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Nunavut Maligaliurvia
Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

R E L E A S E

Standing Committee Recommends Appointment of Languages Commissioner

IQALUIT, Nunavut (February 25, 2005) - The Legislative Assembly of Nunavut today unanimously recommended by way of motion that Mr. Johnny Pujjuut Kusugak of Rankin Inlet be appointed as the territory's second Languages Commissioner.

Section 18 of Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* provides that the Commissioner of Nunavut, on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly, shall appoint a Languages Commissioner.

The Languages Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly who reports directly to the House in fulfilling a range of duties under the *Official Languages Act*.

Mr. Kusugak said, "I am very excited and honoured by this opportunity. This is a critical time for languages in Nunavut and I look forward to working for their long term use and viability."

Mr. Kusugak was recommended by the Assembly after a public competition and selection process undertaken by the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut's Standing Committee *Ajauqtiit*.

Standing Committee Co-Chair Patterk Netser said, "The Languages Commissioner must be a strong, committed voice for the promotion and preservation of Nunavut's official languages and dialects. At the same time, he or she must have the diplomacy to mediate solutions, have sensitivity to the aspirations of different language groups, and possess the integrity and administrative competence to deal with matters in a fair and timely manner."

Mr. Kusugak's biography is attached.

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Mr. Johnny Pujjuut Kusugak

Languages Commissioner of Nunavut

Mr. Kusugak was born on August 13, 1959, in Repulse Bay, NWT. While still an infant his parents moved to Rankin Inlet where Mr. Kusugak completed his primary education. Mr. Kusugak completed secondary education at Yellowknife's Sir John Franklin High School in 1979.

After high school, Mr. Kusugak worked for the Government of the NWT, the Rankin Inlet Housing Association and in the private sector.

Mr. Kusugak began a career in education in 1989 as a Head Supervisor at Kivalliq Hall in Rankin Inlet. He later attended the Eastern Arctic Teacher Education Program, graduating with teacher's certificates from Nunavut Arctic College and McGill University in 1993. For the next three years Mr. Kusugak taught and developed Inuktitut curriculum in Rankin Inlet.

In 1996, Mr. Kusugak was given his first opportunity to work as a senior manager. He took on the position of Special Advisor at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. In this position, Mr. Kusugak reported to and advised the Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for Northern Oil, Gas and Water resources on the impacts and effects of resource development in Nunavut.

In 1998, Mr. Kusugak returned to the field of education as President of Nunavut Arctic College. For three years, Mr. Kusugak provided executive leadership at Nunavut's only post-secondary diploma granting institution. In this capacity Mr. Kusugak managed a budget in excess of \$18 million and a community of more than 200 staff and 1,200 students.

Mr. Kusugak then served as the Executive Director of the Kivalliq Inuit Association in Rankin Inlet. There he supervised the development of a mine training committee and oversaw the initiation of a feasibility study on possible connections between Kivalliq communities and the Manitoba roads network.

In 2005, Mr. Kusugak was appointed by the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut to serve a four-year term as Languages Commissioner of Nunavut. The Languages Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly who reports directly to the House in fulfilling a range of duties under the *Official Languages Act*.