



Update on Indigenous Languages Legislation Timeline

On October 18-19, 2017, the national Assembly of First Nations hosted the National Roll-up to the regional engagement sessions on the languages legislation. At this session they shared the proposed timeline for the legislation.

The legislation process is being led by the Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH) and the three national Indigenous organizations: the Assembly of First Nations (AFN); the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK); and the Metis Nation of Canada (MNC).

Proposed timeline for the legislation:

December 6, 2016	Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announces Indigenous Languages Legislation
June - October, 2017	Engagement sessions with Indigenous people across Canada
November, 2017	Presentation of final report from AFN engagement sessions
January, 2018	Memorandum to Cabinet (policy proposal submitted to Cabinet); Ministry issues drafting instructions to the Legislation Section of the Department of Justice
February - April, 2018	Legislation drafted by the Department of Justice; draft bill is prepared in two official languages and approved by responsible Minister
May, 2018	Cabinet approval of draft legislation
June, 2018	Legislation to be introduced in Parliament <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ First Reading: the Bill is read in the House of Commons➤ Second Reading: a parliamentary committee reviews the Bill and seeks input➤ Third Reading: once the Bill passes the Third Reading in the House of Commons, the process is repeated with the Senate
June, 2019	Legislation passes in Parliament and receives Royal Assent

See also: <http://guides.library.queensu.ca/gov/canada/federal/how-a-bill-becomes-a-law>

Questions about the timeline:

What is the timeline for the Memorandum to Cabinet?

The intent is to introduce the Bill to Parliament by June of 2018. To achieve that target date, DCH along with the AFN, ITK and MNC will need reach a consensus on the principles that form the basis of the legislation. Once that consensus is reached, early in 2018, these four organizations can begin co-developing the Bill.

When will we be able to see the first version of the legislation?

Once the Bill is introduced to Parliament in June 2018, it will become a public document and the process for the first, second and third readings is set in motion. Please see the link above for further information.

When will the parliamentary committee meet to discuss the legislation?

The Bill will be discussed and debated at a number of points after it is introduced, both in the House of Commons and in the Senate. The parliamentary committee process follows the second reading of the Bill.

When and how can First Nations provide input on the draft legislation?

The parliamentary committee has the prerogative to seek input on the draft legislation by holding hearings and special meetings with people from within and outside of government. Groups can also apply to make presentations to the Parliamentary Committee. The exact process and timeline for providing input is not yet clear; FPCC will release another update with this information when it is made available.



Who is on the legislation committee from B.C.?

The three national Indigenous organizations (the AFN, ITK and MNC) will be co-developing the Bill with DCH. They have been and continue to conduct sessions seeking input, as is DCH.

Why is Bill S-212 (Act for the advancement of Aboriginal languages in Canada) still under review?

Bill S-212 is a Senate Public Bill which means it is a bill put forward at the initiative of a Senator (in this case, Senator Joyal). As Members of Parliament, senators can introduce their own legislative initiatives. It is not a government Bill and is not under the control of the government. Bill S-212 was debated and adopted by the Senate at second reading in December 2016 and was referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples for study. The Bill is still awaiting study by the committee, probably because since it was first introduced, the Prime Minister has announced the development of an Indigenous Languages Act.

Key Contacts:

For information about Indigenous language legislation in Canada, follow up with the contacts below.

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FIRST PEOPLES' CULTURAL COUNCIL – www.fpcc.ca

FPCC is a body of technical experts with a mandate to provide advice and support on language and cultural issues. For the past 27 years, FPCC has been supporting the revitalization of Indigenous languages, arts and cultures in B.C. by offering funding and resources to communities, monitoring the status of First Nations languages and developing policy recommendations for First Nations leadership and government.

FPCC's community info page on language legislation: <http://www.fpcc.ca/language/Legislation/>

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