Standing Committee on Legislation
Hearing on the Review of Nunavut's
Language Legislation, the Official
Languages Act and the Inuit Language
Protection Act
Iqaluit, Nunavut
September 26, 2023

## **Members Present:**

Bobby Anavilok
Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, Co-Chair
George Hickes
Mary Killiktee
Adam Lightstone
Solomon Malliki
Karen Nutarak
Daniel Qavvik
Joseph Inagayuk Quqqiaq
Alexander Sammurtok
Joe Savikataaq, Chair
Craig Simailak

## **Staff Members:**

Stephen Innuksuk Siobhan Moss

### **Interpreters**:

Eva Ayalik Andrew Dialla Attima Hadlari Millie Hikok Jacopoosie Peter Abraham Tagalik Blandina Tulugarjuk

#### Witnesses:

Karliin Aariak, Languages Commissioner Lanise Hayes, Legal Counsel Aramide Owoaje, Director of Strategic Planning Rebecca Taukie, Inuit Language Liaison Officer

>>Committee commenced at 9:00

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Chairman (Mr. Savikataaq)(interpretation): Good morning to everyone here and Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) I would like to reconvene our Standing Committee hearing on the Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts. This is the televised hearing on the review of the official language legislation and it's just a continuation of yesterday's hearing.

Before us here today, we have the Languages Commissioner. Ms. Aariak, if you can introduce your guests and proceed with your opening comments. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is the director of our office, Lola Aramide Owoaje, and to my right is our office's legal counsel, Lanise Hayes, and farther to my right seated with us is our office's language coordinator.

Thank you for this opportunity, Mr. Chairman and Committee Members. I am pleased to be here today to speak with you about the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act. These are statutes that I and my office work with each and every day as the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut. In my role and my office's mandate to investigate language rights infringements, it gives us a unique and intimate knowledge of these very important statutes and the challenges my office often faces in applying them. Thank you for this opportunity to speak about current laws, the proposed revisions, and share my office's vision for ensuring language rights are upheld.

Before I proceed further, I would like to acknowledge the interpreters and thank them for being here with us, as we are able to express our views and our language through the interpreters.

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It is undeniable that the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act are important tools in preventing the erosion of minority language and culture. My office's ability to effectively and fully apply the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act ensure that these statutes can fulfill this function. However, years after the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act came into force, we are just now conducting a first review to determine their effectiveness.

The *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit* Language Protection Act provide for language rights and obligations. However, their effectiveness at ensuring in particular broader use of Inuktut in the public and private sectors is debatable. As the Statistics Canada surveys show, the use of Inuktut at home and at work has declined drastically. Fewer individuals actually identify one of the Inuit languages as their first or primary language. Certainly, the ever-growing use of social media and other means of communication that make the world smaller have an impact, but in looking at other indigenous communities that create learning and working environments where their indigenous languages flourish show us that the social pressures can be countered to allow a vital space for indigenous languages.

(interpretation) My office's submissions identify and address the challenges faced since the coming into force of these statutes, as well as gaps that have emerged with respect to language obligations and rights.

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# Language Secretariat

(interpretation ends) One of the gaps that have emerged over the years relates to ensuring that recommendations coming from my office in response to a complaint are carried out. A review of past recommendations illustrates clearly that many go without response and are simply reiterated year after year. The fulfillment of these recommendations ensures that territorial institutions are held accountable for their language obligations and that there is continuity in those institutions in implementing not just my office's recommendations but their own language plans.

This gap can be addressed through the creation of a central body, such as a language secretariat and that would be within the Government of Nunavut to ensure accountability. The secretariat would also oversee continuity of progress in the implementation of language obligations, regardless of changes in elected governments or turnover in senior officials. In addition, this central body could ensure departments are aware of and understand their roles, responsibilities, and obligations with respect to Nunavut's language laws and my office's mandate. Such a structure would be similar to the Treasury Board for the Government of Canada, which issues policies and directives and ensures these are implemented and followed.

# The Languages Commissioner Act

Another key change I hope to see would be the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut having its own law, separate from the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act, (interpretation) such as "the Languages Commissioners Act." The Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut should enjoy the same authority

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and powers as the other independent officers. Separating my role and authority as an independent officer and as an ombudsperson from the Minister of Languages and the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit would further recognize the independence of my office.

(interpretation ends) One issue that can easily be addressed in such a new law is the title of my office. The person appointed shall be called Uqausirnut Kamisina Nunavummi or by such other title as may be given by the commissioner on the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. The Uqausirnut Kamisina Nunavummi may be referred in Inuinnaqtun as Uqauhinut Kamisina Nunavunmi and in English as the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut and in French as Commisssaire aux langues du Nunavut.

Since the inception of my office in 1999, the role and mandate of the Languages Commissioner have evolved as has the scope of language rights. When Nunavut became a territory, the Northwest Territories' Official Languages Act had already been in force for a number of years; in fact, it came into force in 1988. When the Nunavut Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act were enacted, my office created a new logo and title to celebrate the new legislation and to honour the new mandate as more of an ombudsperson, which included new investigative powers and authority. This title is used today and differentiates between the role of the Minister of Languages.

Recognizing the role of the Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut particularly with respect to language rights means that whenever a bill is proposed that may impact either the Official Languages Act or the Inuit Language Protection Act, my office should be consulted. We have first-hand experience and knowledge regarding not just language rights but the success in

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enforcing these, as well as the challenges and gaps that sometimes undermine the efficacy of these laws in promoting and sustaining minority languages and culture.

# Federal language obligations

It's important to note that the difference in the jurisdictions of the language laws. The *Official Languages Act* applies specifically and exclusively to territorial institutions and, to a limited extent, municipalities. However, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* applies to territorial institutions, municipalities, private sector organizations, and the federal departments, agencies and institutions.

(interpretation) Our office has received concerns about some federal government departments and agencies with respect to Inuit language rights. My office's experience in receiving and investigating concerns against the federal government was reflected in two of my appearances before the House of Commons standing committee: first in March 2022, where I raised concerns with the Procedure and House Affairs Committee regarding the inclusion of indigenous languages on federal election ballots, and second in January 2023, where I appeared before the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

### Penalties and Fines

(interpretation ends) Although not outlined in our submission, some considerations that could affect the private sector are fines or penalties when language laws are not complied with. For example, in other Canadian jurisdictions, escalating fines and penalties for multiple failures in complying with language laws up to the disqualification of eligibility to bid on third party contracts with the territorial governments and public agencies. Careful consideration would require

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multiple government departments to develop such a plan.

## Conclusion

We mentioned earlier the Statistics Canada findings showing a decline in the use of Inuktut at home and at work. Without wanting to sound the alarm, the Government of Nunavut is at a crossroads where it will have to take stronger measures to protect Inuinnaqtun, which is spoken by just 500 Nunavummiut and could disappear in just two generations. However, the decline in the use of Inuktitut and the corresponding rise in the use of English as the language of work and at home should be equally alarming.

Language is the vehicle by which culture is transferred from one generation to the next. Language ensures a cultures vitality and sustainability. With fewer and fewer Nunavummiut speaking Inuktut at home and at work, there is inarguably an impact on the transfer of Inuit culture and traditions.

(interpretation) The Official Languages Act and Inuit Language Protection Act are statutes that have a remedial purpose of addressing the impacts and pressures of society, government policy and laws that tried to assimilate indigenous peoples into mainstream Canadian culture. The sustainability and vitality of the Inuit culture therefore depends on the ability to enforce language rights.

(interpretation ends) The amendments proposed in my office's submissions on the Official Languages Act and Inuit Language Protection Act are aimed at making both statutes clearer, clearer for rights holders to understand their language rights so that they can exercise these, clearer for those who have language obligations so that they can implement policies and practices ensuring that they are fulfilling those obligations, and also

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clearer for my office so that it can easily apply the statutes confidently.

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, Inuit language is inseparable and an inherent part of the Inuit identity, of the practices, customs and traditions that are integral to distinctive Inuit culture. (interpretation) Together we should strive to strengthen and uphold the language rights of Nunavummiut by strengthening these language laws. (interpretation ends) *Qujannamiik*, thank you, *merci*.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, commissioner. I now open the floor for general comments on the opening comment. Mary...I apologize. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning to all and to Nunavummiut listening to our proceedings. Today is our day scheduled for languages along with the work of the Language Commissioner, and I appreciate your presence here.

Further, in listening to the reports and your opening comments, it listed different projects under the mandate of the office of the Commissioner. Your report was succinct and clear and I readily understood the gist of your work within this area, and in listening to the report, I felt a sense of pride in being able to discuss our issues related to our Inuit language.

I believe that our language is truth based towards our survival and our lives up north, and language is an integral part of our cultural identity, and it must be recognized since it allows for legal protection and with recognition, it would make these language rights legal and the work that has already been developed, I am very appreciative of as it shows progress has started in this sector.

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This was the first thought I wanted to express during my commentary, and the past meetings with the federal government, your invitation to make a report to the committee and in expressing your views and perspective to resolve some of these challenges. I want to comment on that matter, as our question period will commence later this morning, and most of today.

I want to start by welcoming all of you, and to ask my colleagues to take these issues to heart, and to speak to the issues raised, the challenges faced as we represent our constituents so I ask my colleagues to be observant and to ask our questions we have. I just wanted to comment on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you. That was just a comment, anyone else? I open the floor for questions to the commissioner. Mr. Quqqiaq. (interpretation ends)

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Good morning to everyone listening to the hearings today. (interpretation ends) Your submission is in two parts which propose a number of recommendations to amend Nunavut's Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protective Act, respectively. In your view, what are the most pressing language issues in Nunavut and how can language legislation help to address those issues? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for their question. Indeed, the need for revisions is listed in my report, for both *Acts*, the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, as they are drafted for different purposes although there is common language, and this is why I

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submitted the two reports.

As I stated earlier in my opening comments, my position can receive complaints or concerns related to any of our official languages if residents feel the law was broken, and they can go to my office. When a person submits the complaint, I am required to investigate who broke the law, which section was broken, and if there is room for improvement.

There are almost daily submissions for these two pieces of legislation, and we use them to conduct our investigations, and it highlights the need to check submissions almost daily, and in searching for ways to correct the situation, and we have submitted letters to various bodies today. Why are we still receiving complaints and concerns?

After our investigation, we draft up recommendations to the parties, including methods to make improvements, and my recommendations I send out, where are they sent to? My recommendations usually revolve around service provision and language rights, and obviously, improvements are needed, which is why I then draft up the recommendations from our office.

Why are my recommendations and the previous recommendations from my predecessors from the time the office was opened in 1999, up to date, and why are we still getting concerns submitted? The recommendations I provide are specific to each case, as I cannot make territorial wide recommendations, only for showing the way forward. My prior recommendations from my office as well as the role of the Languages Commissioner has shown past recommendations did not get all implemented.

If the legislation had language specifying the private sector included for the Languages

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Commissioner, it would further highlight my arm's length role from government. I am not an employee of the government. There is also the Minister of Languages, and the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit that are independent bodies, however, in my role as the Languages Commissioner, I am independent.

This independence also applies to other roles, such as the Child and Youth Representative, the Privacy Commissioner who also has investigative powers to investigate potential privacy issues. (interpretation ends) To reiterate, although the largest one that I have proposed today in the change is the *Language Commissioner's Act*.

That would fully recognize the independence of my office and would also recognize the other independent officers, which have their own *Acts* as well as an *Act* in regard to the field they are in. As mentioned, we go through both of the laws almost on a daily basis, which gives us a unique perspective in applying these laws, where there are gaps and where there is room for improvement.

Since these laws have come into force, we know where the possible loopholes are, where they need to be fixed, and where it needs to be updated. With this I hope to go further with my submission today and go further with the details. (interpretation) Hopefully that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Before I go to Mr. Quqqiaq, the Language Commission Act is beyond the scope of this committee. We are just looking at the current legislation. That would be an independent act and it's beyond the scope of what we are looking into right now. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Both the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act were introduced in 2008 with different provisions of the legislation coming into force at different times. What key measures should be used to evaluate whether Nunavut's language legislation is reaching its objectives? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for the question. Where can we evaluate and improve the *Act*? We have issued a submission for what we feel would be the base of our work and for improvements. There are numerous issues that require updating to today's standards that I can use.

For example, the terms in Inuktut and titles. We want to insert that in the *Act*, and also, make improvements in the wording. We have a lot of work to do still and hopefully we will go through these clauses to improve them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Page 3 of your submission on the *Official Languages Act*, discusses some of the objectives of the *Act*, including, and I quote, "providing a framework for the Inuit and Francophone communities to have the means needed to safeguard and strengthen their cultural expression, collective life, and heritage for future generations." End quote.

Can you elaborate further on whether you feel this, and I quote, "framework is provided for, within the current language legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. **Δ•/ペኦርና•**: L'a. Γ<sup>、</sup>ጳሲላ•.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The Official Languages Act, recognizes the three language communities, Inuktut speaking, English, and French. That is what the Official Languages Act was created for, to recognize, within the territory of Nunavut, the distinctive language communities. Federally, there is the Official Languages Act, that recognizes English and French. In Nunavut, we have the Inuit language, English and French. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Page 4 of your submission on the *Official Languages Act*, includes recommendations to amend a number of definitions in section one of the *Act*. Particularly, to clarify the types of territorial offices, agencies, or bodies to which the *Act* applies: can you provide some specific examples of the difficulties in identifying whether the legislation applies to specific bodies or not? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank you for the question. (interpretation ends) In the current law, the Legislative Assembly means the Legislative Assembly and all the institutions and offices. In my recommendation to make it clear, for example, I've included the Office of the Integrity Commissioner, the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth, the Office of the Languages Commissioner, and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

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That clearly states, for example that these independent offices within the Legislative Assembly should be obligated under the *Official Languages Act*. Further to that, I want to add, for example, in the definition of 'public agency;' the public agency is defined under subsection 1.1 of the *Financial Administration Act* and 'territorial institutions' means all the government departments. But in there as well, I am proposing a recommendation that a body established pursuant to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement be included.

In having, I'm going to say, pre-consultations, there may be some issues around that, but I can give you an example of a concern that my office received. It was in regard to consultations that were happening in a community with the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB). The NIRB could be considered a public institution where they get the funding from the federal government and they have board members appointed by the Government of Nunavut, Inuit organizations, and the federal government.

Having that clarification is key so that the obligated bodies are aware of what they are obligated to do under these laws. (interpretation) Hopefully I provided a clear response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question and I'll give my colleagues time to ask some questions too, and I'll have questions later on in the day. To what extent does your work in respect to the territorial *Official Languages Act* overlap with the work of the federal languages' commissioner? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you.

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**Δ<sup>6</sup>/«C**<sup>6</sup>: L'α.

Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for the question. The two Acts, clearly explain what the Minister of Languages is supposed to do, in regard to the Inuit Language Authority, what they are supposed to do, and what my office is supposed to do as well. It's clearly explained in the legislation, and it also explains very clearly as the Languages Commissioner that I can only act in Nunavut. For example, if the government had a contract that was for a non-Nunavut based company, then I am able to review them but only if they are legally signed.

What I am trying to state here is that within Nunavut, the two pieces of legislation are recognized in Nunavut and I can make investigations. For the federal government Languages Commissioner, whom I must work with on occasion and we hold meetings when we need to do joint work, nonetheless, they are federal and can investigate any federal departments throughout Canada.

If I receive a concern from a Nunavut resident, then I can start my investigation. Hopefully that was a clear response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, Mr. Anavilok is next.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to move to this other matter, written within your opening comments, where you stated that Inuinnaqtun is spoken by 545 Nunavummiut.

That seems very low as there are more people learning to understand by taking written courses and speaking lessons, and even digital versions. How can we provide more assistance to them? I personally am thinking **ጳሲላ**ት: 'ቫታጐ ሲቮጐ, Δኮላየኦር፦ 'ቫታጐ ሲቮጐ ላለሲሁልና. ርጐዕላ ኒናጛጐ L፫ሁጐ

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I am just making that comment as I feel more progress could be made, and my parents only used Inuinnaqtun and kids are not learning that in schools, so I wonder when more people can revitalize our dialect and also get it in the schools. Also, there are jobs that could be provided to Inuinnaqtun youth. I want to ask how the smaller communities can get more assistance to preserve our dialects.

How much work is being done for revitalizing our Inuinnaqtun dialect? What kind of assistance is being worked on to support our dialect. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope I got the gist of his question, but I will proceed with my response. We are working on preserving the various dialects as part of our work. I think many dialects require that we all work hard to preserve our language.

In my role as the commissioner, I deal mainly with language rights. If someone feels their language rights are abrogated, then I have to investigate it. Let me quote this from our English document as it clearly outlines the power of the Minister of Languages. (interpretation ends) I am going to switch over to English to reiterated what the laws says on the responsibilities of the Ministers of Languages, which is different from what my role is as the languages commissioner, in which I make sure that language rights are upheld within the territory of Nunavut.

"The Minister of Languages, without limiting the generality of subsection 1, shall develop 7dCSĊ%D& $\Delta$ DCSL $\dot{\Gamma}$ % $\sigma$ %.

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▷'b▷/፫ሲơ'늬' Γσ'C ሲ\▷በሮ 1, CΔb▷Სጏላኈበ'ጋJ \ኈዖታኈበናበቦላሮ policies or programs intended to promote the use and development of the Inuit language so that it can be used in the full range of activities and sectors of Nunavut society; increased learning proficiency and linguistic vitality of the Inuit language including its revitalization through initiatives targeting communities or age groups in which there are special concerns about language loss or assimilation."

I am going to go a little bit further in that particular section on the Minister's responsibility: at the community level, initiatives for the youth, teaching, development, promotion, or preservation of the Inuit language; and two, increased community capacity for the assessment of local needs and the planning and management of local initiatives for the promotion of the Inuit language. My mandate is to ensure that language rights are upheld and that is the differentiation between our roles. (interpretation) I hope I responded to your question correctly. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. To remind everyone, if you are going to quote an Act, please make sure you tell us what section you are quoting so that all the listeners and the Members here can know exactly where you are at. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask you some questions. Your submission recommends amending the legislation by listing territorial offices and institutions to which the *Official Languages Act* applies. Are there any specific types of services delivered by such institutions and offices, which could be identified to determine whether the *Act* applies to them? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. You responded to that already. Can you explain it

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further, Ms. Aariak?

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, and I would like to apologize right away. I did not state which section and number I was quoting in the legislation. I will try to remember that. In terms of submissions on page 4, I would like to answer it again. Independent officials of the Legislative Assembly are appointed. It clearly explains, and I have a clear recommendation because we received concerns from Elections Nunavut. The other one as to what governments are and whatever was opened by the government; public agencies, and institutions.

I used, as an example, in the communities, when they go and have hearings in the communities and do investigations as to how their communities are going to be affected and that body is called the Nunavut Impact Review Board. We've never really been quite sure if they are a government body, or a body created by the federal government or by the Inuit organizations. That's why we want them to explain in the legislation who the Act applies to and who the agencies and public bodies are. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On page 5 of your submission on the *Official Languages Act*, you recommended adding new language in the Act providing that facilities for simultaneous interpretation are made available in the Legislative Assembly. These facilities are already available in the Legislative Assembly precinct. What would this proposed amendment achieve? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. At

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this time, I would like to thank the interpreters for being here. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak: Thank you for that question. Again, I recognize the interpreters that are in the room with us today.

I mentioned earlier about updating the Acts, the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. One example was using the term Inuktut instead of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun. This is another example where the Act in the language could be updated. Basically, this amendment would reflect the similar wording in the federal *Official Languages Act*. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Before I go back to Mr. Anavilok, (interpretation ends) the submission is saying that simultaneous interpretation should be made available in the Legislative Assembly and we already have simultaneous legislation, so the Committee was just wondering the reasoning behind asking for something that is already there. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As I mentioned, I recognize that. It is recognized, but again, this wording is to update it to reflect similar wording which is in the federal *Official Languages Act*. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On page 6 of your submission, you recommended that subsection 5(1) of the *Official Languages Act* e amended to provide that the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* be "made, printed and

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**Δ⁰/ペ▷ርሜ**: L'α. Γ\ጋ ⊲αልጏ⁰.

published in Inuktut, English and French." Given that these pieces of legislation have already been made, printed, and published in all three official languages of Nunavut, what would this proposed amendment achieve? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I wanted to see some parts of the Act, I would look into the federal government's website. To date, if I should look up some information, there is the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. I can go into the website and look at the Act. Currently, English and French are recognized and some are available in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun. Also, we had a meeting with the government on how we can make improvements to those two Acts and also review the Act in Inuinnaqtun.

This one is available in both English and French. There have been some changes made on July 1, 2021, but with the Inuinnaqtun portion, it's an older version and we also have it available in Inuktitut. With the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, it's in both English and French and there have been some changes and they're current and that was on March 2, 2021. We have older versions that are available on the website.

(interpretation ends) To make it clear, Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, in the current law, there is more authority in the English and the French laws. I can go to the Department of Justice's website now or find a copy of the Official Languages Act or the Inuit Language Protection Act where the consolidated laws of the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act, for example, the Official Languages Act is consolidated in the English and French July 1,

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2021, and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* is current to March 2, 2021 in English and French, where the consolidated Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut ones come later.

In this recommendation, what I'm requesting is, at the least, if the consolidated Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act are available in all the languages at the same time. Why is this important? It's important because we spoke about Inuinnagtun and the decline of Inuinnagtun speakers. How can Inuinnagtun speakers be aware of what their language rights are if the Inuinnagtun version of the consolidated law is outdated? In this recommendation. I think it's important for the consolidated laws, especially around language rights, are available in all the official languages. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm almost done, but I want to ask this question first. (interpretation ends) On page 6 of your submission, you recommended that subsection 8(3) of the *Official Languages Act* be amended to provide that translation services as well as interpretation services be made available to parties or witnesses in civil proceedings. Given the current demand for translation services across all sectors in Nunavut, are you concerned that fulfilling this requirement may cause delays in civil proceedings? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) As mentioned, I did have

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some, I'm going to call them, preconsultations after we had submitted our written submission on the recommendations on these changes and one of them was with the Department of Justice. I think that would be best geared towards asking that department because they do provide a lot of that already. It's important to note that in any civil proceedings, everyone should have the right to communicate in the language of their choice.

(interpretation) I hope my response was adequate, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, commissioner and your officials. I also say "good morning" to Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) Section 8 of the *Official Languages Act* addresses the administration of justice in judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings. Your submission notes on page 7 that "situations where the Government of Nunavut commences proceedings involving Inuit but provide only an English version of the pleadings…has prevented individuals from responding adequately and has potentially impacted their rights." Has your office been involved in addressing situations of this nature? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, just recently, last week actually, there was another hearing on issues around youth and children. One of the issues is if they have to go through a child welfare case in court, it can have a detrimental or

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Furthermore, the cases that are required to go through the court system have to clearly understand what the purpose of it is, how the proceedings will be undertaken. Sometimes, they use the JP system, and the actual court system. As an example, if a youth or child have to be apprehended or taken into government custody, or if they have to be sent out extra-territorially for treatment, or for further care or if government must become the steward.

These actions can have a large impact on one's lives, due to these impacts, it is very important to ensure we understand their plight if they are being assessed for custody through the courts, as it can severely impact a young person's life as it can also impact the treatment options for the child, or the plans for the child's treatment.

I hope my response was adequate, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you, commissioner. You make a number of recommendations on pages 8, 9, and 10 of your submission that (interpretation ends) the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs be given responsibilities under the Act. However, the legislation already provides that the Minister of Languages is responsible for the administration of the legislation. If responsibilities for administering the Act were to be reallocated in the manner you propose, what steps should be taken to ensure that policies, monitoring and evaluation activities are consistent across institutions? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As per my earlier statement, I had the opportunity to have a frank discussion with different agencies, both representing governments, along with some members of the private sector on the potential impacts if my proposed changes in my recommendations were revised in the legislation.

This does show the proposed revisions in the document, but the responsible party under our government identifies a (interpretation ends) Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs (interpretation) division, and my first visioning exercise that I thought was appropriate since the office was most likely there.

Nonetheless, the government itself can clearly identify which area is best for the placement of this office, as they have the mandate as the territorial government, and they have the discretion to place the office in a place they feel is most efficient.

At our first drafting, we listed the (interpretation ends) Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs (interpretation) branch as the first suggestion. However, the office could be within the Minister's office, or the Department of Language and Culture, however, let me clarify this further as to the reasoning why this office should be created.

Yesterday you were informed about the substantiation from the Minister when he reported on both *Uqausivut* 1.0 and *Uqausivut* 2.0, and it identifies the process showing the adherence to the legislation. Nonetheless, even with statement, it also shows our offices were created in 1999, and further, prior recommendations were submitted from our offices since 1999.

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Why then are those recommendations still sitting in our offices and as the Languages commissioner, past recommendations of my predecessors along with my current recommendations are still not being enforced, so it begs the question, why are they being implemented?

The government needs to take its linguistic responsibilities seriously. In my role, I am not creating recommendations out of thin air, as these recommendations also identify what needs to be implemented. It directs the government that an investigation is required, and to identify areas that can be improved, along with the fact that our office has a fairly small staff contingent, yet our responsibilities are large and our work plate is full.

When any new Minister or Deputy Minister is hired in the different departments, what I can say here is there are seven Deputy Ministers. When new people are appointed to the positions, we are also required to provide briefings on the issues we have dealt with to date, issues that require further work, investigations required, and if I want to request certain information, it is legally required. It's also quite difficult to keep people updated on a revolving basis.

(interpretation ends) And so to be clear, the secretariat initially, without a lot of consultation, I did do some pre-consultation after the submission and I wanted to note that in the submission, I did indicate that a division should be in the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, but that's within the prerogative of the government where they see best fit for the secretariat.

Again, the need for the secretariat would be to monitor the government's implementation of not only the implementation plan but the past and current recommendations coming from የውውለተር ርላቃላ ላጋር-የላ/Lንዎና ላናርናበት ውዕላት ላጋም አመታት ነው ውና ላጋም አመታት ነው ውና ላጋር የላይ የላር የምንት ነው ውና ለር

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4&<sup>6</sup>D<sup>6</sup><sup>6</sup>/L<sup>4</sup>σ<sup>6</sup> Þ<sup>6</sup>bP<sup>2</sup>α<sup>6</sup>D<sup>4</sup>U Γσ<sup>4</sup>CÞ<sup>4</sup> Ͻ<sup>4</sup>Cdσ<sup>6</sup>

7-σ, CΔL<sup>6</sup><sup>4</sup>UCĹ<sup>4</sup> Δ<sup>6</sup><sup>4</sup>UC<sup>4</sup><sup>4</sup>UC

D<sup>4</sup>DLΠ<sup>4</sup>CΛ<sup>4</sup>6<sup>6</sup>CP<sup>4</sup> Þd<sup>4</sup> Λσλ/L<sup>4</sup>P<sup>6</sup>, Þd<sup>4</sup>

Λσλλα<sup>4</sup>6<sup>6</sup><sup>6</sup>CΠ<sup>4</sup> <sup>6</sup>bP<sup>4</sup><sup>4</sup> P<sup>4</sup>Γ<sup>6</sup>

Λ<sup>4</sup>L<sup>4</sup>5<sup>4</sup><sup>4</sup>UL <sup>4</sup>6<sup>4</sup>CΠ<sup>4</sup>Λα<sup>4</sup>6<sup>6</sup>D<sup>4</sup>.

Λδο<sup>4</sup>CΛ<sup>6</sup>D<sup>4</sup>Δ<sup>4</sup>C<sup>6</sup><sup>6</sup>, <sup>4</sup>6P<sup>4</sup>LΠ<sup>4</sup>Παλ<sup>6</sup>Dσ<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup>6ΔCP<sup>6</sup>CP<sup>4</sup>Λα<sup>4</sup>6<sup>6</sup>Dσ<sup>6</sup>.

Ċºd4 ∧፫ኪ4ʰኪ៤ኑˁጋơՐ° ៤▷ናፖჼንጐኖኴበኑ, ᲡペĽºd° 4ጋ፫ጐበናፖペʹ፫4σ∿Րዮơ⁰ <ʹኄ▷በΓσӬ∿Րናጋጐ. የፖ4σ·ር▷ጐ ▷ペ∿し ፖ≫σ4σ, ▷ʹጔΓጔ 4ጋ፫ፕ₫ፖĽϧʹዮዮơ my office stemming from investigation. There would be a central division that would be responsible and initially, again, I thought it would be best suited at Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, but that's the prerogative of the government to decide and for the government to take those steps to create that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just for clarification and to be clear, then, is it still your position that Intergovernmental Affairs should be given a new responsibility? It's in the submission, but now you're saying that it's up to the government, but it is your position that your submission is still your position. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes and as mentioned, I originally thought it was best suited that it does not depend on the elected government of the day or the changes in senior officials. That's why my original submission was to have that division or secretariat within the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs so that the recommendations from my office are kept on track of the progress and that any past or current investigations and directives stemming from my investigations, that the recommendations are being followed through.

As mentioned, yes, in my submission, it was EIA, but if the government wants it under the Minister of Languages, it's their prerogative. I'll stick with my original recommendation that it should be with EIA, but in the law, it could be.... I think the departments need to be consulted on the wording. Let's put it that way. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

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**LCP**: 5d5°a广°, Δ67<bc>5°6, 4°L 5d5°a广°

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the commissioner for that proper response. (interpretation ends) On page 9 of your submission on the Official Languages Act, you address the concept of "significant demand." In the federal context, "significant demand" is most often determined by demographic context, that is, the size of language-speaking populations. You note that "the concept of 'significant demand' is problematic because demand may decrease as a language becomes more endangered." Can you clarify your understanding of the concept of "significant demand"? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The term "significant demand," the Minister of Languages is responsible for identifying what that threshold is and so that definition or regulation has not been done.

I can take Iqaluit for example, the City of Iqaluit. We have a fairly large francophone community. We have a French school, French radio, we have French organizations like RÉSEFAN, CSFN.... Sorry, I'm using acronyms. ... French organizations within the community. I guess it would be considered that Iqaluit has a significant demand for the French language community. Now, if we go to Arctic Bay or we go to another smaller community where they don't have a lot of French language speakers, then that would be deemed there is no significant demand.

(interpretation) I hope my response was adequate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

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**ἀΛΦ** (Ͻʹ៶ͰΠͿς): ͼͿϧ·αΓͼ, ΔͼϒϾΡϹϾͼ. (Ͻʹ៶ͰΠͿς) Ͼͼα ΡͼβΡΥΓΩσεΊς Γσές αμαΔͼͼϒͼͼΑΡΟΡΘς ͼρφβεσͼ Ͼͼα ϽρͼβͼνθενΕνίς. ϹͼϾ Ͼͼα Ͻρͼ Lσυργεω ἀͼρεςΡΥΓενεσές.

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**LCP**: 5d5°a′t, Δ67<bc′t, 4L 5d5°a′t, ưa

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for that clarification. (interpretation ends) On page 10 of your submission on the *Official Languages Act*, you recommend that subsection 13(4) be amended such that, in addition to the Minister responsible for the Act, your office also be given power to give direction to the administrative head of a government department, public agency, or municipality. Under your proposed amendment, what would prevent conflicting or inconsistent directions being given? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): I'm sorry, but I didn't quite understand the question. Can the question be repeated? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki, please repeat your question. Thank you.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): I will ask the question again. (interpretation ends) On page 10 of your submission on the *Official Languages Act*, you recommend that subsection 13(4) be amended such that, in addition to the Minister responsible for the Act, your office also be given power to give direction to the administrative head of a government department, public agency or municipality. Under your proposed amendment, what would prevent conflicting or inconsistent directions being given? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just for simplicity, there could be a potential of having two bosses, and how do you deal with that? Ms. Aariak.

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**Δ<sup>6</sup>/«ÞC<sup>66</sup>**: L'a. Γ<sup>1</sup>C LC<sup>P</sup>, ላለ心<sup>6</sup>b°σ<sup>1</sup>d<sup>5</sup>D<sup>1</sup>d<sup>2</sup>. Γ<sup>1</sup>C LC<sup>6</sup>.

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Ms. Aariak: That clarifies it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Currently, how it works is I don't have privy to be given any language plans. This particular section would help identify that. My office should be consulted on the implementation of these plans, not on the drafting of it, but to give feedback to the departments on how better to comply with the *Official Languages Act*.

It's not that there are two cooks in the kitchen. It is more so a way and a step for my office and in my capacity as the Languages Commissioner to give feedback on how better to comply with the *Official Languages Act*, if that makes it clearer. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) There is one wording there that says "the ability to give direction," which is more than communicating, so if you can just clarify on the ability to give direction to the department. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It gets to that point where there is currently no practice for me to get a chance to look at any language plans by any department. We are taking Uqausivut 1.0, 2.0, departments are dealing with language plans and how they plan to implement and to comply with the laws. There is no provision at this point. For example, if they draft their implementation plan, they complete it, there should be a way for me to be able to give feedback on how better they can comply with the Act. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your submission further recommends that the

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Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act not apply to direction given by the Minister or the Languages Commissioner under an amended subsection 13(4). What is the reasoning for this recommendation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak: Currently, in the *Official* Languages Act, when it comes to any of my investigations, if I receive a concern regarding a language rights infringement, and I need information from a department. I can give an example and there have been delays because of not understanding what my investigative powers are. Our office received a concern and launched an investigation, which required for me to get a third party contract with a department. The response I received from the department was, "Oh, it's a third party contract; you're not privy to that information," but according to the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language *Protection Act*, when it pertains to any investigation from my office, I have the privilege of getting that information and ATIPP does not apply.

It's important to note that a lot of time has been spent either on informing departments, agencies, the private sector, municipalities, and the federal government on what their obligations are under these Acts and there have been delays because, for example, a department may think that I'm not privy to access any third party contracts, but when it does pertain to my investigations, the Access to Information and Privacy Act does not apply. Now, this also means it's not any information that I want, I can just get; it's actually pertaining a particular investigation. If it's regarding a particular investigation and I need that information, the Access to Information and Privacy Act does not apply.

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(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for that clarification. (interpretation ends) Sections 16 through 36 of the *Official Languages Act* provide for the appointment and duties of Nunavut's Languages Commissioner. Before we address the specific recommendations you have proposed for amending related sections of the legislation, do you have any general comments on this part of the Act and how it establishes your office's role? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The wording is changed to clarify the powers of the Languages Commissioner to make staffing decisions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand correctly, you would like to hire an employee at any time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's in the process of the hiring process; it's not that I'm looking for a new position. It's the change in the process of hiring. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr.

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**፭ሲ⊲•** (ጋጎ,ትበJና): የປታ°ሲቮ• Δ•/ペÞርና•. CL७d ለ፫ሲፈነጎJና ΔσΓ• Δ°Δነ/ペ°፫⊲ሲ/ናጋJና Ċ७d CΔbởናጋJና. የປታ°ሲ፫• Δ•/ペÞርና•.

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Malliki. (interpretation ends) Oh, sorry. I'll use my discretion as the Chair and we will take a 15-minute break to stretch our legs. (interpretation) Thank you.

>>Committee recessed at 10:19 and resumed at 10:38

**Chairman** (interpretation): I would now like to call the Committee meeting to order. The next name I have on my list: Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To go back to before our break, my colleague asked about staffing for the languages commissioner. For the improvements you are seeking related to staffing in terms of following the Act.... I'll speak in English. (interpretation ends) You recommend that section 20.1 of the legislation be amended to provide that the languages commissioner be permitted to appoint staff without competition and without approval of the Legislative Assembly or the Management and Services Board. Why do you feel it necessary to have such unfettered powers in making staffing decisions?

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier, I clarified the legality of being independent or known as (interpretation ends) independent offices (interpretation) and we want this independence identified very succinctly, to cite this need.

All employee positions in our offices are required to either be fluent in French or Inuktitut, and in contemplating that requirement, we try to hire fully fluent speakers, and this requirement results in longer delays when we use the Department of Human Resources, as we are following the legal requirements and regulations.

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To use this example, if I am looking to hire a worker, I must first draft up a job description, the job title and the pay scale to be submitted to the Department of Human Resources, and there is a paper trail required if you are going to advertise the position being opened. It has to be posted for a two-week period, and all applicants are screened as to their qualifications.

The next step is checking their résumés, and if they have the prerequisite skills. After the interviews are conducted, then the applicants are notified, again all of this follows the human resource hiring policy or policies for that hire. Again, our office isn't run by multiple groups, as there are only six employees under my position. Further, our work isn't really comparable to other departments, hence the need for clarity.

We would like to be able to hire if we seek employees that are capable, and we would like to direct appoint them. As we are an independent organization, I would like this aspect improved, due to the need to follow policies for our staff and I would like this changed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman along with the commissioner. Yes, in my view, the direct appointment for certain positions has its flaws due to the potentiality for abuse, as we all know we cannot directly appoint due to legal requirements any of our friends or family members.

This in my opinion could have been left out, and that is my preference. Members of the public who express interest in any advertised position should be able to apply, when the copy of the job description is readily available.

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**Δ<sup>6</sup>/<bc'**: L'α. Γ' ΔCς<sup>46</sup>.

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(interpretation ends) Direct appointment (interpretation) has already been applied for a position in your office, and the government can use this process to hire employees through this appointment process or (interpretation ends) direct appointment.

(interpretation) I believe your office has this ability and can bypass the employee hiring process after the advertisement has been open for two weeks, and I think that you have that option, if I am mistaken, you can correct me later.

I am just making a comment on it as I want to turn to another matter. My query wasn't asked previously and what would your opinion be, if the (interpretation ends) direct appointment (interpretation) process was your only route, due to it being in the legislation or the (interpretation ends) hiring process. (interpretation) Can't you just use this existing process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, currently the way it is drafted, all positions must be advertised for a two-week period, and without using the regulations, we are able to only directly appoint an employee with the written approval of the Members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This written directive, can this be amended or revised? Indeed, the government deals with their employees following protocols or specifically the (interpretation ends) Human Resource Policy (interpretation) process that is followed.

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**Δ<sup>6</sup>/<6>**: L'α. Γ' ἀαΦ.

**ሳሲላ**ቅ: 'dሃ°ሲቮካ, Δካፖペኦር፦ካ. Δ΄, Űሲ በበና፣ካረተካሪ ኦናቴ፣ካረ-ኒ-ኒ-ር ርመካኦበናበσ፣ናካ ሥነጋ ለሲፖላዖሥነት ተነት መተ ርኒኦሲ ላጋላሁናረ-ርኮ ኒ---- የኮቴጋላ፣ ጋር በካዕላ፣ካ/ተ-ሲ-ነ>ጋህና የረላσ ቴበኒትና ላግር፣ነቴ፣ የተረጉ፣, Δካፖペኦር፦ካ.

**Δ•/ペኦር**••: L'a. Γ<sup>、</sup> ΔCհ•.

I wonder if this appointment process can also be applied so that your office's ability to appoint employees can apply only by following the legally drafted law. Is there any ability to change that requirement? Can we create that ability through here? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: I think just to make things a little bit clearer, it is not only the appointment of staff in this particular section. We have looked at other jurisdictions that have languages commissioners and other independent officers. It is also recognizing the independence of my office. In other jurisdictions as well, for example, we have looked at the staff of independent officers.

Further to that section where the recommendation is that I should be able to direct appoint employees, in my submission, on page 11, 20.1, I request 2.1(), the staff appointed under subsection (1) or (1.1) are not eligible for membership in a bargaining unit as defined in the *Public Service Act*.

Our role as independent officers is: we investigate, for example, government departments, and recognizing the independence of my office is where this is coming from. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Before I go back to Ms. Nutarak, (interpretation ends) just for clarification, you want the ability to appoint staff without a competition and to set salaries without oversight too? Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For further clarification, it is a minor change on the appointment part.

**Δ<sup>6</sup>/ペ>C<sup>6</sup>**: L'α. Γ<sup>1</sup> ἀα α<sup>6</sup>.

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a▷ናሃጋጐር▷ጐቦጎበና? Γ' ጳሲፈጐ.

**፭ሲላ** (ጋኒትበህና): 'dታ<sub>°</sub>ሲቮ<sub>°</sub>, Δ<sup>6</sup>/የኦር<sup>6</sup>. ጋየረፈናበላ'σላና<sup>6</sup>ሁና. Γየረժጋ<sup>1</sup>Γ<sup>6</sup> ር<sup>6</sup>ሲ ላ/<sup>5</sup>/ትσኦሁታ<sup>6</sup>ንና በ<sup>6</sup>dላ<sup>6</sup>የረታኦና Γ<sup>5</sup>ነ<sub>-</sub>ሴና. C<sup>6</sup>የታ በበና<sup>6</sup>የ/L<sup>4</sup>ረታ<sup>6</sup> 20.1 በበና<sup>6</sup>የ/L<sup>4</sup>L<sup>6</sup> L<sup>6</sup>ሲ Section 20.1, the way it currently is, despite subsection 1, "The languages commissioner may appoint staff without a competition, with the approval of the Management and Services Board." The change would be "The languages commissioner may, with the approval of the Management and Services Board appoint staff without a competition." (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. That is clearer. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you for clarifying this. I would like to move on to another question. (interpretation ends) On page 5 of your submission on the *Inuit Language Protection Act* you proposed an amendment to subsection 1(3)(b) to provide for improvised access to communication services, instructions and programs in Inuinnaqtun, where Inuinnaqtun is spoken.

The legislation currently requires those services in communities where Inuinnaqtun is indigenous, indicating a historical use of the language. If Inuinnaqtun declines such that it is no longer spoken in the community, how will the proposed new wording to help support its revitalization? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) I think this is to make it broader, so even if Inuinnaqtun is not indigenous in a community, Inuinnaqtun maybe spoken in another community even though it is not indigenous to that community. It would make it broader to ensure that Inuinnaqtun speakers, wherever they are, can receive these services and programs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Δ•/ペኦርጭ**: L'α. Γ' ጳሲላቴ.

**Δ<sup>6</sup>/<br/><br/>/\*** L'α. Γ<sup>1</sup> ΔCG<sup>16</sup>.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would like to ask: here in (interpretation ends) section 3 through 13, part 1 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* provides for Inuit language rights and duties. Subsection 2 (2) of Act currently states that these provisions prevail over the Act except for the *Human Rights Act*. Page 5 proposes that any provision of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* should prevail over the Acts to make the legislation "more coherent with the important federal, territorial, and Inuit objectives set out in the preamble."

Can you elaborate further on your reasoning for this proposed amendment? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The wording there is to update the language and to also make it broader so that the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* prevail, except for the *Human Rights Act*. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

>>Laughter

Sorry. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Is it just the wording that you would like changed and nothing else? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr.

**ΔC5<sup>6</sup>**: <sup>6</sup>d<sup>6</sup> Δ<sup>6</sup>L<sup>6</sup> Δ<sup>6</sup>L<sup>6</sup>C<sup>6</sup>. Δ΄,  $7\%^{\circ}$ 5ት ነገር ለናላታና የነው ለህ የሚነት በና የነገር ለውልና ▷'b▷ґ∿ᡥ᠘᠖ᠰᢞᡆ᠌᠌₽ᡤ᠙᠕ᠸᡅᡏ᠋ᡃᡀᢣᡅᡏᡄᡥᠦᡄᢅᢖ.  $\Delta$ JCb5 $\sigma$ LJ 2 (2)  $\Lambda$ 6f7f4f1 LLL Pibirler, "Cidajir NU2277C Podcje V40DU  $L^b \wedge U^b \cup \sigma$  5- $^b \cup \sigma^b$   $D^b \vee G^b \wedge L^b \cup C$ .  $P_{\rho}$  /  $P_{\rho}$  /  $P_{\rho}$  /  $P_{\rho}$  /  $P_{\rho}$ ᢣ°%ᠬᠣᠬᢐᢣᠵ᠒ᠻᢐᠻLC ᠔ᢣ%ᡥ᠐ᠳ᠕ᠻᡆᡃᠵᠵᠣ  $C\Delta\dot{L}^{\prime}$   $DP/a^{\prime}AP^{\ast}a^{\prime}\sigma^{\prime\prime}AP^{\prime}a^{\prime\prime}a^{\prime\prime}LC$  $\Lambda^{L}$ ለሚል ርペይጋና ነፃ የሆኑ የውይ ነው እና ጋና  $^{\circ}$ ር  $a_a \Delta^{\varsigma_b} D_b C^{\varsigma_b} \Delta^{\varsigma_b} \Delta^{\varsigma_b} C^{\varsigma_b} C^{\varsigma_b} C^{\varsigma_b}$ 

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Chairman. Yes. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to ask, in your submission, on page 8, (interpretation ends) on the *Inuit Language Protection Act* you proposed amendments to change the wording of subjection 4(1) respecting government contracts. Can you elaborate further on why you feel these changes are necessary? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for that very good question. Earlier I stated that different government departments were investigated after a complaint over a concern was submitted, obviously we had to conduct our investigation and this was revolving around a service provision agreement between the departments promising to provide services. The agreement was signed by the government and a private businessperson, and we had to investigate the language used in this agreement, and whether or not their duties were clearly outlined within this agreement.

(interpretation ends) I'm going to further explain, just to make it clear because this pertains to third party contracts. During last week's hearing, you heard from the Department of Family Services and the third party contracts that they have. The government departments have a lot of third party contracts. That is fine, and it's recognized in the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

There is a particular provision that I can get to. Section 4 of the *Inuit Language Protection* 

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Act, (1); "Every contract issued or made by or on behalf of a department of the Government of Nunavut or a public agency, whether as a result of a request for proposals, tender or otherwise, shall require the third party communications with and services to the public in the Inuit Language that are necessary to ensure compliance with section 3."

I'm going to go a little bit further to that because as part of our investigation, we had to make sure that this particular provision was recognized and that section 4(2) in the *Inuit Language Protection Act* where it says "Transitional," "This section does not apply to a request for proposals or tender not yet awarded or to contracts in force on the day that this section comes into force."

In the years 2016 and 2017 our office received a concern regarding a facility that had an agreement with a government department. In 2016 and 2017, sections 3 to 5 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* was not in force. What does that mean? That means that the concerns that we investigated were deemed inadmissible because that particular section of the law was not in force.

On July 9, 2017, sections 3 to 5 came into force and that put particular obligations onto the private sector, and particular services. I want to focus on that section that I quoted on the third party contracts.

What does it mean? It means if a government department has a third party contract with a private sector, there are very particular obligations set out that the Government of Nunavut is supposed to comply. When a third party contract is signed, which means that the third party contractor will act as if it's the Government of Nunavut, which means that the third party contractor is now obligated to comply with the *Inuit Language Protection* 

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Act and give particular services in the Inuit language.

When we came across another concern, we again requested a third party contract and because the department didn't think we were privy to that information, there was a delay in investigation. I have had to go back and forth sometimes to some departments to reiterate the fact that in the law, the Access to Information and Privacy Act does not apply when it comes to my investigations.

When we did see the third party contract, in the contract itself, it was not clear that the third party contractor, if they sign with the Government of Nunavut, the third party contractor has the same obligations as the Government of Nunavut. In the RFP, request for proposal process, and the tendering process, and in the whole process from A to Z about third party contracts, it needs to be clear that when a third party contractor signs a contract with the Government of Nunavut, they have the same obligations and are expected to comply with the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

With that, we did a lot of work and correspondence. I can give an example. Instead of dealing with one particular facility, when I requested the third party contract from the department, the response I received from the department was that Community and Government Services handles the contract and not my department. At that time, what I did was, this department and Community and Government Services, come sit with me for a second. Let's talk about the whole tendering process.

Let's make it clear that when a department signs a third party contract, the third party contractor needs to know that they need to give particular services in the Inuit language. Instead of focusing on one particular third CΔLΔ<)Γ<br/>
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party contract in a facility, we worked with the department to ensure that the process and the wording is clear in the tendering process, request for proposal, awarding of contracts, and signing of contracts that it is made much clearer, that the language obligations fall now under the private sector or the third party contractor that signs with the department, or any public agency of the Government of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the commissioner. We had talked about this subject and moving on to another subject. (interpretation ends) On page 15, of your submission on the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, you proposed the addition of subsection 16(2.1) to provide that if the Inuit Language Authority does not provide a recommendation in response to a request of the language commissioner, the commissioner may retain another service provider to provide advice and recommendations and will be reimbursed from the budgetary allocations of the Inuit Language Authority. Can you elaborate further on how you envision this proposed subsection of the legislation being implemented? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank you for the question. Now, the work of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit is critically important in this context. And, also this is an avenue to strengthen the usage of our language through it, and the IUT has an important role but only if they fulfill their duties.

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I know for a fact that the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit will also be making a presentation later on, and to quickly try to provide a response is a reference to my previous request to the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit body in July 2020. Languages are central to our office and terminology is important to complete this as we need to publicize them or to flesh out our reports about language usage or the terms.

There were 213 terms I presented last year in the year 2020. To date, I haven't received a response as to where these terms are in the process, if they've been approved or if the term is getting a definition. The drafting of definitions allows for more consistency in our language, so I believe it is needed along with the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit mandate, as that is under them.

However, without any feedback from them, I get confused as to where they are in the process, whether they are reviewing, approving it and who is actually signing off on this, including reimbursements as spoken to. I am unsure, as it has room for improvement but, if I see the lengthy delays in feedback from IUT, I should be able to turn to another approval body. That is, if we want to see progress in this area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. As a reminder, please keep in mind that we have interpreters. Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to thank the commissioner. If you should retain another service provider for advice and recommendations, where would the money come from to pay for that service?

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Δ<sup>6</sup>/«ΡC<sup>6</sup>»**: L'α. C«σ<sup>6</sup>ςηνο<sup>6</sup>υ<sup>6</sup>νο Ληασ<sup>6</sup>ς<sup>6</sup>βο Ο<sup>1</sup>λο Δ<sup>7</sup>Γογα<sup>6</sup>ος CΡοα<sup>6</sup>ος Ρος<sup>6</sup>ος Γος Εναρος<sup>6</sup>ος

**Δ<sup>6</sup>/ペ>C**%: L'α. Γ<sup>1</sup> ἀα. Φ.

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Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. In my submission, I have it from the budgetary allocations of Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit. How exactly that will work will need to be discussed, but in my submission, if I request the Inuit Language Authority and they are not able to complete, then I want to be able to get a contract or other ways of ensuring that terminology work is being done. The logistics on it will need to be discussed, but that's what I'm proposing for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just for clarity then, the Languages Commissioner's office would have the authority to spend another entity's budget without their say? Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms.** Nutarak (interpretation): I am quite new, but thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the commissioner. So is that possible? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I put it in my submission. It's September 2023. This request came to the Inuit Language Authority in July of the year 2020. This was one way for me to provide a solution so that again, I fully respect the mandate of the Inuit Language Authority and I know the importance of the work that they do, but this was one way for me to provide a solution to ensure that the terminology development that my office needed is being done. Thank you, Mr.

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**Δ<sup>6</sup>/<6>**: L'α. Γ' ἀαΦ.

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Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you commissioner. It would be at your discretion. It looks like you have the authority to pay for the services from the Inuit Language Authority budget. Is that the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) The wording in there is just my office's request, it's not any request. It wouldn't imply that we want to do the work of the Inuit Language Authority, it's this example of the 213, less than 250 terms that we needed standardized. It's not very often that we've requested standardization. It's not an occurrence that has happened often. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just before I go back to Ms. Nutarak for clarification, this is not just asking to spend budget from the Inuit Language Authority, it's also to take responsibility away from their role as Taiguusiliuqtiit, is the clarification. The work that would be done to standardize those 200 plus words would then be submitted to language authority, or they would become the language? Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned, the request was made in the 2020. It was an internal document that my office requested. For example, when we provide reports, publications, there are common terms that need to be standardized. These are internal to my office, so it would be my

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request, and it would be to assist the Inuit Language Authority.

For example, with these 213 terms that I want standardized, what I envision is if the Inuit Language Authority cannot do it at this time, I can have the work drafted so that it could assist the Inuit Language Authority to have at least a draft document for the Inuit Language Authority to approve. It's not replacing what the Inuit Language Authority would do; it would be more to assist, to ensure that the work was being done. Again, this is not something that occurs very often. My request was in 2020, and I have not seen the finalized version. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. That makes sense.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the commissioner. You want a response from the Inuit Language Authority for those 213 standardized terms. Would that money come out of your budget? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): If I understood your question, correctly, I'll try and respond. As I indicated earlier, the terms will be gathered and approved by the Inuit Language Authority then the Inuit Language Authority, who would then do whatever they have to do, because they have to work further on the approved terms.

The Inuit Language Authority has to make the draft and outline what they had done. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, that includes all the standards that they produce. It's their responsibility to make it public. I would not want to overstep that, but if that

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request is being made from me to publicize it, it's an internal document, but it could be widely used. I'd be fine with that, but I have to recognize the mandate and the authority of the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit and respect their mandate. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. If I understood your response, the question was where would the money come from, from which budget? (interpretation ends) Why would you not use your budget to get the work done, as opposed to using Inuit Language Authority's budget? Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak**: I guess I can, but the authority lies within the Inuit Language Authority to standardize terms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Based on my list of names, the next person is: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to query on this page, actually Section 31. I lost it, where did I see it. In these documents here, you in your role as commissioner have submitted these reports to further the direction we need to go to and in looking at the documents, are these recommendations or obligations?

These areas require further improvements, has language that has to be adhered to through your office, and in citing the need for an investigation. Can you provide further details on specific sections that require revision? How can we make progress?

Is there anything concurrent besides this investigation and monitoring process? I fear that we will only delay the work required and I wonder if there are any plans to make this process smoother or a target in mind.

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Perhaps to have a target in mind on the recommendations suggested if there was any wrongdoing in your investigation, to ensure progression is continuing. What is your role there? Could you explain a little more? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, I believe you cited section 31. Was that the *Official Languages Act* or the *Inuit Language Protection Act*? Ms. Killiktee, could you give a reference?

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry. I am referring to sections 31 to 37 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In my drafted report, it speaks to the proposed changes to revise the legislation as written and further, to segregate the two parts that speak to the investigative process. At this junction, as an example, it is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle with missing pieces.

With that it shows the need for improvements in this area, and why it speaks to the discrepancies and my recommendation. Now, the actual language as drafted, should we just massage the wording and further, as I mentioned as an aside, the government departments if our office is unaware of their work, we must request information.

If we're conducting an investigation and we receive a complaint, then the investigation gathers the pertinent and applicable information specific to our investigation, and this should happen without requiring compunction. Also, with respect to the federal government, they undertook more work on the

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languages officially recognized in Canada.

This is more in line with that language, although it applies differently but it states it more clearly and that is how we want to revise the language used in the legislation. We have the recommendations, and furthermore, we want to make revisions to the two *Acts* approved by the previous Assemblies that used the word "concern".

The difference is, "I am concerned that object will fall". While complaint is used and it is (interpretation ends) concern versus complaint" so I am going to fix the English. When the laws were drafted, I believe there was a conscious decision to use the term 'concern' versus 'complaint.' In other jurisdictions as well as other independent officers' *Acts*, the term 'complaint' is used.

That is the part where I request that change. To clarify: do you want me to go from 31 to 37 or which particular section did you have in mind? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your observation with the word complaint or the concern, based on the differences you may have noted and with the inclusion of the words, then the difference between complaint and concern would be interchanged?

Are the definitions the same or where did they get copied from? Where did your office grab this idea from? A shortened version perhaps. I would like it clarified for my edification, and to the listening audience, why have you put this forward to use under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. Perhaps if you can make it a little bit more clear in the actual definition. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): If I understand correctly, I believe you are referring to the words "concern" and "complaint." We have concerns when we perhaps have something in mind, or we may worry that we might fall down. That's a concern. However, the word "concern" has to be replaced with stronger language. To streamline the language used outside of Nunavut and for individuals. They also use the word 'complaint.'

(interpretation ends) When you have a concern, it's a concern, that not necessarily needs to be actioned on, but a complaint is something they are aware of that is not right, and they feel that their rights have been infringed, and it is a complaint that should have corrective measures. It would be in line, not only with other independent offices within the territory, it would be in line with other jurisdictions as well as the federal *Official Languages Act*, where the term 'complaint' is used all across the board.

The term "complaint" makes it stronger and when we include an applicant in correspondence, we don't say "concernant." It should be "complainant." It is not only to further update, but to also clarify the strength of the complaint of Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you. Now, with the wordage surrounding consternation and worrisome are perhaps a bit light in terms of the issues under discussions, you want to bring this to light as being applicable through our legislation, or applicable to the federal government legislation language? Is it for our government

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C\*@ P°σ'ισΔσςΔσ<sup>®</sup> \°°Γσ<sup>®</sup>\P'L'. C\*@ Λ'b/PበJ'በJ በበና'ልቦታ'በ° Δ' Δ/Ĺισ°σςΔυታ<sup>®</sup>°Γα·'C, P°σ'ισ°σ'bςታς'C. ΔĊ?ሲፈ<sup>®</sup>ΓΟΔ°α<sup>®</sup>C»<sup>°</sup> ΟΡ/α<sup>®</sup>/በቦፈ'Γታ»<sup>°</sup> P°σ'ισ°σςΔσ<sup>®</sup> Δα»<sup>°</sup>Γ. 'dታ°αΓ΄<sup>®</sup>. Δ<sup>®</sup>/«PC<sup>®</sup>.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak (interpretation): Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you. Yeah. I want to ask another question about, your role as the commissioner, your communication with the federal government on issues, is this done here? Perhaps it may already have been brought up in January during the 2023 meetings. Did you make a presentation to the federal standing committee as per your report?

(interpretation ends) In January of 2023, you provided evidence before the federal Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs. Can you provide a brief overview of some of the topics that you raised before that committee with respect to the implementation and enforcement of Nunavut's language legislation within federal offices, agencies and institutions that are located in Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd be happy to. (interpretation) Firstly, the matter I shall first visit is it was in March 2022 where I received an invitation to speak to the House of Commons MPs, and it dealt mainly with the challenges associated with federal government elections that year.

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**ጳሲላ**\* (ጋ넋ᲑᲘJና): የdኑ°ሲቮቴ, Δቴፖጳኦርቴቴ.
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Our office received complaints about the problems encountered during the federal election. And it was very clear after our investigation, that they derogated the territorial election obligations. It was legally reviewed, and a letter outlining their derogation of the *Act*, and we sent that to the federal election bureau.

I can provide concrete evidence towards the inadequacy of our federal electoral materials, and if a federal election is underway, Nunavummiut should know the exact location of each ballot station, and the various means of voting rights accruable to them, and to have the election material available.

If they wish to take part in an advance vote, then they need to be able to understand the process required to submit their advance vote in the Inuktitut language. They have to show the advance voting time, where to go to vote as Nunavummiut and these kinds of informational requirements have to be provided in Inuktitut by the federal government, and especially this requirement I can cite as an example of the shortcomings of the federal elections' bureau.

Now, during my presentation to the standing committee, I used these actual examples of the deep concerns held by Inuit who submitted complaints to our offices, about the disservice provided by the federal elections' bureau during the actual polling process. I can also use this example, during the federal election, no Inuktitut signage was made available as posters detailing the advance polling stations.

Another example I can cite here revolves around the actual voting day hours and the hours set for the advance polls, and no documentation or signage was made available in Inuktitut and this continued in other areas. Another example is the specialized ballots

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that if I want to cast a special ballot, then there was no information available either.

The document also failed to list the name of the chief federal returning officer, nor included their crest as required for official notices to Nunavummiut, and this too was completely ignored during the interim.

During the actual polling day, when electors started filing into vote, no public signage was on the walls, especially the public health directives around COVID-19, such as the need for masking, yes, even that restriction wasn't translated as only the English versions were provided about the masking restrictions.

We made three recommendations to the federal standing committee. First, was to require revision to the *Federal Elections Act*, as there should be reference to the need for revising the public information requirement especially related to indigenous languages so that voters can be served in the Inuktitut language or read the syllabics or in Roman Orthography, both *Qaniujaqpatitun* or *Qaliujaqpatitun* are for the two styles.

The second recommendation submitted to the committee was to have the information on the federal chief returning officer for any public signage to be used in a polling station, and that it has to include signage in Inuktitut, and at the same level as the French and English signage.

The third recommendation related to the documented materials used for that process should all be destroyed, obviously due to their erroneous implementation of services and they abrogated certain sections of our legislation, requiring service provision in Inuktitut. This recommendation also included a mini-policy outlining the requirements for all of the different regions of Canada, clear and concise instructions included for all

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elections.

We wanted the materials readily available in our Inuktitut languages, as they need to hear and read this in Inuktitut. I will try to quickly peruse this section as I have already spoken at length, in trying to be understandable. Again, in January 2023, we appeared before the Parliamentary committee related to this.

The *Inuktitut Language Protection Act* and the federal government requirement to provide services in Inuktitut, including written materials. In speech or services from their office that they have to provide services in Inuktitut. I also included that after a complaint has been filed with the federal government and the need to provide services in Inuktitut from their office.

The federal government provides services in French. As required, they have additional funding to provide French services. They also receive a bilingual bonus for fluency in French. For Nunavut federal employees required to speak Inuktitut in servicing Inuit, he or she must be agreeable, but no bilingual bonus is paid for Inuktitut service provision.

The federal government must provide services in Inuktitut, must have Inuit employees fluent in Inuktitut. They should be compensated financially for their ability. Another issue within the government, recommendations brought forward or complaints filed with the Government of Nunavut needs to ensure that there is one-stop shop for complaints. The federal government also has an office for complaints and that we work with because there are many departments within our level of government and the federal government departments.

For example, the Government of Nunavut has many departments, and the federal government has many departments. We need

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one department to coordinate for the Languages commissioner and also for the Government of Nunavut, so that we have one place to deal with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you for the response. Although it was long, it was clear. I understand better and our Chairman told us to as brief as possible. As Inuit, some of us can speak Inuktitut for a long time.

My question is about three recommendations that you mentioned were from a complaint. In January 2023 you appeared before the committee. Has there been any response from the federal government? Do you have any progress to report? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I also thank our colleague for the question. After my presentation to that standing committee, the members of that committee made further recommendations applicable for the whole of Canada, related to the public information requirements, and to have pilot project in Nunavut.

This would be specific to voting documents, ballots and the explanation of the federal voting process in Inuktitut, and after this pilot project in Nunavut, they stated they would revisit these requirements for the whole of Canada. (interpretation ends) To make it short, the recommendation from the committee afterward was for Elections Canada to have a pilot project to include Inuit language in its ballots, and after that pilot project, to look at other jurisdictions and other Indigenous languages is Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. Under section 8, I want to ask: (interpretation ends) the *Indigenous Languages Act* provides that the federal minister may cooperate with the territorial governments by "entering into agreements or arrangements for purposes such as providing Indigenous language programs and services in relation to education, health and the administration of justice." In your view, what priority areas should these agreements be focused on? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): All of it. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do want to clearly indicate that my jurisdiction is stated within the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and the *Official Languages Act*.

My jurisdiction is in Nunavut and the *Indigenous Languages Act* is separate and there are no provisions for investigations at this time. But in my opinion, of course Inuit language should be available in all facets. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wish to turn to another matter or subject in my line of queries, perhaps to provide some background as linear. Firstly, when a complaint is submitted to your office, in this complaint review process, I am referring to a single individual. Do you plan out the service you want to provide?

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Is this part of the process or do you have to make a particular step to start the process? I will use this example. In our community, we hire local people to undertake these processes in registering complaints or by having meeting halls to see if agreement is possible for that complaint. There are commonly held concerns and individual concerns, which is the process you use when you receive one complaint versus the process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. When we investigate, investigations have specific steps to follow as listed. For example, we received a concern regarding a third party contract, it could be Department of Health or the (interpretation ends) Department of Family Services (interpretation) though it may have been one concern, when was it lodged?

Details such as who made the complaint, what was it about, since we can be easily reached at our offices, can receive calls, correspondence, emailed letters, or a personal visitation to our offices. We have to file all of the details in the complainant, who submitted it, whether we need more details and more meetings, either through the phone or by going to them.

There are different ways to register the complaints, and we must always list the specific details on the complaint. Details, such as when it was registered, what concern caused the complaint, when did it occur, where did it occur and if they have the time of the incident, which company or body is it referring to, and most importantly, which of the legal sections were broken, so mostly details like that.

Through the investigation process, and both internal and public communication

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requirements, and we would register the concern that is the subject of the investigation as well as informing the guilty party or department that is being investigated. We have to investigate which law was broken or which regulation.

The investigation report isn't started immediately, as the report takes time to compile as it must identify the legal broach, which legislation? It also includes pictures, recordings or interview transcripts, where we ensure the concern is true and valid. After we've received a complaint and complete the investigation, we look to see how it can be resolved and then we make a recommendation to the people or the group who broke the law or didn't follow the rules. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to recognize the clock at this time. We will take a break for lunch and restart at 1:30. Let's go for lunch.

>>Committee recessed at 11:49 and resumed at 13:29

**Chairman** (interpretation): I reconvene the meeting. I hope you all had a good lunch. Prior to recommencing our hearing, I would like to ask this to the commissioner: earlier this morning as part of the questioning and answering process, this word (interpretation ends) investigations (interpretation) was used, if you can provide a timeline on when the process starts, the timeline from beginning to end, and if this will lead to changes. Now investigations commence only if a concern is submitted, and if this is written within the forms as to if it is a problem, or a noncompliance issue, or of a higher concern. (interpretation ends) Concerns or complaints (interpretation) are written as the reason for the investigation. Ms. Aariak.

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Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and as mentioned this morning, the term "complaint" is stronger than the term "concern" used, and (interpretation) If I understand it correctly, I will go through it. Anytime, anywhere, we can receive concerns. They can come to us in our office, or they can call us at the office, or they can write to us via email. As to whom the person is concerned about or who created the problem, or if a person is raising their concerns, we need to know who the person is.

(interpretation ends) So the first step is to see if the complaint or the concern is admissible. Who is the complainant, and do they have language rights? I can get into more details if you so do wish. I'll keep going.

Which law applies? Is it the *Inuit Language Protection Act* or is it the *Official Languages Act*? Does the organization have language obligations under that law? There is the complainant, and then the organization that is being complained about. Taking all of that into consideration, is the complaint, I'm going to call it, admissible. That means after looking at the laws, were there language rights obligations broken or infringed.

If it is admissible, we have to notify the administrative head and/or the organization, depending on which law applies. Again, the federal government does not fall under the *Official Languages Act*, but it falls under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, as well as municipalities, private sector, and territorial institutions.

At this point, we've tried to ensure that there is an informal resolution process. A quick example I can share with you is: I have the ability as the languages commissioner to launch an investigation and I have done so in the past. When I noticed a language rights infringement, I went ahead and got the details, notified the department that it was affecting,

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verbally, and that particular concern was resolved within a few hours. This means, yes, we have opened a concern file, it was deemed admissible, but the file is closed because it was resolved.

If it cannot be easily resolved, and there are some instances where they cannot be easily resolved, and more time is needed, we also go through a formal investigation process to a point, and I've done this before, where I can summons a witness. If it is with regard to our investigation, I can also compel production of a document. I can also enter offices, organizations, whoever the organization is relating to. I can go into those premises, those offices, whatever it may be, to either request for documents, or take pictures.

If the complaint is substantiated, a report is done with recommendations. If it's not substantiated, then the applicant and the organization is notified. I'm making this as concise as possible.

(interpretation) Do you have any questions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): It's a very clear explanation and those who are watching on TV and the people listening here understand it better now. Thank you. Ms. Killiktee was asking questions at the break, so it's Ms. Killiktee again.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman for the added opportunity. I want to ask more questions about our earlier discussions this morning regarding the issue of the proposed indigenous peoples' language legislation.

What you wanted reviewed and adoption is what you submitted in your report. Due to these reasons, and that this is the legislation made in Nunavut and the fact that the federal 
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government's language legislation, what kind of impact does the federal government legislation have in Nunavut for English and French. You stated this morning that the federal government did not adhere to the legislative recognition, for the official recognition of the Inuit languages within Canada.

Since that has not been settled, my question is: do you have a concern if this does not go ahead and no proper official recognition legislation? Do you have a plan B or do you have another plan? I'm asking about the two documents that you have given them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) When I mentioned the federal official languages commissioner, their jurisdiction is across Canada. My jurisdiction is within Nunavut. The Minister of Languages and the Government of Nunavut have relationships, as well as Inuit organizations, with their counterparts. Oh my!

## >>Laughter

(interpretation) I apologize. There is a fly. They have relationships between Inuit organizations and the territorial government, they do have that relationship with the federal government, and should be able to make movement and progress around ensuring that the federal government is aware of their obligations under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

With the federal languages commissioner, we do have a working relationship, but there is no interaction or crossroads in what we do in our work.

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(interpretation ends) I'm going to quote the English version of the *Inuit Language*Protection Act in section 3, indicating "Duties of every organization... shall, in accordance with this section and the regulations, if any,(a) display its public signs, including emergency and exit signs..." and there are certain provisions, "...provide, in the Inuit Language, its reception services and any customer or client services that are available to the general public." It does get into more detail of what those services should be available in the Inuit language.

I've done my due diligence in providing evidence of the obligations of the federal government by presenting to the House of Commons committee, of which too, I mentioned this morning. I have also made contact, with one of the recommendations that I had, in that when I recommended that within the Government of Nunavut, there should be a secretariat or a division under the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs that specifically focuses on the recommendations from my office or any progress in the investigations that we have started.

I have requested that same or similar structure happen with the federal government, whether it be through the Department of Heritage, whether it be through the Privy Council, or the Treasury Board. That decision is the federal government's prerogative. The main point should be that I have one point of contact when it comes to investigations

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regarding the federal government.

I believe we all have a role to play in ensuring that the federal government departments within the territory of Nunavut are fully aware of their obligations and that they comply with the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, because again, the federal government departments and its public agencies do not fall under the territorial *Official Languages Act*. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It sounds like you have done your due diligence on the matter and you have presented your finding and reports. Something to get this moving, with regard to the other people in Nunavut who represent Inuit, to imagine it, if you got more responsibilities and the people who represent the Inuit in Nunavut, I believe that is the only way to go. The fact that Inuit values have to be pushed to them and the people who represent the arctic and Nunavut, I'm talking about different bodies that represent Nunavut; the Inuit of Nunavut.

I would really like your idea to move forward, but I would like to move on to something else. When do you imagine or envision...? Can you explain that you have a vision? The fact that you said it, I would like to get back to.... You talk about many things that have been established that are important and that are being talked about, even here.

What is really considered very important by our constituents and what the other groups are saying, I believe they are taking it too orally as just words and they don't really have much meaning in the way they hear it. When you are made to just talk and talk, it becomes concerning. If a leader is saying proper things しペLጋናbºd°σ ለንፈበሮ°σ<sup>ь</sup>.

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and saying that they are going to do certain things and create certain things, we hear that a lot. Then, we believe them. Then they explain it to us as MLAs and we believe them.

What you describe earlier about how important is the fact that the language in Nunavut is not really recognized and it has made things to be delayed, so how can we start to use it? There has been some very important work that has been spoken about in the past, but they have never been returned to and discussed some more. Inuit, experts and our elders' wisdom and all the wise words that they have said, they have just said them and then they just disappear, even though they have been presented.

How can we set something to correct things or improve things? Whatever is said in the public is generally believed. As to where we are actually at with the situation, I would really like to hear more because there are so many things that needed to go ahead that have not proceeded today in your office. Maybe something should be done at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you for your question. As I indicated earlier, the recommendations do not come from me personally. Usually, the people of Nunavut come to my office to make complaints of their concerns and whether they are provided services that they should be receiving. Then it's up to me to start an investigation and make a recommendation. That's the end of that.

There is an investigation, there is a recommendation, and it focuses on the complaint that our office received. Even if I

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make a recommendation, the government, private sector, and the hamlets, after they have received as recommendation from our office, and usually it ends there. That's why I included my opening comments, because we to make a decision on, for example, if the private sector doesn't follow the recommendations and keep breaking the rules, is there a need to have some sort of a sanction that we should apply to that organization? With regard to the *Official Languages Act*, 33(2) gives me very little opportunity to, for example, find an organization.

(interpretation ends) To be specific, section 33 under the *Inuit Language Protection Act* is so small in the scope in which I can find. It is only to a point where, let's say, for example, a Nunavummiut complains to my office, and their employer finds out about the complaint, and the employer punishes the complainant because they complained to my office, and now made the organization responsible, if that complain is that "I have been mistreated because I reported to your office," it is the only time I can fine someone or an organization. People should not be afraid to give us their complaints.

That particular section is so small scale and so specific, so much so, that we have never had to use that section because it has never happened. In my opening statements is the reason why there needs to be more of an incentive or repercussion, and are we open to fines? How is that going to be structure?

Those are discussions that are needed further with the departments and the government because, for example, in other jurisdictions, I briefly mentioned there is a provision in another jurisdiction where if the private sector does not comply with a language Act, they get a fine one time, and if that problem continues to be a problem that is not resolved, they get a higher fine from the first one.

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That is up for discussion, but that is why in my opening statement I stated the fact that careful considerations may be needed in order to discuss any fines or penalties. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Indeed, this is a very deep matter but it should be resolvable as we are required to undertake the hard work in order to have it readily planned, and to have consistency in the Inuktitut versions, much like how the English wording lays out the protocols or rules they must follow, sometimes the devil is in the details, that is how detailed it can get.

We as Inuit must also start planning out details that ensure there is no confusion about the process they have to follow, especially for proper implementation of the legislation we have drafted and to list the barriers and obstacles. That was my question about the need to bring this to light.

I will say this in English. (interpretation ends) Subsection 26(2) of the *Official Languages Act* provides for penalties for persons guilty of discriminating against a person involved in a concern or investigation under the Act.

On page 20 of your submission on the *Official Languages Act*, you propose an amendment that would fine a person who refused to comply with the Languages Commissioner's

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requests under subsection 31(5). However, there are no penalties for direct contravention or non-compliance with the legislation. In your view, would imposing fines or other such penalties improve enforcement of the legislation?

(interpretation) Would this apply to the examples that you set out? Can we make sure that proper steps are taken so that we can have some sort of sanction for companies that contravene the legislation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. I use this sheet almost nonstop, so we have actually placed a plastic film over it to protect it from damage as paper tends to rip, this sheet here. Why? Because of these two pieces of legislation, that are dissimilar and the applicability is identified as to who has to comply with the legislation.

(interpretation ends) Territorial institutions have to comply with the *Official Languages Act*, which includes GN departments and public agencies, the Legislative Assembly, the Nunavut Court of Justice and other tribunals, and it may apply to municipalities where there is significant demand. It does not directly apply to private sector bodies, does not apply to federal departments, agencies, or institutions.

I'm stating this specifically because in the *Official Languages Act*, on that part of the fine, we found that it would probably be stronger in the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, and again, there are other independent offices with this particular provision, and it really does not resolve or is beneficial to fine a government department that would be administratively burdensome if I, for example,

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fined the Department of Health, or whatever department and they would have to, through the court system, pay the fine.

The administration of that really doesn't make sense and the money is coming from the government to the government, so that is why I say that specifically. In the *Inuit Language Protection Act* though, that Act applies to the territorial institutions and its public agencies, the private sector, which means private businesses, the Legislative Assembly, the Nunavut Court of Justice and other tribunals.

It applies to municipalities regardless of demand, and it applies to the federal departments, agencies, or institutions, so it has a broader scope.

If we want to talk about fines, I think it would be a lot stronger there, and I think there is room for discussion on what those repercussions or those fines and penalties may be. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just a clarification there. The question was: in your view, would imposing fines or other such penalties improve the enforcement of the legislation. If there were fines that were going to be issued, would the enforcement of the legislation be improved? Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's why I explained it under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. It would have more of a scope. The point of what I mentioned about recommendation is basically the extent of my authority when it comes to that. The penalty part is so specific it has never been able to be enforced. If there are penalties for other, possibly. I could see that if there was an incentive for them for all these organizations to, then yes. I would have to suggest that it would be under the *Inuit Language Protection* 

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Act, and what those repercussions are fines and penalties, is definitely up for discussion. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is very deep. Our Chairman also asked and looking at the scope, it can build up. This should be looked into further is a question. Perhaps, my last question: have you seen anything new or any changes that will be required within the government? In your recommendations you submitted to the government and the federal government: since 1999, have you seen or observed any recommendations not going anywhere in numbers or since 1999, Inuit language and the recommendations that have gone through your office even previous to your placement as a commissioner.

Have you seen what practices have been made since the commissioner's office opened? How far are we behind in Nunavut with the recommendations just fading away without ever being given a response or are the recommendations still moving forward even if they are old recommendations? When you look at Nunavut and standing up; the recommendations that have come forth from your office and the language used and since Nunavut has grown, if they are implemented or have you seen absolutely no response or actions taken any more because the recommendations have become too old on the part of the Nunavut government and the federal Government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a good question. I believe

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In gathering all the recommendations from my office, I no longer had the desire to make another recommendation that wasn't going to go anywhere. I'll get the exact date here. In March 2022, a copy of my office's past recommendations was given to the Government of Nunavut to respond, to give me an update on where they are on the recommendations by the end of that fiscal year, which was a very short time. March 3 was when I sent it and I wanted a short update by March 31 to follow the fiscal year.

I then further explained that after the fiscal year, the Government of Nunavut can have the time and space to update as much as they could on what the government has done with my office's past recommendations. From March 3, 2022, and today is September 26, 2023; I have not seen any responses as to what the government has done, in regard to my office's past recommendations.

This is specific to the Government of Nunavut, the 88 recommendations. We compiled all of them so that all the departments it pertains to can have a response. If they have done anything, let me know. If they haven't done anything, let me know. That would be a way to indicate what work has been done and has not been done, that the

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Government of Nunavut had received on the recommendations from my office. I hope that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I represent our community, I am also here sitting. When we meet and discuss with organizations like the Office of the Auditor General. The line you just mentioned, I heard the same thing in the Auditor General's recommendations, Mr. Chairman. As they mentioned, the recommendations they had submitted in previous years, and they are not in a position to present any new recommendations. That was very similar and likewise, you are saying the same thing. There is a reason. There is something wrong that needs to be rectified. within Nunavut's government. We have heard and the public hears, and they know the issue here needs correction. To my questions and the responses you gave concerning the recommendations you outlined, my apologies is something I can only express. We have to move. I'll end there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. That was a comment, but Ms. Aariak may want to respond.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last year, I believe we requested of the government, whether they were going to give a response. As is, we have given submissions on paper to you on the recommendations that the government perhaps establish, one secretariat to move forward with recommendations, or any improvement that may be made, so that we have a central agency and not be divided up. The government, the elected officials, the

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Ministers, and the deputies, even if they change, the language would be clear and what departments need to do in adherence to the law and where they must do their work, and any investigations by my office where they are responsible.

(interpretation ends) Say that the concern our office received in regard to a facility that had a third party contract, which dates back to 2016, where it was deemed inadmissible, but we have since received a further complaint about that particular facility that had the third party contract. I requested copies of the old, at the time, third party contracts up to a point where I have dates of different correspondences between the department that the third party contractor involved, as well as Community and Government Services and the third party contractor.

One of the better things that came out recently and I saw progress on, is the wording in the third party contract. I must be honest, it could be better worded, strongly worded, but at least now, it is in the third party contract of the third party contractor who will be fully aware of what their language obligations are, if and when they sign a third party contract with the Government of Nunavut, which then makes the third party contractor to be able to fully comply with, just like the Government of Nunavut is obligated to. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Back to my list, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon all. On the *Official Languages Act*, page 14 of 21, section 26(2). The way it is right now, it says, "on the Languages Commissioner's own initiative or at the request of a territorial institution, municipality, a Member, or a Committee of the Legislative Assembly. The Languages

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Commissioner may commence an investigation on the grounds of concern, refer to subsection (1).

I am looking for a bit of clarification to the amendments you want and in their proposed amendment, it says that the Languages Commissioner may, on their own initiative or at the request of a territorial institution, a municipality, or a Member or a Committee of the Legislative Assembly, commence an investigation on the grounds or complaints set out at subsection (1).

Can I get a bit of clarification as to the reasoning behind the changes you want? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a good question. (interpretation ends) In the current law, it's already stated in this way, which means I can either receive a concern or, I'm going to call it, complaint; I don't know if that's presumptuous.

When we receive a complaint, we can investigate, but in the current law itself, it still stipulates that I can start an investigation on my own initiative, and I have done so. If I witness something, if I hear something, if I catch something that violates the language laws, I can open a file and start my own investigation on my own initiative.

This particular change is actually to reflect updating the wording and so it's just kind of updating the wording and also to include the word "complaint." (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

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Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your response. Moving on to my next question, we have been discussing for a couple of days now, actually; it was with the Minister of Languages as well, standardization of Inuktut in government offices. I understand the initiative. We are losing Inuktitut; we are losing it. It's just a fact. Mr. Anavilok mentioned yesterday that there is quite a bit of loss over in Kugluktuk and whatnot.

I'm wondering if I can get the Minister's points of view on another aspect of my observation. Like I said, I understand the initiative of why we're trying to standardize Inuktut, but as you know, we all have our own little numerous dialects in different communities. In Baker Lake, growing up, I was told that there are 11 different groups with seven different dialects.

(interpretation) I'll speak Inuktut for a moment. As I went through my growth process, I had several favourite places to visit, primarily elders in our community. I stem from the Qainniq clan, and the elder I would visit was originally from Wager Bay, north of us. When we spoke, his son used to interpret his words to me, as that elder was extremely verbose and he sounded almost musical to me due to the difference in dialects. There were also other dialects. I haven't heard the dialectal saying in a while: "Hanniuttiruma iikuluuk", and I loved hearing it from a different dialect speech, and a statement was made about this as well: "hivaniqhalukmanilu hulinit mimmakiaq taitnahiurliLaalummat" and this saying when I first heard it was almost musical to me. I even told him to say it again. There are many phrases that we have that we should keep.

(interpretation ends) I'll switch back to English; apologies. I'm wondering what your thoughts are on, I guess, the negative impacts CL°α Þንትሊታካሪ፣ ጋዮ/ÞLላ∿υ ΔΔካበጋና ΔCÞ/°ህጐበCÞ≪ʹʹϹϤϭʹʹ·ሀ ጋዮ/ፈՐαʹጐጋΓ· Δንት՝Ի՞∿Γ°ጋσ· Þ'ÞÞ/'6ÞϚ٬C, '6Lσ°ጋϤ'ΓÞCϽʹ ΛΡʹ·ϧʹʹͽϹ 11ʹህປΔና ΔΔΔና ፈንት՝Ի՞∿Γ°ጋΔና 7σ· Þ'bÞ/'6ጐ, ΔΓ ፈንት՝Ի՞° Γ°ΟΠ·.

to standardizing Inuktut. We are going to lose more and more of all these dialects that are beautiful in our territory. I just wanted your point of view and if this is the direction that we should be heading. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: The direction in standardizing our language, I'm stepping out a little bit of my role as Languages Commissioner when I'm making these comments because my purview as the Languages Commissioner deals with language rights and upholding language rights holders to ensure that their rights are strengthened and upheld.

I must also point to the Statistics Canada numbers. Within the five years that Statistics Canada has done their survey, and we can rely on these numbers, the numbers are dropping drastically in that fewer people are considering Inuktut as their mother tongue and fewer people are using the Inuit language, Inuktut, in the workplace.

(interpretation) Let me switch to Inuktitut, to the interpreters, I thank you. I apologize for this morning beforehand, as I was speaking very rapidly due to my wish to get the message out most likely.

Now, regarding the figures in front of us, obviously, these are Statistics Canada's statistics provided on an annual basis, and they continue to conduct annual counts. Pretty well, annually reaching to our current date, the 2021 statistics are the latest figures for that. It is apparent that fluency in Inuktitut continues to fall precipitously, and the latest figures showed a further decrease in the number of Inuit who could speak in Inuktitut.

With the continual language trending down,

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and with the legislation within Nunavut requirements to strengthen Inuktitut is very clear to me. Do we value our language? Do we wish to keep our language strong? Do we treasure our language? Our language rights, do we want them adhered to? These types of questions result in every one of us having to self-reflect on this truism.

The existence of language rights is the sole purpose that this position, that I currently hold, as the Languages commissioner, in following my mandate and the need to keep the message consistent, as an example of strengthening our languages right through legislation if the need is there for it. I can speak to this question by remarking that the total numbers are veering sharply downwards.

We have to look at faster and simpler ways to support our language, if we truly value our language. The other matter I want to expound on was that Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami has a committee looking at a unified writing system for Inuit Nunangat. Am I talking too fast?

The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Board of Directors come from all the Inuit regions throughout Canada and the committee is mandated to research the viability of a unified writing system for Inuit. The Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated is on the board, if I recall correctly. NTI along with the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, but to date, I am not aware of the progress to date, as I am not a member of the committee. It would be interesting to hear the progress that they are making in terms of language retention and the use and the standardization of Inuktitut.

Hopefully that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

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Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for your response and it's understandable. I'm not going to ask any more questions. I just wanted to make that quick statement. It has to be on record that yes, we all understand that we're trying to preserve our Inuktut language and trying to standardize it, but we must also not forget all of these little dialects that we have all across our territory that are beautiful. I think we should also try to preserve that, but I do understand that attempt and I wanted to bring it up with you as you are the Languages Commissioner and you do speak with the Minister of Languages and other key stakeholders.

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(interpretation) That's it for me, (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is related to the attempted further implementation which requires more clarification with our questions and I want to return to this issue. You want to add more teeth to the legislation as per your report, for the proposed revisions or language needs to be added, or for consistency and to have these amended. However, this would require a different fund.

I refer to the Inuit Uqausinginnik
Taiguusiliuqtiit, who would pay for the work,
but that you would deal with these issues. I
want to better understand the annual report for
2020-21 of the Languages Commissioner.
Seeing that on an annual basis, the funding
was not completed or spent, the funds that
your office carries over, that's my question.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you.

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Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think the point is where that money comes from. If it comes from my office, fine, let's just get the work done. We're all talking about the loss of language, the need for standard terms, and we're talking about 200 terms here. It's not a couple of hundred thousand dollars. It would be the work done within the office if it should be, but it should be standardized and approved by the respectful mandate of the Inuit Language Authority.

(interpretation) I have no issues with where the funding comes from, whether my office pays for it, I would not mind providing the payment for that work. At the very least, the work would commence on these required matters and be completed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, commissioner. The revisions you are recommending in your written submission are what I am questioning you on, mainly to determine where this new funding would come from.

My second question I wanted to ask about relates to the (interpretation ends) Language secretariat (interpretation) or language foundation. My other question will be whether this is a permanent position, based on your written report and where you cited the need for improvements in your opening comments.

When we talk about the Act and the adjustments to the Act... I'll say this in English. (interpretation ends) This morning, in your opening comments, you mentioned that you recommended that a secretariat be a

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position opened, but in your recommendations for the *Official Languages Act*, it's not stated in there. (interpretation) I'll switch to Inuktitut. Where would that come from? Would it come from your office or the Office of the (interpretation ends) Premier? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. You answered the question this morning, but maybe you can elaborate on it. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I can further clarify in that in the submission for the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, I basically submitted that this division should be under the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. In having those discussions with different departments, it's in the government's prerogative. They can put that division wherever they want.

I think the term "secretariat" is confusing you or some Members in that in another jurisdiction, in New Brunswick, actually, the government of the day put out a release that would open an office in April 2023 with the Government of New Brunswick within the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs that would be considered a language secretariat and that would be exactly to follow through and follow up with the Languages Commissioner's recommendations and investigations.

The secretariat that I mentioned this morning in my opening statement is basically considered the division under the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs I had mentioned in my submission. The terminology is just different, but the concept is the same in that there be a division or a secretariat within a government department that would systemically keep track of my office's recommendations and to ensure that

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there is follow-through, implementation, and completion of my recommendations. That should not matter on the number of senior officials that change or the government of the day.

Right now, it is more time-consuming for my office. We're not a very big office. It's more time-consuming to update every single, either new government, new Minister, new senior official, and in this way, this secretariat or this division under Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, or wherever they decide to put it, would be a systemic tracking so that there would be a way to continue the progress of language obligations under the government. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to take a step back. Earlier today, the commissioner mentioned that there seems to be some issues with getting documents to substantiate investigations, as well as what info should be provided for those investigations.

One of the challenges we have as legislators in here is we need to make legislation because it's law and it can't be dependent upon current circumstances, such as I'll use the issues that the commissioner brought up earlier on getting access to documents, that departments don't understand or third party entities don't understand their obligations under current legislation.

To me, I guess my question would be: is there actual legislative change that needs to be made or is it more of a communication strategy with government and third party entities to make sure that they are aware of their requirements under current legislation?

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The particular sections under both the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* have provisions that ATIPP does not apply when it comes to my investigations. The wording on the two is different. In my submission, what I'm requesting is that the wording is comprehensive to each other, but it still means the same thing.

The example I gave about a facility that I requested the third party contract on, my initial response from the department was, "You are not privy to this information because it's a third party contract, therefore, goodbye," in which I said, "Actually, in the Official Languages Act and in the Inuit Language *Protection Act*, there are provisions that ATIPP does not apply when it comes to my investigations. This happened so many times with government departments and agencies, even after reiterating both the *Inuit Language* Protection Act and the Official Languages Act where there are provisions that the Information and Privacy Act does not apply to my investigations.

In February 2021 I had to go out of my way to contact the Information and Privacy
Commissioner because even after my quotes of both the laws, they were still either misinformed or resistant in giving me and my office information when it gets into investigations. Now I have this letter in my back pocket and if a government department or agency refuses to give me information, "Here you go." That's it.

Another thing that would address this particular issue is having that...I don't know

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what the government wants to call it. Is it a secretariat or is it a division? It would be to systemically identify the government's obligations and having that information all throughout so I don't have to continually reinform or re-educate or reconnect with whether it be a new Minister or a new Deputy Minister or a new Assistant Deputy Minister. I think there is that critical need for a systemic overview of what the government's obligations are so that there are frontline workers, middle managers, all the way to the Deputy Ministers and the Ministers of the day who are fully aware of what those obligations are under the law. I believe this secretariat or division could be useful for that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry; I didn't mean to confuse the commissioner. I was thinking in my head, so I looked off into a different direction.

A similar question, when I look at, again, in an earlier response when the commissioner is looking at having more autonomy within the human resource functions of her office, again, when we make legislative changes, it becomes law. To me, again, we had the Deputy Minister of Human Resources here last week with the Office of the Auditor General report on family services and there are, admittedly, some gaps in the human resource process, mainly due to capacity.

Again, I would just like to get some further clarification on when we're changing legislation to accommodate a situational thing, such as lack of capacity with the Department of Human Resources. I have kind of a two-part question, Mr. Chairman: so a little bit further explanation on why it's still felt that we need the legislative changes to

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give that autonomy to the office and why isn't the current methodology of having the Management and Services Board approve direct appointment packages that are put forward by the commissioner sufficient. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you. Thanks for bringing this up again because I was looking forward to more discussions on this because that particular section in my submission under 20.1, it's just changing the wording around. It's basically the same thing. We are still requesting with the approval of the Management and Services Board. It's not that that needs to be taken out. It's just cleaning up of the legislation and updating it. Secondly, I want to mention that in other jurisdictions as well as other independent officers, this is also the case, so that would also be reflected through here as well.

I was going to request the Chair to recognize Lanise, but I think we're okay. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's always good when witnesses look to their right or left and realize that they gave a fulsome response that they didn't have to be supplemented, so thank you for that.

Another question I had on page 12 of the submission on the *Official Languages Act*, it was suggested that an amendment to subsection 22(2) providing that the duties of the Languages Commissioner include the power to conduct reviews of legislation or policies as it relates to the status, use, or protection of official languages. I would like

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to ask the commissioner why it is felt that this needs to be, again, explicitly provided for in the Act.

From what I understand, that can be done at any time and any legislative proposal can be submitted by the commissioner through the Management and Services Board or through the Speaker. I can't recall the exact process. I was just wondering why this needs to be explicitly described in this manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't hear which number was referenced. Which number was that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Hickes, if you can quote the section, but it is on page 12, OLA... no acronyms; official languages. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak** (interpretation): I apologize and thank you. (interpretation ends) The specific wording that is in the submission, page 12, you're considering 12(3)? 12(4) is on page 13.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Hickes, if you can clarify the section so that there is no confusion. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you for that opportunity, Mr. Chairman. It's on page 12 of the commissioner's submission to the *Official Languages Act* and it's subsection 22(2) and the proposing of a new (b) under section 22. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

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**Ms. Aariak**: Do we have the same submission? Sorry. I'm on page 12 of my submission on the *Official Languages Act*. Here we go.

I'm sorry; repeat the number again.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) It is on page 12 of the submission and the section that wants to be added on says, "conducting review of legislation and policies as it relates to status, use, protection of official language or its impact on official language speakers, and reporting on the results of the review and the Languages Commissioner's recommendations, if any." That's a new section that is proposed to be added on. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak**: Mr. Chairman, through you, if I can ask Lanise Hayes, legal counsel, to respond. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Hayes.

Ms. Hayes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The purpose for this amendment, while it's practised, it is good to have these things actually in writing because sometimes those practises do get lost. Here we find that many of the statutes of Nunavut are based on legislation from other Canadian jurisdictions and may inadvertently place speakers of those official languages at a disadvantage, so for example, the need for interpreters and translators to facilitate compliance.

There is a precedent as well in different jurisdictions for conducting systemic reviews of legislation, for example, the legislation for the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. The idea is to ensure that this is something that will happen regularly. It's

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already in the law, but we will bring it into the purview of the Languages Commissioner. It also relates to the functions of the Languages Commissioner's Office, which is to receive complaints, prepare reports and recommendations. It sort of dovetails with the whole purpose of ensuring that there are recommendations reporting and that the reviews are tied to that as well. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave that alone for now and I'll move on.

Mr. Chairman, in section 38, it provides that regulations may be made in respect to the legislation. To date, no regulations have been brought forward to support the implementation of the *Official Languages Act*. In the commissioner's view, what areas should be considered as a priority for the drafting of Official Languages Regulations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This morning, or was it this afternoon. I mentioned that in the Official Languages Act, there is a section on municipalities. If there is "significant demand," I'm putting this in quotes because it's in the law, if there is significant demand in a particular municipality, they then have to comply with the Official Languages Act. The definition of what "significant demand" is has not been created in regulations. I believe, even having that clarification of what and what threshold is the definition of "significant demand" so that it will be clear that if there is a significant demand, then they have to comply with the Act. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just before I move on, I actually had a question noted here on significant demand. The commissioner had mentioned earlier that the federal legislation hasn't provided a description or a meaning of "significant demand" and the commissioner used an example earlier of French services in Igaluit versus French services in a smaller community with a much smaller population. The commissioner just mentioned that it's in the legislation now, and forgive me, colleagues; I didn't have time between the last question and this one to look up if there's an actual description in our legislation on "significant demand" and, if there is, maybe the commissioner could explain it a little bit and, if there isn't, maybe explain how the commissioner interprets "significant demand" under Nunavut legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That leads to your question of what regulations should be added because in the law now, the Minister of Languages is responsible for drafting regulations.

One of the regulations that have not been completed is the definition of "significant demand." That would be a regulation that I think should be completed to ensure that there is a clear definition or threshold of what significant demand is, and I think that would be one of the things I can think of off the top of my head. It would make it clear as to which municipality is obligated under the *Official Languages Act*, and yes, it is not clear in the federal legislation on "significant demand" and there has been no regulation or definition

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in Nunavut, but that's why I mentioned that if there were to be regulation considerations, that would be one of the ones that should be drafted. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. On page 2 of the commissioner's submission on the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, it includes a discussion on measurement against objectives. In the commissioner's view, what key measures could be used to evaluate whether the legislation is reaching its objectives? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This touches a little bit along the lines of Mr. Simailak's questions earlier. In our office, the Office of the Languages Commissioner, we have measurements, for example, surveys. We do surveys on municipal services and their compliance. We have phone surveys where our office conducts a phone survey and calls random departments and figures out what percentage of the departments have the services available in the official languages or in the Inuit language if it's under ILPA.

We also did a survey on the right to work in which our office conducted interviews with Government of Nunavut employees. Those numbers, which were tabled in the...I'm not going to mention the year because I don't have it right in front of me, but our office did the right to work survey where Government of Nunavut employees were interviewed and collected numbers around how many employees knew that they have the right to work in the Inuit language, how many can

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receive and are welcomed with the training in the language that they wish to learn more of. These are measurements to indicate, "Okay, the government needs to do more."

With what Mr. Simailak had also mentioned, we are witnessing the loss at such a rapid rate. In Nunavut, 8 percent doesn't seem like a lot, but 8 percent lower from the previous five years was the number that was captured by Statistics Canada on those who consider Inuktut as their mother tongue or those that use it in their workplace.

I think these are indicators and numbers and we experience these. We are fully aware of them and I think these indicators and these measurements should be taken as a way to ensure that there is constant improvement of not only the strengthening of language rights, but also the programming, the availability, the development, whether it be through standardization or training, because the numbers are there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to follow up on that and I know that there have been a number of different models around the world that have been explored for standardization of language and the benefits and pros and cons to doing that.

As Mr. Simailak mentioned, many communities are very proud of their dialect, many regions are very proud of their dialect, yet from providing services at a government level, I'll use the Department of Education as an example because I recall a circumstance where, I think it was in the Fourth Assembly, there were a number of textbooks that had been updated and translated to Inuktitut. At

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the time, it was explained that due to the dialectal differences, it would be almost impossible or at least not very financially prudent to provide textbooks for every dialect across the territory.

Coming to an agreement on a standardized language, to me, is important from an education standpoint, but even after that description, if I recall correctly, one of the first questions to the Minister at the time was, "Well, when is it coming out in my community's dialect?" I think having that understanding across the public and public sector of some of the limitations and movement, like at some point, maybe that is possible.

Right now, to move ourselves forward and to strengthen the language that we have in front of us now, I would just like to get the commissioner's perspective on how prudent it is to continue on the path of language standardization or to celebrate the uniqueness of the different dialects when it comes to providing services across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I must be clear; I don't want to overstep any toes, but my purview and my mandate is with language rights. I do want to say this: there was a project led by the Department of Culture and Heritage as well as Community and Government Services with a translation device and that was, from what I understand, created with the Translation Bank of the Translation Bureau as well as translations, I believe, from the *Hansard* and from that, there are a lot of common terms that could be used from that.

Further to that, I think there is confusion

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around standardization of a language versus a standardization of a writing system. Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the committee that is tasked at creating a standardized writing orthography is comprised of the different Inuit regions, from what I understand, of which Nunavut Tunngavik and the Inuit Language Authority are committee members of. Even if there is to be a standard orthography, which is a writing system, the writing system, from what I understand, could also accommodate the different dialects, but it's written in one way.

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Another aspect I would like to mention is there is traditional terminology and there is modern terminology, like email. That's not a traditional word, but we all now know it as *irngirnaaqtaut*. It's a new term that was created and that was a way to keep our language evolving so that our language is strong. I think there are benefits to standardizing, but at one point, I had to explain on more than on occasion the fact that even if there were to be a standard term, nobody is going to go to jail by speaking their dialect.

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Everyone should be encouraged to speak their particular dialect wherever and whenever they want, but a standard term could be a way to help evolve our language to strengthen it because if our language isn't evolving, it's dying; I think, to encourage the learning of all kinds of dialects, but to also encourage the learning of standard terms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

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**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you. I'm glad the commissioner used the word "encourage" in there. From my experience, not everyone is encouraging people to practise their language.

**ዙ∆<sup>\$</sup>'** (ጋጎት∩J<sup>\$</sup>): 'd৮°Ⴍ<sup>†</sup><sup>\$</sup>. ላ፫ላႭΔ<sup>\$</sup> bጚ<sup>\$</sup>ቦ<sup>\$</sup>\$\Δσ<sup>\$</sup>Γ<sup>\$</sup> Þ<sup>\$</sup>bbΔ<sup>\$</sup>α<sup>\$</sup>L<sup>\$</sup>. bጚ<sup>\$</sup>ቦ<sup>\$</sup>\$\Δα<sup>\$</sup><<sup>\$</sup>ቦ<sup>\$</sup>Γ<sup>\*</sup>LC P<sup>\$</sup>d<sup>\$</sup> Þ<sup>\$</sup>bÞ<sup>\*</sup>\$<sup>\$</sup>Γσ<sup>\$</sup> ላጋ<sup>\$</sup>በ The commissioner had mentioned the written formats and I'm glad that was mentioned as well too. One of the amendments proposed is to provide for specific written formats for Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun, and again, I would like to ask the commissioner a question on why this requirement should be written into legislation itself versus regulations or policy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If I'm correct, you're referring to 1(2.1) in my submission on page 5 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

We have received concerns in the past that we've had to investigate and there is currently nothing in the law now that covers the writing system or the quality of translations. One question that was posed to my office is if a company wants to register their company just in syllabics, can they? At the time, the system that is used to register businesses could not support syllabics. I also want to keep in mind, whatever the recommendation that comes from the Inuit Language Authority as well as any Inuit organization that is part of the standardized writing committee with ITK, whatever that recommendation comes out should be also reflected here.

Also, the signs, for example, if a company wants to advertise just in roman orthography and not use any syllabics, this gives clarity as to what writing system they can use in that they don't need to use syllabics, English, French, and roman orthography and Inuinnaqtun. It gives that option because there are those that prefer the roman orthography and there are those that prefer the syllabic writing system. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope I answered the question.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the commissioner for that response. I'm not sure if the commissioner was listening in yesterday. I had a similar question regarding outside of the territory facilities that want to comply with our language legislation and the challenge they have because they don't have the connections or the contacts necessarily to come forward to find reliable translation or interpreter services, especially with something as simple as signage where I had asked the Minister yesterday, or the Minister's office vesterday in this room to basically describe if there were any concerns with the consistency of that signage and the standardization of terminology and signage.

We have all seen examples of where that system has failed, where signs have had to have been taken down and redone in some circumstances because of one symbol in the wrong place. I've had to do it myself on elections signs one time. I had one misprint on there and I had to get a sticker to cover it up because it meant a totally different thing.

To encompass solutions to that issue, basically it was suggested to me that they go online and use google to find terminology. I found that was kind of a weak response. We want to make sure that our contracted facilities are using up-to-date language, proper language, that there is no confusion. Even in facilities with people from different regions that may have different words for differing signs, so having that consistency and standardization to me, is important.

I would just like to get the commissioner's viewpoint on outside-of-territory facilities. I know she had mentioned earlier where it is part of a third party contract, and if it is, or isn't, there are businesses that do want to

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comply with Nunavut's language legislation and provide that service for the people either in their care or their clientele. I would just like to get some feedback from the commissioner on that topic. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm also happy that you asked this question because in my submission, you will see under 3(1)(a) in the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, we have received concerns that pertain to the quality of translations.

Currently, I don't have jurisdiction because in the law right now, it says it must be intelligible. What does intelligible mean? With this particular clarification that I've recommended, to be clear, the Inuktut version of any written text described in this section must be a) intelligible, use the Inuktut spelling standards, and at least as prominent as the text of any other language used.

In 1976, a body under Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, led by the late Josie Amaujaq Kusugak, created the Inuit Cultural Institute spelling standards. In English we have grammar rules. We also have grammar rules in the Inuit language. At the time, when the Inuit Cultural Institute was operating, they adopted these spelling standards. Since then, Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit has updated those same spelling standards.

This gets to the important work that needs to be done by the Inuit Language Authority. Their mandate is to standardize terminology. Their mandate is to come up with new terms. Their mandate is to ensure that traditional terms are being preserved. This is why when I have to wait that long to get standard terms, and we're talking about current terms, even for something like an annual report, there

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should be some standard term that could be used for an example, and I just picked that out of everywhere.

When it comes to third party contracts, with the work and the correspondence I've had, I believe there was work done around the wording where Community and Government Services, as well as the Department of Justice did some work around the legal terminology to ensure that in the whole process of an RFP template, request for proposal templates, standing offer agreements, and that whole process, the wording is there to ensure that the third party contractor is fully aware of what their obligations are when they bid, for example.

This will ensure that the third party contractor budgets to ensure that a) they are fully aware of what their language obligations are, and what they have to do to budget. Even if a government department has a third party contractor outside of the territory, they are still obligated under the law to be the same as Government of Nunavut obligations.

In terms of the funding that is available with the Department of Culture and Heritage, which was mentioned vesterday I believe. from what I understand, and those questions could be posed to the department again, but I believe that funding was geared towards smaller businesses. I do know there were policy issues. One in particular that was brought to my attention was the fact that if the private sector wants to comply with the *Inuit* Language Protection Act, when they apply to the Department of Culture and Heritage, why do they have to provide a reference letter from an organization? It doesn't make sense to me because if a company wants to comply and they are willing to, there should be no extra hurdles for the private sector to get that funding. Yes, they need to be accountable.

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The other things, in terms of the work stemming from the Inuit Language Authority, I did have some discussions with chambers of commerce.... That \$5,000 doesn't go very far when you think of all the translations and the interpreting that a private sector needs to do.

I did have some discussions that need to be ongoing with private sector representatives, chambers, tourism, economic development officers, and associations. There really is nothing that is stopping those sectors that own businesses and those that represent the private sector in coming up with a terminology list of what the most common terms are that the private sector is coming across. For example, open sign, closed, bathroom, exit; these are all terms that most likely are by a lot of the private sector.

There could be a way, and that is partly why Becky Taukie is here, is to assist the private sector in such a project in collecting terminologies that would assist the private sector and have that standardized by the Inuit Language Authority so that there is already a bank of terminologies used by the private sector that doesn't need to be continually translated. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I answered your question, though I have forgotten what it was.

>>Laughter

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I will use my discretion as the Chair to take a 15-minute break so we can stretch and have some refreshments.

>>Committee recessed at 15:14 and resumed at 15:32

**Chairman** (interpretation): The hearing has reconvened. Mr. Hickes was the last one to ask questions, so we will continue from there. Mr. Hickes.

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Ρ'ປ'ς "ό'ς σ σΛ° ν'ς Ρ'L' CΔb° \υ' b√/Γσ'σσις. Γ'ς ΗΔ<sup>6</sup>. Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to continue on with the line of questioning I had just before the break on signage and responsibility. The commissioner had mentioned that there needs to be that standardized list of terminology that people can access.

My next question is, in the commissioner's vision of accessibility to that list or the responsibility of terminology, if a facility.... Again, I'm just going to keep using "out-of-territory" because I think it's a stronger example of having access. I think, in-territory, the resources are a little bit more known, but outside the territory, when we look at, again I'll just use signage because it's just an easy example, should it not be maybe the sponsoring department's responsibility to provide the language for those signs or for the information that's to be shared with their clients to add an ease of reference or at least an entry point for facilities?

Like the commissioner had mentioned, even if these entities do apply and are given up to \$5,000 from Culture and Heritage on providing the signage, it doesn't go very far. To me, having four different entities trying to get the same verbiage for their signage just seems defeatist to me. It's a waste of resources. You're duplicating things over and over and over and over again because there are maybe four now and it could be six more next month, trying to get the same information.

Having that standardization of especially something like the commissioner had mentioned, like exits and stairs and things like that, common signage that we have, I understand that some may be a little bit more unique to the situation, but I would like to get the commissioner's feedback on where that responsibility should lie in providing translated terminology. Thank you, Mr.

**HΔ<sup>64</sup>** (ጋጎትበJ<sup>6</sup>): 'dታ°ፚ፫፞<sup>6</sup> Δ<sup>6</sup>۲ペÞር<sup>66</sup>. ላለ<sup>66</sup>dົ<sup>6</sup> CL<sup>6</sup>d4 በበና<sup>66</sup>۲L⊀Δ<sup>6</sup> ለ<sup>5</sup>⊀በቦ<sub>→</sub>ቦ<sup>6</sup> CL<sup>6</sup>ፚ CΔ<sup>1</sup>/<sup>6</sup> ላ<sup>5</sup>ትቦ˙<sup>66</sup>۲L⊀Δ<sup>6</sup> ላጋΔ°ፚÞታሊፈ<sup>6</sup>b<sup>66</sup>ጋΔ<sup>6</sup>.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to provide my answers in two sections.

I'm going to refer to the *Inuit Language Protection Act* where, in Part 2, section 16(5), on page 14 of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* and as I mentioned this morning, the three different offices have different mandates. My office concentrates on language rights issues; language rights infringements; and language rights. Now, mind you, there are other provisions where I can provide some advice, request research, etcetera. The Minister of Languages is responsible for providing funding language promotion which, even though I personally do it, it's not in my capacity as the Languages Commissioner to do so, but I do, do it on my own initiative.

I want to get to this particular section because it highlights the importance and the need for the Inuit Language Authority to fulfill its mandate. In this section that I am about to quote:

"The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit may

- (a) designate standard terminology, expressions, orthography, language or usage in the Inuit Language for
  - (i) use by an organization or in an area of activity to which this Act and the regulations apply, and
  - (ii) the communications of a department of the Government of Nunavut or public agency";

And it goes on with the mandate of the Inuit

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Language Authority and that's why that organization and the functionality for the organization to fulfill its mandate are so important because they do have a very important section of keeping our language strong and that's part of standardization.

The other part, actually, I'm going to add another part, the second part is I had mentioned this morning or this afternoon, I had mentioned that this translation device or app was in collaboration with the Department of Culture and Heritage, Community and Government Services, and Microsoft. They have created this database of terms that have been translated in the past, which is a great bank of terminology that could be used. The Translation Bureau within the Department of Culture and Heritage could also be reached out, I believe.

I had this very discussion with one of the departments after I sent in my submission when we were dealing with third party contracts and that very issue of "Okay, if it's an organization outside the territory, what resources are there?" And there is still quite a bit out there. The Microsoft Bing Translator, for example, is available everywhere, anywhere you go. There are other resources that have been developed by different organizations, for example, Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, the language bureau where they come up with medical or health terms and there are different resources that are available to the public as well as organizations.

I think it's also a matter of promoting those resources and having that available too to the third party contractors. I think that would be more of a question to the departments on what they are doing in ensuring that the third party contractors outside the territory have the resources available and they are aware of what's available out there currently. I agree

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with you wholeheartedly that third party contractors and everyone for that matter should not be translating a term 5,000 times, hence the idea and the collaboration I wanted to have with the private sector organizations that represent them, the private sector themselves, economic development officers, and organizations that are representing the private sector.

This is Becky Taukie's role in ensuring that the private sector can come to our office to figure out how they can fill out an Inuit language plan so that they have a map as to how they plan to comply with the laws. One thing that I think we can assist down the line is to start collecting those common terms that the private sector uses and to have them officially standardized by the Inuit Language Authority so that we can respect their authority and their mandate, but also assist in that. If a collection of terminology bank is needed, that's something that we can assist with so that the Inuit Language Authority can approve them or standardize them.

One more thing, there are government departments that are responsible, for example, for all the exit signs, all the emergency signs. That has already happened and it's an ongoing thing and I think those are other resources and materials that could be tapped into. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the commissioner for her response. I think the word bank is needed and I think it should be available publicly. I do look forward to hearing some updates on that work and not just from the commissioner. I realize she mentioned that's not her mandate, but she is there and available to assist the language authority or the Government of Nunavut in

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The language authority has been mentioned a few times. Specifically, it was mentioned earlier that there are a number of outstanding standardized terminology requests that have been on the books for a long time. I guess I have a couple of questions here; one, are there words that are coming in incrementally? I believe the number 200 was used earlier and those were submitted a number of years ago, yet we have talked about some recent new terminology such as email and a few other things that were mentioned specifically.

My first question would be: how are those requests made to the language authority and how are they responded to? Is it like as the terminology is developed and agreed to, it comes out? How does it come out? Who is it shared with?

A medical terminology was used and I remember in a previous life when we were trying to promote interpreters in health centres and in the hospital here to access Nunavut Arctic College's terminology workshops. I think there were six different ones just for medical terminology alone, so there are just so many different professions and so much needed to evolve the language, I believe is the term that was used earlier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms.** Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. I'm going to go further in the *Inuit Language Protection Act* where it makes it clear of what the mandate of the Inuit Language Authority is and that is to, continuing from what I quoted in that section 16(5)(b) is to "direct a department of the

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**ἀΛΦ** (ϽΫΡΠͿς): ʹϭͰͼϪͰͼ ΔͼϒϾϷϹͼͼ, ʹϭͰͼϪͰʹ·Ͻ ϤΛΛͰͼϪϾ ΛʹϭͰ ϽͼͼͿϴϹͰͼϹͼͿ ϹϪͿϒϹϷͼϔ 16 ϤϹϭ, ϷʹϭϹϲͼ 5 ϤͰ ϷʹϭϹϲͼ Β, ϹͼͿϤ υϨͰͼͿͼ ΠϲϽΓς Government of Nunavut or public agency to implement standard terminology, expressions, orthography or another standard language or usage in the Inuit Language" that the language authority has recommended.

I'm saying this because the Translation Bureau and the Department of Culture and Heritage have tremendous resources and, if you like, the terminology bank, translation bank of information that is commonly used. I believe there is that room for collaboration between the Department of Culture and Heritage and the Inuit Language Authority to use their resources to come up with more standard terminology so that there is progress in ensuring that not only new words but old terminology is being documented and publicized.

I also want to go back to a recommendation that my office has made and I did mention that we compiled all of my office's past recommendations. Those recommendations have always been tabled in this House through our annual report. In the annual report for 2017-18, our office recommended that the Department of Culture and Heritage, along with the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, should implement a database to gather terminology already used in the territorial institutions and develop specialized terminology. There is also a section in the law where it states that the mandate of the Inuit Language Authority is to publicize standard and approved terms.

(interpretation) I hope my response was adequate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was trying to go to that page to see what the recommendations look like in the....

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The commissioner has mentioned a number of different recommendations that have come forward and there hasn't been anything communicated back. I'm just wondering if it might be an option for the commissioner to provide that list directly to the Committee so that we can follow up during our proceedings to follow up on those recommendations. That would be the first thing.

With the Inuit Language Authority, again, to see that number, 200, that was used earlier on 200 words or terms that are outstanding, I would just like to get some clarification on how those are fed back into the system. Is it as they are developed or are they in chunks or are they waiting until all 200 are done before they share it with anybody and how many are outstanding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I actually wrote a note here because you asked about the process for the Inuit Language Authority on how they process a request and how they emit that information out. I believe that's more of a question that could be directed to the Inuit Language Authority, but what I have done is and I must be clear, to be exact, the 213 terms was a request from my office to the Inuit Language Authority. The commonly used terms that my office collected is from our past annual reports, from different publications, and terms that we need in order to have that continual and consistent terminology in all the languages, in the Inuit language more so.

July 2020 was the date that I said that I sent the request to the Inuit Language Authority and we did do our due diligence in collecting terms from our past annual reports so that they can have something to refer to because it can get confusing with the different terms that **Δኮ/ペレርና**b: L'a. Γ' ላሲላ<sup>b</sup>.

were used. We put it in a way that historical terminologies that have been used are inserted into this database and have a column for Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, and then a column for the Inuit Language Authority's recommendation if it's separate from the ones that have been used in the past.

I believe the resources that could be utilized; a large part could be through the assistance of the Department of Culture and Heritage through their Translation Bureau since they do similar work. The request was made in 2020. In the beginning of the year, I want to say January 2023; I did receive some word back from the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit. I was okay with some of the terminology, but I was not okay with the rest. I sent which terms those were back to the Inuit Language Authority, but I have not received anything back since the board has met or which ones were approved.

I must say I mentioned, in 1976 under the leadership of the late Josie Amaujaq Kusugak, they created the Inuit Cultural Institute's spelling standards or writing standards. The Inuit Language Authority came up with an updated version. Just like the English grammar rules, it's the same thing with the Inuit language. We should take pride in ensuring that these spelling standards are used when publications are being made.

What had happened was I sent them back to the organization to be finalized, and to date, I have yet to receive anything. Once I do receive it and it is, again, the responsibility of the Inuit Language Authority and the mandate to make those databases available, but in my recommendation, like I mentioned in 2017-18, in that the Department of Culture and Heritage, in collaboration with the Inuit Language Authority, should have that database publicly available.

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As for me, when I do receive the formalized standard terms approved by the Inuit Language Authority, I have no issues sharing that data, and again, these were internal usage to my office, but some of the terms could be used all across the board, but again, that mandate lies behind the Inuit Language Authority.

(interpretation) I hope I responded to the question correctly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just before I get back to Mr. Hickes there, one of the requests he asked was if your office can share the 88 recommendations that appear to have not been acted on, so if you can give that to me as the Chair and I will distribute it to the Members. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to follow up on that. Just for the record, the commissioner gave a thumbs-up, so there's affirmation there.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. On pages 14 through 29 of the commissioner's submission on the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, it has proposed a number of amendments to give responsibilities to the Department of Culture and Heritage within Part 2 of the Act, which establishes the duties and responsibilities of the Inuit Language Authority. Can the commissioner describe what she envisions as the working relationship between these entities and indicate which entity will make the final decision in cases of contradictory or conflicting direction as provided for in the legislation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we heard from the Minister of

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Languages yesterday where the recommendation was to.... I don't know if the word "adopt" the Inuit Language Authority was used, but that seems to be the idea that I got from yesterday's appearance.

Basically, in my submission that I have provided for you is a recommendation that there is a need for the Department of Culture and Heritage to collaborate with the Inuit Language Authority. Why this is important is because the Translation Bureau, which is in the Department of Culture and Heritage, is responsible for all the translations with the government and its public agencies, and has a terminology bank and translation bank that could be useful for standardizing terms that the Inuit Language Authority may be working on.

Further to that, I made it purposeful in that I'm requesting and recommending that the collaboration happen with the Department of Culture and Heritage and the Inuit Language Authority. How that structure will be or how the two entities envision that, it is their prerogative, but it's evident that the Translation Bureau and the Department of Culture and Heritage as well as the Inuit Language Authority need to be working closer together in collaboration because of the similarities of their mandates and the resources available to them.

That could be beneficial not only to the Government of Nunavut but to all Nunavummiut, in which we have all talked about the need for standard terms and the need to support the private sector. I believe that's where it would best be suited, but how and the structure of it is the prerogative of the Government of Nunavut and it's in your decision as to how you want to recommend that working as well. To be clear, I state that the two entities have a clear need to further collaborate. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page 19 of the commissioner's submission on the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, it has proposed that the Inuit Language Authority be required to submit its annual report to the Languages Commissioner in addition to submitting it to the Minister responsible for the Act. I would like to get an explanation of why this amendment seems to be needed or is necessary. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. Currently, under the *Inuit Language Protection Act*, the Minister of Languages is required to give me and my office a copy of their annual reports when it is tabling its annual report. In the past, I have received the Minister's annual reports.

I believe having that cohesion in the fields that work in language, as well as not only language rights but the promotion, development, and standardization. We're a small world of work around the field of language and I think having that closer collaboration to ensure that we are fully aware of each other's work, I believe this would be a formal way to ensure that the small world of language field workers are collaborating and have that formal way to keep informed of each other's not only mandate but also the progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wholeheartedly agree with the commissioner.

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I think that's going to be critical in advancing some of the projects that are going simultaneously.

Mr. Chairman, like I had asked with regard to the *Official Languages Act*, in section 44, it provides that the regulations may be made in respect to the legislation on the *Inuit Language Protection Act* as well as the *Official Languages Act*. To date, no regulations have been brought forward to support the implementation. I'm going to ask the commissioner again her perspective on what the priority regulations that need to be drafted first. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak** (interpretation): My apologies, Mr. Chairman. I'm looking for something.

(interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks for being patient. The part that is being referred to is 3(2-3) of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* submission. The commissioner and Executive Council may make regulations prescribing other services that, because of their essential nature or the consequences for individuals, must be delivered in Inuktut.

In the current law, there are certain services that are to be provided in the Inuit language. With my recommendation to ensure that there's a clearer statement of what those obligations and services are, for example, police, fire and emergency response services, the police part is not in the current law. Health and medical services, long-term care, seniors facilities, child and youth protection services and facilities, pharmaceutical services, which is already in the current law, and an organization must communicate with the public in Inuktut when delivering, and I want this to be more specific; food, shelter,

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household services, including without limitation and the list is a) housing and boarding homes. There are many boarding homes across the territory and outside the territory. Emergency shelter services, hotel short-term accommodations and hospitality services, and that needs to be a little bit clearer because we have come across some..... It needs to be clearer as to who and what services that need this. Grocery and food services, the supply of electricity, fuel, water and telecommunications, which was already on there, so the regulations prescribing other services could be in those regulations, if that's understandable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just want to go back to earlier today when I brought up the percentages of the communities losing their language. I used Kugluktuk as 87 percent. I want to get back to your opening statement in the last paragraph, "Inuit language is inseparable and an inherit part of the Inuit identity." If you can't speak Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun, are you not considered Inuk? I just want to get clarification on that statement there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This actually gets to a former MLA's request in this House. Mr. Joe Allan Evyagotailak was an MLA who, in this House, suggested and recommended that the term Inuktut be used to be inclusive of Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun. With that in mind, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, I believe, also standardized that term "Inuktut," as well as Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami who adopted that term to

Δ<sup>2</sup>-J<sup>2</sup>-J Δο<sup>2</sup>/ο Λ<sup>2</sup>ο Λ<sup>2</sup>

**∆⁰/ペ⊳ር⁰**: L'a. ୮¹ር ⊲aል⊃⁰.

**ጳዕል ኃ**<sup>6</sup>: 'የጳጳሲ <sup>16</sup> ሰቦ', ልካላየኦር<sup>16</sup>.

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encompass all the languages across Canada, which would include Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I think there's a miscommunication here. The Member is asking on your opening comments, in the last paragraph, it says, "Mr. Chairman, Inuit language is inseparable and is an inherit part of Inuit identity." The Member asked: if you don't speak Inuinnaqtun or Inuktitut, are you less identified as an Inuk? The Member asked for a clarification. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): I apologize for that misunderstanding. This has been a question to our office. Even if you speak just a little bit if Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun, you can identify that yourself. For example, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated has indicated that for people living in Nunavut or part of the land claims agreement have a beneficiary card, you can use that card to identify yourself as an Inuk and from Nunavut.

It's a very good question. All of us have to take into consideration, even if you can't speak Inuktut or Inuinnaqtun, I still think of you as an Inuk. (interpretation ends) That's more of a personal opinion than my role as the Languages Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just want to get on something. (interpretation) I also want to state that in Kugluktuk Inuinnaqtun writing, r and q are added into the writing system. Inuit in the past were using those q's and r's, standardized, and also, those were standardized way back.

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(interpretation ends) Afar back, I got some information on our terminology to be changed, k's to q's and r's, and I think there were some incidents where some elders were still with the same terminology using the k's and they were told that whatever they're applying for or trying to submit, that form wouldn't be accepted because it was in the old terminology and not with the q's and r's.

I just want to get direction on where would a concerned person see if they could have it remain with the old terminologies for a while instead of just direct there, "You can't get this application because it's not in the new terminology." I just want to get some directions where a person could either seek in a direction which way to go or try to have it changed. *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I know the commissioner stated earlier that the Inuit Language Authority is in charge of standardization and how a word should be spelled, but it may come in as a concern or complaint to the Languages Commissioner to do with language, so if the commissioner can elaborate on that. Ms. Aariak.

**Ms. Aariak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. You are right; I was going to refer to the mandate of the Inuit Language Authority.

The thing about receiving, I'm going to continue with the term "complaints," is the fact that even though a complaint may not be deemed admissible, if it's inadmissible, there could be grounds to have more collaboration. For example, if I did receive a concern regarding the spelling standards that were being imposed, is that being imposed at the moment by whom? We would have to go through that process and even though it is deemed inadmissible and not breaking the law

CL<sup>a</sup> Δ/L. ΔΠΓΑΡ CP<sup>1</sup>L<sup>1</sup> ΔΔ<sup>1</sup>L<sup>1</sup> ΔCP<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>L<sup>1</sup>.

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because we don't have the jurisdiction of spelling standards or quality of translations at the moment. The benefit of sending us your concerns is, even though it is deemed inadmissible, there could be some progress in finding out what the actual issue is. Is it being imposed? Is it being imposed by the department? Which department is it? Was it a directive? It could be used to help gain information that could possibly help the applicant.

I think, for individuals or anyone, for that matter, in Nunavut that feels that their language rights have been infringed, send it to our office. We will do our due diligence to ensure that it is indeed a language rights infringement or not. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the clarification. I will provide a copy of the applications from the elders that are written in the old writing system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That was just a comment. I have no more names on my list for questions. Okay. Any brief closing comments from the commissioner? Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There was one particular thing that was mentioned yesterday that I wanted to address, whether it was being brought up today or not, and that's around the mandate of the Minister of Languages where it was mentioned from the Hon. Member that there were issues around language dialect being dubbed into a different dialect and was wondering what could be done.

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**Δ<sup>6</sup>/ペ▷C**<sup>6</sup>6: L'a. Γ<sup>1</sup>C ላαልے<sup>6</sup>.

**ላ௳ል⇒** (ጋቫትበJና): 'd৮°៤፫', Δº८९▷ር'<sup>6</sup>. 'd৮°៤፫'<sup>6</sup><ቦ'ച ፈചർፊ°८८६. ጋº८५▷በԺ<sup>6</sup> ५<sup>6</sup>P°በԺՎ<sup>6</sup>>°6 ፈ<sup>1</sup>Lച C∆<sup>6</sup>d4 በበና▷८ጋ′6∆° ሊചቦና. 'd৮°៤፫<sup>6</sup>.

**Δ<sup>6</sup>/«ÞC<sup>66</sup>** (ጋ<sup>5</sup>/<sub>2</sub>ትበJ<sup>6</sup>): ▷<sup>6</sup>6>/<sup>6</sup><sup>6</sup>/<sub>2</sub>Δ<sup>6</sup>α<sup>66</sup>.

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Λ<sup>6</sup>6>&<sup>6</sup>. Γ<sup>6</sup> 4α<sup>6</sup>.

Under section 24 of the mandate of the Minister of Languages is "the identification and development of the content and methods or technologies for Inuit Language media distribution or access that have the greatest potential to promote the use or revitalization of the Inuit Language, including print, film, television, radio, digital audio or video, interactive or any other media"; and from what I understand, that's what part of what the department does is provide funding, grants and contributions. I just wanted to lie that out there for the question that was raised yesterday. (interpretation) Thank you.

(interpretation ends) The vitality and sustainability of Inuktut in Nunavut is really at a critical moment. We have touched a little bit about the number of degradation of the use of our language, both Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut, and I believe this is a critical moment where the Government of Nunavut must decide how important language is to Nunavummiut and to themselves. Language is the vehicle of culture and an intrinsic part of the Inuit identity.

We mentioned a little bit today about the Statistics Canada numbers where there was a decline. Between 2016 and 2021, the percentage of census respondents in Nunavut who identified Inuktut as their mother tongue decreased from 63.3 percent to 52.9 percent. In addition, the percentage of Nunavummiut who use Inuktut most often at work decreased from 26 percent to 18 percent. These statistics are indicative that the *Official Languages Act* and particularly the *Inuit Language Protection Act* are unable to effectively attain their stated objectives.

Some of the changes proposed are simply rewording existing provisions and updating legal terminology. As we discussed today, for example, the direct appointment of staff is already set out in the *Official Languages Act*,

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but the provision was reworded to make it more comprehensible.

Another change that was asked about the use of complaint rather than concern better reflects not just the terminology with respect to other independent offices and jurisdictions, but also the reality of a person invoking their language rights and the violation of the processes undertaken by my office.

Other proposed changes are made to address real challenges faced by my office in carrying out its important functions. This is the reason for our proposals respecting Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit and the vital role it has, and it cannot be forgotten that delays in carrying out its functions delayed the full implementation of Inuit language rights.

The Department of Culture and Heritage suggested as one of its proposals that the Inuit Language Authority be absorbed into the department. Even some Committee Members raised concerns about the governance as audits and minutes are not up to date. Our proposal that my office be able to contract certain services if Taiguusiliuqtiit does not respond to a request was put forward to highlight this issue for the Committee, with the hopes of coming up with a solution.

I briefly touched on the need to distinguish between the roles of the Languages Commissioner, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, and the Minister of Languages. A revision of the Official Languages Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act must necessarily ensure that respective roles are better delineated and described. The statistics from my office show that a large of the complaints are made in respect of the Government of Nunavut, and I will happily give you a copy of all the recommendations since the inception of my

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office in 1999; spread that onto you. My office needs the cooperation and collaboration of the Government of Nunavut to ensure that it can carry out its functions and safeguard the language rights of Nunavut's three linguistic communities.

Very quickly, Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, this is where our proposals for a central body, whether it's the secretariat or a division under Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, is up to the Government of Nunavut. The purpose is to ensure that recommendations regarding the implementation of language obligations and the fulfillment of language rights are carried out.

(interpretation) If we are going to make progress, we need to have a close collaboration and get feedback from, for example, the Department of Justice and other departments that deal with language. Solutions must be found that our language, in respect to our rights, if infringement is made, what are the things that we can use to identify and what disciplinary actions we may make, or what recommendations are we able to carry out, (interpretation ends) to determine how to penalize violations of the Acts and give these important Acts some teeth.

As I said, we're at a crossroads in Nunavut where the revision of the Acts represent great opportunities for the government to design the future for the Inuit language, its sustainability and vitality, making it the language of home, work, and daily life.

Finally, (interpretation) I wholeheartedly appreciate and I know we are all working hard with respect to our language and for your welcoming. I also thank the interpreters behind me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I

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thank the witnesses, the Languages Commissioner and her staff, as well as the Members of the Legislative Assembly for being here today to discuss the issue of language, which is very important in Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) This concludes our meeting today and we will start again tomorrow morning at 9 with the Francophone Association of Nunavut. Everyone have a good evening. (interpretation) That's it.

(ጋጎትበJና) ለ⊲σ∿Lና bበLσ≫ና ▷ʻ⊃Γ ĊናረL Γ啮̇∟ϼና, ቴ▷<<ና ▷Δά bጋንትቴበሶኄቦ°ϼና ϼͼ≫ιΓ bበLቴbበዮ≟ኈር≫ና.

>>Committee adjourned at 16:20

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