairly small number of students per nest. The First Peoples’ Cultural Council provides grants for Master-Apprentice pairs which are approximately \$15,000 for every 300 hours of instruction. While this information is heartening in that \$10,000 a year is not a huge amount of money, it is the security in having those funds available year after year that is necessary, and the lack of which is a leading cause of programs having to shut down.

Support can also take the form of forums where language revitalization practitioners can get together and share strategies. Institutes and conferences do exist and are incredibly beneficial, but it would also be beneficial to make available small recurrent grants for local conferences and training (e.g. the Dhegiha language group that meets annually). This is something I have heard requested many times here in Oklahoma.

Finally, as an archiving professional at a public institution, one of the main services we provide to tribes is digitization and preservation of their materials. It is abundantly clear that there are more recordings and materials that need to be digitized and preserved than we are able to handle (or that we are allowed to use state funds to process, if the tribes do not want to make those recordings publicly available), and most tribes do not have archives capable of this either. Please continue to support those tribal archive grants that exist, and consider strategic initiatives to digitize the materials in people’s basements and attics before it is too late. Consider that tying preservation to access (e.g. as in the NEH Humanities Collections and Reference Resources solicitation) in this particular context of Native people who have had their intellectual property rights abused may well cause the disappearance of the resources we are trying to protect.

JOINT PREPARED STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS H. WHALEN, CHAIR/BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ENDANGERED LANGUAGE FUND; MARGARET P. MOSS, INCOMING DIRECTOR, FIRST NATIONS HOUSE OF LEARNING, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA; AND DARYL BALDWIN, DIRECTOR, MYAAMIA CENTER, MIAMI UNIVERSITY (OHIO)

Dear Senators,

We strongly support the maintenance and revitalization of Native languages in the United States. We would like to point out that such efforts have direct health benefits, as detailed in our published article (Whalen, D. H., Moss, M. P., & Baldwin, D. (2016). Healing through language: Positive physical health effects of indigenous language use [version 1; referees: awaiting peer review]. *F1000Research*, 5(852). doi:10.12688/f1000research.8656.1). The benefits are wide-ranging, including reduction in diabetes, suicide, and smoking, as well as improvements in general well-being and educational outcomes. Such improvements are essential for Native Americans, who have some of the worst health outcomes in the country, and language programs are an efficient way of improving those outcomes.

Please support the maintenance and revitalization of Native languages by continuing current efforts and providing for increased support in the future.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TERRI BURR, AHL’LIDA AW LANGUAGE FACILITATOR, TSIMSHIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

I am Tsimshian from Alaska and work for Ketchikan Indian Community as a Tsimshian Language Facilitator. I have been learning and teaching our Shm’algayack

language for nine years. Because our people suffer from historic trauma, it is extremely difficult to restore language use. Our people require time to manage feelings and values after two hundred years of interference from Anglo influence. The few fluent speaking Elders who are left are not professionally trained instructors. Our population is left to rediscover ways of learning that respect who we are as Native Americans. There is great value in all Native American languages. We are making measurable progress. This work has to be conducted carefully. It will take time to do it right. Please continue to support all revitalizations efforts nationwide. Do what you can to remove any competitive models in funding. In these final efforts, we should not have to compete against one another. All tribes need each other and need to be working together, not competing against each other for federal funding. Please ensure funding goes only to IRS's and not "for-profit" businesses.

Sha aam dza waan

(May Everyone Speak well of your Name),

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SANDRA KOWALSKI, DIRECTOR OF INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS,
OFFICE OF RURAL, COMMUNITY AND NATIVE EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA
FAIRBANKS

Chairman Hoeven, Vice Chairman Udall, and Honorable Members of the Committee thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony following the hearing on "Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations" held on August 22, 2018. As I am certain you have been learning from recent testimony, there is a great deal of positive synergy in the work of revitalizing Indigenous languages. Recent developments in Alaska have been pivotal, and I would like to share those with you.

I am the Director of Indigenous Programs at the Office of Rural, Community and Native Education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I am Iñupiaq, and I learned my language in the 1980s through the Alaska Native Language Program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I became a teacher, and later a school administrator in Kotzebue and Fairbanks.

My most important work during my career was language revitalization work done through my tribe, the Native Village of Kotzebue. I am one of a group of community members that started Nikaitchuat Iisagviat, an Iñupiaq language immersion school for preschool through early elementary in Qikiqtagruk (Kotzebue) in 1998. Next week, I travel to my home community to help celebrate the twentieth year for Nikaitchuat Iisagviat. People from across Alaska are expected to attend, including Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott, as my home community celebrates twenty years of effort and commitment to our young children and community.

Before I share about recent efforts, it is important to understand the vast challenges Alaska Native language revitalization efforts face. There are twenty distinct and formally recognized Alaska Native languages that are in various states of decline. Decades of colonialism and recent globalization have created chasms between older first language speakers and younger generations. Western societal pressures resulting from this colonialism and globalization continue to contribute to the low success rates of Alaska Native students in the K–12 and university settings.

Despite these challenges, however, Alaska is witnessing a renaissance. Alaskan Native individuals whose first language is English have, through immersion programs, master-apprentice partnerships, and some working individually, become proficient in their own Alaska Native language. These second language speakers' stories have inspired interest and demand for opportunities for other Alaska Natives to learn to speak their own language at home and throughout the community.

There have also been several significant and broadly impacting milestones that support this resurgence. In January 2018, the Alaska Native Language Preservation & Advisory Council (ANLPAC) presented its biennial report to the Governor of Alaska, the Alaska State Legislature, and the people of Alaska. Key themes in this 2018 Report included self-determination of Alaska Native peoples shaping the future survival of their own languages and cultural justice in reclaiming their traditional and cultural forms of practice—themes that resonate with Alaskans throughout the state.

The report also called for state-level, elected officials to declare a linguistic emergency for Alaska's Native languages. Indigenous languages in Alaska are predicted to become extinct or dormant by the end of this century without aggressive intervention.

In March 2018, the Alaska Legislature passed a resolution based on recommendations from the 2018 ANLPAC Biennial Report. The resolution urged the Governor of Alaska to issue an administrative order recognizing a linguistic emergency. It also

called for the legislature, state agencies and Alaska Native groups to work actively to ensure the survival and use of all twenty of Alaska's Indigenous languages.

In response to the ANLPAC recommendations, the surge in public interest, and to support key efforts already underway throughout Alaska, the Office of Rural Community and Native Education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks hosted the Alaska Native Language Revitalization Institute (ANLRI) in May 2018. Approximately 150 language learners and instructors, elders and first-language speakers attended. In hosting this institute, UAF partnered with faculty from Ha Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language. Language revitalization experts William Pila Wilson, Keiki Kawai'ae'a, and Larry Kimura presented and collaborated with ten Indigenous language teams including Yup'ik, Iñupiaq, Tlingit, Haida, Gwich'in, Dena'ina, Ahtna, Sugpiaq/Alutiiq, Deg Xinag, and Denaakke'e.

Language teams at the ANLRI developed strategies and initiatives to further their own language's revitalization efforts, from dictionary development and documentation to planning for immersion schools for youth learning and master-apprenticeships to support adult learning. One realization of ANLRI participants was the need for an Indigenous teacher education and preparation program for Alaska Natives who return to teach everything from Kindergarten to AP Chemistry. A pathway is needed so that our Alaska Native communities have, for example, a biology teacher who speaks Yup'ik as she teaches about the local ecosystem and is able to ground scientific concepts in the local context. When communities own both the language and the education, Alaskan communities will thrive.

The UAF Office of Rural, Community and Native Education oversees the College of Rural and Community Development which provides academic and vocational education across nearly two-thirds of the state of Alaska, including 160 Alaska Native and rural communities. The College of Rural and Community Development is a network of rural campuses and learning centers that are the critical link between the University of Alaska Fairbanks and the communities that UAF serves, providing place-based education that prepares graduates to fill jobs within home communities. To this end, the UAF Office of Rural, Community and Native Education supports the development of teacher preparation pathways grounded in Indigenous language, knowledge, and values.

UAF will begin to develop a teacher preparation program that provides teachers who are fluent in their own Alaska Native language and teach culturally relevant concepts, working with Alaska Native language and culture teaching experts, and partnering with the Ha Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language. Additionally, in collaboration with the UAF School of Education, the UAF Alaska Native Language Program, and the Rural Alaska Honors Institute (a program within the College of Rural and Community Development) is developing a summer college preparation and learning opportunity for high school students interested in attending UAF to learn their Alaska Native language through while preparing to become a teacher.

Any effort to have an impact across all twenty Alaskan Native languages must include an effort to support Alaska's diversity in Native languages and their unique needs. Support to build a comprehensive language revitalization center that pulls together elders and experts in the field, community language advocates, learners, and teachers would bolster and maintain the work being done across the state. As we learned this past May during the Alaska Native Language Revitalization Institute, partnerships such as the one we have with the Ha Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language are key to this work. Partnerships for work across all tribes and communities would provide resources and leverage for language revitalization.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM H. WILSON, PH.D.

My Background

My name is Dr. William H. Wilson. My Ph.D. is in Linguistics. I am the founding full professor of what is now the Hawai'i State Hawaiian Language College, Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikolani College of Hawaiian Language (KHUOK) located within the University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) on the most rural of the Hawaiian Islands, Hawai'i. Although we began over forty years ago with a small set of Hawaiian language classes in the Foreign Languages Department of UH Hilo, we have grown to become the sole college in the United States operated and administered primarily through a Native American language. Our array of undergraduate and graduate courses in and through Hawaiian is the most developed program in a Native American language in the United States. Besides undergraduate certificates and the baccalaureate degree taught through Hawaiian, we have a graduate level teaching cer-

tificate taught through Hawaiian, two masters, and the doctorate taught through Hawaiian. In addition we have outreach degree opportunities taught through English for speakers of other indigenous languages, including the doctorate.

I am also a founding board member of the non-profit 'Aha Punana Leo, Inc., the oldest Native American language nest organization in the United States. The 'Aha Punana Leo has been the key factor in the revitalization of Hawaiian among children and the movement of Hawaiian language medium education into public and charter school education through to grade 12 and indeed the growth of university Hawaiian language classes to point of developing a full college operated and administered primarily through Hawaiian. The 'Aha Punana Leo operates twelve language nests in the state of Hawai'i, provides distance education in Hawaiian and provides facilities for follow-up charter/public school Hawaiian language medium sites. Our small group of founders began the organization in 1983.

Closely associated with the above two responsibilities is my position as a founder of the preschool to grade 12 (P-12) total Hawaiian language medium demonstration laboratory school of KHUOK, called Ke Kula 'O Nawahiokalani'opu'u (Nawahi). Nawahi is the largest Native American language medium/immersion school in the United States with 531 students enrolled and over 70 in Punana Leo early education programming colocated with them. Nawahi is recognized in Hawai'i state law as the laboratory school of KHUOK and demonstrates operation using different models of administration including charter, off-campus stream of a standard public school, satellite campuses in small communities, and public-private school partnering.

In recent years I have become the Linguist advisor for the Coalition of Native American Language Schools (the Coalition), a mutual help-oriented confederation of schools and programs taught through a variety of Native American languages in seventeen states. The National Coalition is loosely organized with the basic requirement for participation the establishment of a program or school taught primarily, that is over 50 percent, and preferably totally, through a Native American language. The Coalition grew out of the large number of visitors to the Consortium of the 'Aha Punana Leo, Nawahi, and KHUOK all located close together in Hilo.

My wife, Dr. Kauano'e Kamana, and myself, both second language speakers of Hawaiian, raised our own two children speaking only Hawaiian in the home at a time when only elders born before 1920 spoke Hawaiian in our community. When our children were born in the early 1980s, no other children in our community were being raised totally through Hawaiian. Our children became the core of the first tiny group of students in the Punana Leo O Hilo and then what eventually became Nawahi. Both graduated from Nawahi and enrolled in an English medium university program—one in Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and the other at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. Both graduated and went on to successful careers and continue to use Hawaiian as the language of family communication with us and each other as well as with other Hawaiian speakers. They are part of a considerable number of Hawaiian speaking graduates moving the language forward.

Although holding a degree in linguistics, I see myself as primarily a language teacher and language revitalization program developer. I have taught at all levels of Hawaiian language medium education, including the preschool, elementary, intermediate, high school, undergraduate, masters, teacher education, and doctoral levels. I have taught graduate students from American Indian, Alaska Native and Pacific Islander communities as well as Native Hawaiians.

Main Points Of This Testimony

Given below are some key points relative to the benefits and needs of Native American language medium education. In the ESSA Act, Sec. 6005 "Report on Native American Language Medium Education" Congress required that the US Department of Education prepare a detailed report on Native American language medium education. The report was to be completed within 18 months of passage of the Act and then sent to Congress. The deadline for this report is long overdue as ESSA was signed on December 10, 2015. I would be happy to contribute more detailed information to such a report and urge the Senate Indian Affairs Committee to assure that ESSA Sec. 6005 is carried out.

Positive Academic Outcomes

Education delivered through the medium of indigenous languages as provided for under NALA produces academic outcomes superior to that of mainstream English medium education for Native students. Those positive academic outcomes are best seen in the high school graduation and college going rates of students who have attended schooling primarily through a Native American language. Reports of this sort of success can be found throughout the Native communities where this model

of schooling has been established long enough to have students reach the age of high school graduation.

The most positive results are being produced when the Native American language is used the most. Optimal programming and demonstrated best practice has all instruction through the indigenous language with English taught as a course. Ideally such best practice continues through to the end of high school. At present, however, Hawai'i is the sole state where Native American language medium education continues through high school with Nawahi being an example of a full preschool to grade 12 site. The highest grades reached elsewhere have been in intermediate school in a few states such as Alaska, Wisconsin and Oklahoma. Most programs are still confined to elementary school. Support is needed nationally to assist in expansion into intermediate school and high school.

The full preschool to grade 12 model used at Nawahi is based on the most successful models used for very small European languages such as Sami and Faroese. Using this model Nawahi has never had a drop out since its first class which graduated in 1999. Nawahi has had a college going rate immediately out of high school of 85 percent for a student body at over 95 percent Native Hawaiian ancestry and approximately 70 percent eligible for free and reduced lunch. Crucially important for language revitalization, a full preschool to grade 12 program produces the highest levels of Native American language proficiency.

Positive English Outcomes

International research has shown immersion to provide students with English outcomes equal to, or better than, those of peers in English medium schools upon high school graduation. Furthermore, speakers of small languages in a community learn the largest language used in the community through interaction with the larger community. With globalization and the spread of English through mass media, the Internet and travel, even education through small national languages such as Danish and Finnish with English taught as a course produces English language results by high school graduation that allow enrollment in American universities on par with American students graduating from English medium high schools.

Nawahi has demonstrated now for two decades that positive English results are produced when a Native American language is used as the sole language of education and indeed school operations through to grade 12. The home languages of Nawahi students include Hawaiian for approximately 33 percent and Hawai'i Creole English for the majority of the remaining students, but all Nawahi students have access to the media through standard English on a level much higher than that available to high performing English learners in Denmark and Finland. Similar and even higher access to standard English is typical of contemporary Native American communities.

At Nawahi English is taught on a European model where it is first taught as a course in grade 5 and remains solely a course through to grade 12. By high school students use their skills in English to research papers for other subjects using that information to write papers in Hawaiian on social science, science, etc. Fears of mainstream educators that Nawahi students would not learn oral and written English have been proven unfounded. Indeed, a former Nawahi student works at Oxford University in England.

Effect Of High Multilingualism On Brain Development

In recent years the positive effect of high bilingualism and biliteracy on cognitive development has become more widely known. It is extremely difficult to produce the level of bilingualism necessary to gain that cognitive advantage through standard second language programming in an English medium school. However, high use of the indigenous language as the medium of education as in the Native American language medium model used at Nawahi assures such high levels of bilingualism and the resulting cognitive advantages. Those cognitive advantages affect academic outcomes in a wide variety of academic fields and also make learning additional languages easier for students enrolled in schools taught primarily through a native American language. At Nawahi all lower elementary school students also study Latin, a language important in developing international scientific vocabulary, and all upper elementary and intermediate school students study Chinese, an important language for business in a globalized world.

Placing the Native American language is the position of being the primary language of the school also affirms Native sovereignty and cultural continuation in the Native homeland accordance with NALA.

Social And Community Outcomes

Native American language and cultural revitalization as produced in Native American language medium education is having highly beneficial impacts on what

have been some of the most difficult problems in Native communities. Reductions in suicide rates, drug and alcohol dependencies and youth delinquency are occurring in Native communities in conjunction with the development of Native American language medium schools and programs. The reason for this is that these schools demonstrate through their very use of Native American languages, values and cultural practices as primary in their operations that Native identity, are not only important, but can be the foundation upon which positive young lives can be built for the future. This lived message contrasts with historical practices where Native peoples, languages, values, and cultures were forcibly denigrated in boarding schools and other repressive actions.

That Native American languages, cultures and values are inferior continues as an implicit message in mainstream education taught through a non-Native American language English, with teacher qualifications, materials and assessments that all emerge from a non-Native American context. Typically in such mainstream English medium education the majority of administrators and teachers are imported from elsewhere and not only lack a deep understanding of the traditional language and culture of the community, but even lack understanding of daily contemporary Native life in the community.

By way of contrast, the most successful Native American language medium education programs are initiated, developed and largely lead by local Native community language revitalization non-profit organizations working in conjunction with local BIE, public, charter or private schools. Teachers are from the local community or affiliated communities with a related language and culture. This sort of structure used in Native American language medium education turns the historic mainstream messaging of Native identity as inferior upside down and demonstrates the value of Native American identity for contemporary life.

Developing Teachers For Native American Language Schooling

Teachers are the most important resource for any school or program. For Native American language medium education this means teachers fully proficient and literate in the Native American language medium of education. Proficiency in the language of instruction is more important than a teaching certificate or a degree in a particular content area. Illustrative of this is the successes of home schooling, where a considerable number of mainstream community parents who have had a minimal background in different academic fields and no teaching certificate have prepared their children academically for enrolling in college. Those homeschooling parents, however, are quite proficient in spoken and written English used to homeschool their children with materials written in English.

Sec. 104 (2) of NALA allows for exceptions to teacher certification requirements in cases of teachers who teach in Native American languages, as in Native American language medium education. However, this provision has not been widely applied for Native American language medium schools. The lack of teachers has hindered the establishment and growth of Native American language medium schools. Attention is needed at the federal Department of Education to Sec. 104 (2) to support Native American language medium education expansion to serve more Native American students.

It is not uncommon for foreign language immersion programs in the United States to import from foreign countries teachers highly proficient and literate in the foreign language of instruction. This is not an option for Native American language medium schools. A number of Native American language schools began with teachers who were individuals born and raised in the school's Native American language during an earlier period when that language was widely spoken in the community. However, such individuals are no longer available in most communities and will become increasingly rare as time progresses. In order to assure teachers for Native American language medium schools there is a severe need for programs that produce high levels of proficiency among young adults aged 18 through 30.

Such programs need to be taught through the language and explicitly point out areas of linguistic structural differences between English and the target Native American language. They also need to include the minimum number of hours recommended by the U.S. Foreign Service Institute to reach S-3 General Proficiency in a language significantly distinct from English. That minimum number of 1,100 hours and more for Native American languages with more challenging structures is more than the standard number of hours in a foreign language required for a foreign language B.A. The only way to reach that number of hours in a university or college setting is to use the target language as the medium of instruction not only for teaching the language and culture, but also for other subjects—that is extending the Native American Language Medium education into tertiary education. The number of hours needed to reach such proficiency can be reduced if a high school Native

American medium education program provides matriculation into such a college level program. The only place where both of these options are occurring is at the Hawai'i state Hawaiian language college, KHUOK, in Hilo. KHUOK has been working with a number of colleges interested in replicating its model.

While tribal colleges and universities are potential sites to replicate the KHUOK model, there are other possible models for reaching the recommended S-3 General Proficiency to become a Native American language medium teacher. The adult Mohawk immersion program developed by Brian Maracle and his team is producing exemplary results using a two year program that focuses solely on developing Mohawk language proficiency. The program is very carefully designed using insights from the linguistic analysis of Mohawk and is producing young adults who can teach in Mohawk language medium schools and also raise their own children as first language Mohawk speakers.

Another model being developed is the training of adult teachers along with the development of a Native American language medium school. That is young adults aspiring to become teachers and staff work with elders in the classroom in operating classes using the language in that environment while being given formal lessons in the linguistic structure of the language by experts within the organization operating the school. This model requires on-site expertise in both the linguistic structure of the language and actual high proficiency in the language. Typically those teaching the after hours classes are extraordinary young adults who pursued the language both through formal linguistic analysis and extensive time with the remaining fluent elder speakers. Such individuals need to be cultivated for the various languages for which Native American language medium programs are being developed. KHUOK provides some of the individuals with that sort of potential with training through its Ph.D. program in language revitalization.

Federal support for innovative methods of developing highly proficient speakers of Native American languages to serve as teachers is a crucial need that should be addressed.

Assessment

Assessment is a major issue for Native American language medium schools. Planned programs have been blocked from initiation by administrators fearful of the effect of such programs on state academic assessments through English. Programs have been moved away from best practices toward mainstream models and dominant use of English through the same fears. Because programs have to start in the early elementary years, the assessments required in the early elementary years are the ones currently having the greatest detrimental affect on the development of high quality Native American language medium schools and programs.

It is inequitable to assess students and teachers in Native American language medium schools through the same assessments used in mainstream English medium schools. I urge that Congress pass provisions that exempt individual grades of Native American Language Schools and Programs from federal requirements for state and other assessments when those grades are taught at 75 percent or higher through one or more Native American languages and when such programs follow a model that has a history of producing high school graduation and college enrollment rates equal to or higher than the state average for Native Americans as defined in ESSA.

NALA itself makes provisions for the use of Native American languages for all purposes (e.g., assessments) in publically supported education by Native American language speaking students (NALA Sec. 105). After passage of NALA in 1990, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act incorporated NALA compliant provisions including provisions relating to assessment, with the current continuation of those provisions including ESSA Sec. 3124 (3) and Sec. 3127 in addition to standard civil rights provisions with ESSA. These provisions have never been fully carried out relative to schools taught through Native American languages.

A stance that mainstream student and teacher assessments are inappropriate for schools taught through Native American languages and cultures in accordance with NALA is a not a rejection of assessments that predict the sorts of positive academic and social outcomes described earlier above. Since the early 2000s a number of members of the National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs have been administrating internal "Curriculum Based Assessments" (CBM) relative to mathematics and reading achievement using their own specific languages and dialects of those languages. Some have also administrated assessments of English reading development within the context of such best practices. Those assessments were developed as part of a project with Dr. William Demmert (Tlingit), a founder of the National Indian Education Association, and the Northwest Educational Laboratory to assure the validity and reliability of those CBM assessments.

Nawahi is one such member of the Coalition that has nearly two decades of CBM assessment results that can be aligned with its exemplary high school graduation and college attendance rates.

Parents of students at Nawahi have a history of boycotting state assessments that are not designed for the unique situation of total Native American language medium education. Attached is an article on those boycotts. Those boycotts resulted in public listing of Nawahi as one of the lowest performing schools in the state in spite of its much higher rate of high school graduation and college attendance than that of the overall state average. Most recently the state of Hawaii has created a Hawaiian language assessment up to grade 4 through Hawaiian based on the Common Core as used for the English medium schools in the state. This has been a very costly enterprise and one for which there remain several additional issues pertinent to Native American language medium programs as a whole.

Among distinctive barriers to producing a Native American language version of a state English medium assessment are: 1) the existence of different dialects of the Native American language used in different schools; 2) lack of a means to differentiate scoring and supports based on whether the Native American language is used in the home or not (parallel to the issue of EL students in English medium schools); 3) alignment with English medium assessments to assure fair scoring when the very nature of the language requires the measurement of different skills; 4) a requirement for parallel use of computers for assessment when Native American language medium schools and programs have little opportunity to use computers in teaching due to minimal amounts of computerized instructional materials in those languages and dialects; 5) lack of an equivalent volume of teaching resources in the Native American language making any comparison between student groups in mainstream English medium and Native American language medium education unequal in terms of educational support, and 6) lack of in-service training of teachers in Native American language medium education strategies equivalent to what is made available by districts and states to English medium teachers, again an area where inequality of support makes comparisons inappropriate.

A final factor relative to producing Native American language medium versions of state assessments is cost. To make an equivalent assessment to an English assessment in a single dialect of a single Native American language is prohibitively expensive. The state of Hawaii spent several million dollars on a Hawaiian set of grade 1 to grade 4 Common Core equivalent assessments as a priority over producing teaching materials through Hawaiian and providing support in the development of teachers. This was done under circumstances where the state department of education feared loss of federal funds due to parent refusals to participate in the mainstream assessment. Its choice to develop assessments in a single dialect of Hawaiian and require that same assessment regardless of dialect and even for English speaking children who had only recently entered the program has created additional problems. The state of Hawai'i still has to deal with issues relative to the higher grades and earlier issues describe relative to determining equivalencies between English and Hawaiian medium assessments.

The CBM assessments used in some schools of the National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs are consistent with NALA and the ESSA and are better aligned with the distinctive goals and outcomes of Native American language medium education. Requiring something along the nature of internally developed economical CBM assessments as best practice while otherwise exempting Native American language medium programs from state testing would be a practical solution to overcoming the assessment barrier.

Cooperation Across Languages And Political Boundaries

The National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs represents an effort on a national basis to provide mutual assistance. There are other more localized efforts between schools using different dialects of the same language on different reservations and sometimes in different states with those efforts often folding into the National Coalition. On a biannual basis KHUOK and Nawahi hold a field study conference that brings members of the Coalition, Native American educators and tribal leaders, interested linguists and indigenous peoples from outside the United States. The National Coalition has held meetings after this conference and then maintains support through electronic means and a facebook page.

The University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF) and KHUOK have worked closely together now for a number of years to serve the growth of Native American language revitalization. Alaska and Hawai'i are also the only states that have recognized their languages as official, with Alaska's 20 distinctive languages as official especially impressive. The Native Alaska Language Center at UAF established in 1972 has the most developed reference resources, e.g., dictionaries, grammars, texts, for

the indigenous languages of any state. UAF has unique experience in serving highly isolated rural communities of Native Americans, while KHUOK has distinctive experience in full development of Native American language medium education and curriculum materials to a high level. At present Alaska is the state with the most languages represented in immersion programs, while Hawai'i has the largest number of students enrolled in Native American language medium/immersion.

Other tertiary and adult proficiency efforts that have worked especially closely with KHUOK include Dine College on Navajo, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, Mohawk adult immersion and Wadookodaading Ojibwe Language Immersion School of Wisconsin and the Lakota Language Initiative of Thunder Valley and Red Cloud School of Pine Ridge South Dakota.

Support for increased cooperation among programs is needed. Most Native American language medium schools are on isolated reservations with little access to information on best practices. They also need access to bringing in national experts to talk to their administrators and school boards regarding these programs and the federal laws that exist in support of them.

Attached to this testimony are a number of articles that can provide further information on points made above.*

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIM THORNES, PH.D., ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF
LINGUISTICS, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Dear Committee,

I am submitting this brief testimony to serve as part of the pending oversight hearing on "Examining Efforts to Maintain and Revitalize Native Languages for Future Generations." I am certain that by now you have received ample testimony regarding the value of these languages to the heritage language communities, the individuals of those communities, and to the world at large, as well as a range of stories of success as a reward for the tremendous commitments and sacrifices of time and money dedicated to the cause.

I would like to suggest, briefly, that whether or not every effort bears fruit, the effort itself may, for many communities and individuals, be fruit enough to satisfy the hunger many feel in the face of a decline in fluent elder speakers and connection to heritage. That is to say, there is an often uncounted value in the hope that accompanies the efforts applied toward being an instrument in the preservation of one's heritage language.

As a linguist with nearly a quarter century of experience working with Native communities on such efforts, I have witnessed the joy shared by people engaged in the process of language revival. When I at first began this work, I did not question the expectations I had for what success in language revitalization meant—a new generation of fluent speakers eventually using the language with their own children at home and in a whole range of contexts in their communities. I admit that, back then, I sometimes felt discouraged and cynical about the lack of what I'd assumed everyone considered "true" progress toward those goals.

Eventually, however, I began to see that perhaps the greatest value was in the effort itself and how the process provided for and supported the well-being of elder speakers and young learners alike, through joint participation in something all valued highly. In one community we formed a group that included community members of all ages. The group developed a very process/effort-based mission "to hear and speak the language for future generations so that the youth never forget where they come from." The mission didn't privilege one skill level over another—one served the mission even by hearing the language, whether one spoke it or not. Soon enough, however, efforts to use the language began to sprout—to bear fruit.

I hope that by my testimony, the committee, in its examination of efforts to maintain and revitalize Native languages for future generations, considers the value of the efforts themselves in helping to strengthen Native families and communities by supporting the identities and the health of Native youth for the future of all.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY MONTLER, DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH PROFESSOR OF
LINGUISTICS, DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION, UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH TEXAS

Dear members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs:

*The information referred to has been retained in the Committee files.

I have been working with various Native American tribes and languages since 1977. I have authored or co-authored several large dictionaries and grammars of various Native American languages. I have recorded and translated hundreds of hours of native tales, history, legends, and songs.

Since 1992, I have worked closely with the Klallam tribes of Washington state. Working with members of the tribes—both native speaking elders and young language teachers, we have developed a writing system for the language, a complete grammar and dictionary—published by the University of Washington Press, a collection of traditional stories and oral history, videos, and a large amount of other language teaching and learning materials. Some of the material can be seen at <http://klallam.montler.net>.

The Klallam community has been very enthusiastic about the revitalization of their language. The revitalization of the language has meant the revitalization of hope and excitement in a personal/ethnic identity that has for generations suffered humiliation and prejudice.

Since 1999 the Klallam language has been taught in the Port Angeles, Washington high school. The language is taught at three levels by a tribal member who has both state and tribal teaching certificates. It is now accepted by Washington universities as fulfilling the “foreign” language requirement.

Since the institution of the high school Klallam language courses, standardized test scores for Native American students at Port Angeles High have increased dramatically. According to the school superintendent, they have increased faster than those of the general student population. As revitalization of the language has progressed, pride and feelings of self-worth have increased, crime-rates, suicide rates have decreased while college entrance rates have increased. Jamie Valadez, the Port Angeles High Klallam language teacher has already testified to congress on this (<https://youtu.be/xuzcrWISwjQ?t=4454>). Language revitalization is valuable, not just for the tribes and tribal members, it is good for society at large.

I could speak at great length about the inherent beauty and complexity of Klallam and the other Native American languages I have studied. Indeed, I do so in my undergraduate and graduate classes. Our understanding of these languages contributes to our unraveling the mysteries of the nature of human language itself.

The work on the Klallam language has been supported by grants from the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and from the Administration for Native Americans. These funds all come from the wise generosity of the American people. These efforts preserve a precious and endangered part of our common American heritage.

When I first visited the Klallam community in 1978, there were over 100 native speakers. The last speaker of Klallam as a first language passed away in 2013. The urgency of the preservation and revitalization of Native American languages is critical.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TYLER A. WHITAKER, LINGUIST, TUNICA-BILOXI TRIBE OF LOUISIANA, LANGUAGE & CULTURE REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (LCRP), CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CENTER (CERC) LIBRARY

Dear Committee on Indian Affairs,

I have been working with the Tunica-Biloxi tribe on their Language and Culture revitalization project for four years. I volunteered every summer while I was in graduate school, and now I work for the tribe full-time.

We work tirelessly to enrich our students' lives. We have created books, games, after-school language lessons, and an annual summer camp dedicating to teaching Tunica language.

Our efforts extend beyond language. We cultivate a sense of pride and community. We inspire an appreciation of culture and history, and encourage them to succeed. We show the world that the Tunica-Biloxi culture is alive and thriving.

Instruction does not end in the classroom. We empower our students to do their own research-to communicate with their elders and learn about their history and contribute to their community. Our students taken the language to communicate at home, at school, and in sports and after-school activities. Students have used what they learn to win achievements, scholarships, apply to colleges, and pass along to their own children.

Number of speakers and level of fluency are not the only measures of success. Our program provides students with a space for enrichment and empowerment. It is something children and parents rely on. We will continue to spread our work to reach as many community members as possible. I hope many other communities will have the same opportunity as well.

Tikahch! Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TODD GETTLEMAN, KEALAKEKUA, HI

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for Native language revitalization efforts. I worked Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation for 20 years with, where we successfully implemented a Patwin language revitalization program and have been able to produce conversationally fluent Patwin speakers by high school. I am currently working on a language revitalization project with the Konkow Maidu Cultural Preservation Association. I am honored to be able to work on these types of projects, which are important to maintaining and supporting cultural diversity in this country.

*The final report of the Commission on Language Learning, entitled "America's Languages: Investing in Language Education for the 21st Century" has been retained in the Committee files and can be found at <http://www.amacad.org/multimedia/pdfs/publications/researchpapersmonographs/language/Commission-on-language-learning—americas-languages.pdf>

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. TOM UDALL TO
DR. CHRISTINE SIMS

Question 1. Your hearing testimony described the growing efforts to implement language programs and provide technical assistance with the support, resources, and academic knowledge of institutions of higher education, such as the Institute you co-founded at the University of New Mexico. However, universities are not eligible for direct grants for language revitalization like the Esther Martinez grants. How can we leverage resources from institutions of higher education such as the University of New Mexico? What barriers exist that prevent more of these University-Tribal partnerships from benefitting Indian Country?

Answer. Federal funding sources can help mitigate and increase the capacity of Native tribal language and education efforts through engaged tribal partnerships with IHEs who have the capacity and experienced faculty expertise in Native language maintenance and revitalization issues. These latter qualifications are key to effective partnering and engagement with tribes. At the present time, many federal grant and discretionary fund regulations related to Native language preservation and program implementation in schools do not explicitly identify qualifying Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) as potential applicants. In some instances they may be considered as tribal partners, but it is usually more the norm for Tribal colleges and organizations with tribal representation to be listed as qualifying partners concerning language program planning and implementation initiatives. An expansion of regulatory requirements that includes qualifying IHEs needs to be considered for the following reasons.

At the University of New Mexico (UNM) the most valuable resource we have is the high number of Native American faculty representing enrolled members of tribes indigenous to the New Mexico and the southwest. In the UNM College of Education, out of 110 faculty, we have ten Native faculty who teach within different graduate programs and departments including teacher education, bilingual education, health sciences, Native American studies, early childhood education and educational psychology. Within the COE Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies, where the American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center (AILPRTTC) is housed, we have both faculty and graduate student assistants who are from New Mexico tribes and speakers of their Native languages. Across the board, Native American faculty represent a broad range of expertise at UNM in a variety of fields and disciplines including Indian law, linguistics, anthropology, medicine, and other fields. The Native American teaching resources at UNM represent one of the highest concentrations of Native faculty in a southwest IHE classified as a Carnegie Foundation Doctoral University and ranked among the Top 100 Research Institutions by the National Science Foundation (2014). As well, there is a growing pool of Native doctoral graduate students who are being trained as researchers and the next generation of educational leadership for Native communities.

As mentioned in the previous example, the growing number of Native faculty in IHEs such as UNM, with expertise in educational research, K-12 teaching backgrounds and field experience working with tribes, coupled with first hand knowledge and experiences with Native languages, should be considered assets to be sought

after in federal regulations and governing mechanisms of federal professional development and other Native language related support grants. This is especially important in light of federal laws affecting Native students such as ESSA, federal funded programs such as ANA language preservation grants under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start programs, and other Native student focused programs in the U.S. Department of Education, and the Bureau of Indian Education. Moreover, as federally funded programs move increasingly towards support for Native language programs and initiatives in school settings, local tribes, schools and districts may or may not have the local capacity to establish or maintain support for teacher training, Native language-specific curriculum development, or building the internal leadership and workforce capacity of tribes in order to sustain such efforts. This should be a key consideration for including qualified IHEs who have the capacity to support Native language initiatives and professional development.

Lastly, for Native Language teacher training centers such as the AILPRTTC to continue providing support to local tribal efforts in language and education, major infusions of funding will be necessary for support staff and graduate assistants who assist faculty in this work. The challenge that many university faculty face is that in addition to their teaching responsibilities, they must often seek outside funding sources in order to support the work they do in partnership with tribal communities and/or to seek scholarship funds that will support Native language teachers' training. In New Mexico, future partnerships with tribes and school districts will be especially critical in order to address the current paucity of Native language and Native bilingual teachers, as referenced in the recent court ruling regarding *Yazzie / Martinez Case (Yazzie, et al. v. State of New Mexico, et al.)*, as well as the growing need for Native language curriculum development and material resources as language efforts expand.

Question 2. Can you expand on the relationship that your Institute and the University of New Mexico have, and how that relationship assists Tribes in language revitalization? What is the nature of your relationship with tribes? How does that relationship assist tribes in language revitalization?

Answer. The American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center has worked over a number of years in close partnership with New Mexico tribes, tribal leadership, and tribal community members in the work of Native language preservation and revitalization. We regularly maintain our connections with the broader tribal community by making ourselves present and actively participating in tribal education summits, community education forums, and numerous venues where we can learn more about pressing issues and challenges facing tribes in their language preservation efforts. We maintain updated listserves that includes tribal leaders, language teachers and other community members for purposes of inviting their participation in our workshops and training institutes, public language and education forum information that comes through the university and our academic networks, summits we organize, and other collaborations involving on-the-ground on-site training and technical assistance requests.

We are guided in our work with tribes by maintaining a policy of acknowledging and recognizing fundamentally, the autonomy and sovereignty of tribes in making decisions and choices about their own languages and cultures. As an academic institution, we view our role as being a source of support and service to tribes in language revitalization efforts rather than utilizing a "top down" approach and we do not pursue any form of academic research about specific Native languages without the express sanction and approvals of local tribal leaders and their communities.

Lastly, we maintain a close working relationship with the New Mexico Tribal Language Consortium, a recently formed non-profit organization that is inclusive of different Native language programs in the state. Tribal language teachers, language program directors, tribal leaders and other community members are some of the key people who have formed this advocacy organization. We meet with this organization on a quarterly basis, gathering their input about language teacher and program needs, guidance on our Center's training and technical assistance activities, as well as sharing and collaboratively working on native language policy issues that we can advocate for and help support.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. TOM UDALL TO
HON. JEANIE HOVLAND

Ensuring Federal Support at All Phases of Language Revitalization

Question 1. The Commissioner of the ANA is responsible for overseeing the administration and processing of language revitalization grants, and as such, plays a

vital role in Native language revitalization efforts throughout Indian Country. The importance of access to these programs for all Tribes is of great concern to the Committee. In your hearing testimony, you stated that, since your confirmation, you have visited multiple Tribes in their communities to ascertain their needs and to properly understand your role as Commissioner.

Recognizing that different Tribes have different needs when it comes to language preservation and revitalization, what are you doing to ensure that your grant programs are tailored to fit the needs of Indian Country?

Answer. As the Commissioner, I intend to visit as many tribes in their communities as practicable to share information about ANA and our funding opportunities. I am hopeful these visits will allow communities to articulate their individual needs, allowing ANA to make better informed decisions when planning outreach and developing Funding Opportunity Announcements. Further, I hope these visits will serve to increase interest in ANA programs, and perhaps encourage smaller or lower capacity tribes to apply for ANA funding.

ANA provides discretionary grant funding in support of grassroots, community-based projects that address the current social and economic conditions in Native American communities, including language preservation and revitalization. ANA supports locally determined projects that achieve community goals through specific, measurable outcomes. Native Languages Preservation and Maintenance (P&M) is ANA's largest language program. P&M funding is flexible and can be used to meet the language preservation and revitalization needs of a community by supporting curriculum development, language instruction, teacher training and certification, language restoration programs, and preservation and documentation of native languages.

ANA also supports immersion projects under the Esther Martinez Immersion (EMI) program. EMI is designed to preserve Native American languages through Native American language nests and language survival schools. The EMI program focuses support on projects that are based in teaching and building capacity for language immersion instruction.

Lastly, ANA provides training workshops for Project Planning and Development, as well as technical assistance to applicants in four different regions. This is made possible through our training and technical assistance centers, which provide additional outreach and support to native communities. ANA regularly invites federal and academic representatives to partner with us at our Native American Language Summit, which is open to the public. We also invite our partners to present to grantees at our annual grantee meetings and to the broader public via webinars.

Leveraging Federal and Academic Resources to Support Native Languages

Question 2. Federal resources including, but not limited to, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the Smithsonian Institute play a vital role in the research and archival processes that have assisted in language revitalization. Past Commissioners have made efforts to create strong partnerships with these institutions, which are vital for Tribes to access archives of old documents and recording.

How do you intend to facilitate relationships with these and other federal partners, and what steps have you already taken to work with them?

Answer. I am making it a priority to partner with other federal agencies and academic institutions to support native languages. Specifically, our Native Language Workgroup will reach out to other federal and academic resources and create an action plan as a part of the a proposed revision to the Native Language Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Education and the White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education. In addition, ANA plans to create a list of national and regional repositories to house materials, such as dictionaries, sample curriculum, videos, etc. created by our grantees. We will distribute the list as a resource for tribes and organizations to share their federally funded projects. The Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of the American Indian has offered to serve as a national repository, but final plans are not yet in place for the transfer of materials to their holdings.

ANA is partnering with the following federal colleagues to develop materials and present at relevant meetings:

- Dr. Colleen Fitzgerald, Program Director of the Documenting Endangered Languages Program at the National Science Foundation, is invited to present at the 2018 Native Languages Summit in Oklahoma August 27–28, 2018.
- Dr. Mary Linn, Curator of Cultural and Linguistic Revitalization at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, will participate in the Native Language Community Coordination semiannual grantee meeting in September 2018.

- Dr. Clifford Murphy, Folk & Traditional Arts Director in Multidisciplinary Arts at the National Endowment for the Arts, is developing a resource guide on federal support for culture and traditional arts. He is also partnering with ANA on an upcoming Native language conference in 2019.
- Dr. Mary Downs, Senior Program Office in the Division of Preservation and Access at the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), manages the funding for the First Nations Development Institute Native Language Immersion Initiative. The NEH is also interested in partnering with ANA to strengthen outreach to potential applicants and diversifying grant reviewers and improving training for reviewers.

