



Indigenous Language Legislation: How To Advocate For Your Own Position

The First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is holding regional sessions in May & June 2017 to talk about the promised Indigenous language legislation for Canada. We have two goals:

1. As our mandate is to serve the 34 languages and 203 First Nation communities in BC, we want to hear from our language experts across the province to help us develop a report advocating for our position on the proposed legislation.
2. FPCC does not claim to speak on your behalf. This issue is of crucial importance to all First Nations, so **we encourage YOU** to have good discussions in your community and provide your own input on this process. We are holding these sessions to ensure that everyone is well-informed about this important issue.

FOR INFORMATION: Many reports have already been written that address Indigenous languages, the rights of Indigenous people to speak their languages, and proposals for legislation. Please see our website for links to these important documents:

<http://www.fpcc.ca/language/Legislation/>

What can you do about this issue?

There are several ways to make your voice heard.

1. Write a short letter or email. If possible, write a few sentences in your language.
2. Write a position paper stating what you would like to see included in the legislation.
3. Write a report stating what you would like to see included in the legislation and a detailed plan for what is needed for your community.

What should you include?

Here are some questions to think about when developing your input:

- What does recognition mean to you? Can there be different levels of recognition – local, provincial and federal? How does recognition contribute to the reclamation of languages?
- How can legislation help you in your revitalization work? For example: what kind of support do you need from the federal and provincial governments? Think about policy, funding and infrastructure.
- Consider how your Nation fits within the geography and the diversity of languages in Canada. What seems good for your language might not be helpful for everyone else. How can top-down measures support and not hinder the work you are doing?
- Consider the long-term needs, not just the immediate ones. Think about *your* long-term plan for *your* language: where do you hope to see your language in 25 years? What strategies are you implementing, or will you implement, that have the right outcomes to meet these goals? (For instance, which strategies are creating new fluent speakers?)



Timeline: When should you provide input?

You can have a general position and/or initial feedback ready for the AFN's engagement session on June 22-23, 2017. Plan to submit finalized feedback by the end of September 2017.

Who should you contact?

You can send your feedback to any or all of the following organizations:

National Assembly of First Nations 55 Metcalfe Street Suite 1600 Ottawa, ON K1P 6L5	Manon Tremblay Director of Languages, AFN mtremblay@afn.ca
BC Assembly of First Nations 312-345 Chief Alex Thomas Way Kamloops, BC V2H 1H1	Maureen Chapman, Acting BC AFN Chief maureen.chapman@acfcc.bc.ca Chief Ron Ignace Chair of the Chief's Committee on Languages, National AFN Kukpi7.ignace@gmail.com
Union of BC Indian Chiefs 500 - 342 Water Street Vancouver, BC, V6B 1B6	ubcic@ubcic.bc.ca
First Nations Summit 1200 - 100 Park Royal South West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2	Grand Chief Edward John (Akile Ch'oh) edjohn@fns.bc.ca
Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage House of Commons Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6 *no stamp required to mail minister	The Honourable Mélanie Joly Hon.Melanie.Joly@canada.ca
Department of Canadian Heritage 15 Eddy Street Gatineau, QC K1A 0M5	Vanessa Mackenzie vanessa.mckenzie@canada.ca
Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation PO Box 9051, Stn Prov Govt Victoria, BC V8W 9E2	Doug Caul, Deputy Minister Doug.Caul@gov.bc.ca
First Nations Education Steering Committee 113-100 Park Royal South West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2	Jesse Fairley, First Nations Languages and Culture Manager jessef@fnesc.ca
First Peoples' Cultural Council 1A Boat Ramp Road Brentwood Bay, BC V8M 1N9	Aliana Parker, Language Revitalization Program Specialist aliana@fpcc.ca