Address:

Date:

Mr. Tom Sammutok

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Dear, Mr. Tom Sammurtok

**RE: Bill 37 proposed amendments to the *Education Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act.***

As a Nunavummiut I am writing to ask that bill 37 is withdrawn because it will diminish my existing legal right to education in Inuktut. Nunavut was created so that Inuit would have the right to learn in their language. Bill 37 goes against the ideals and the foundation of Nunavut.

Mr. Sammurtok, bill 37 proposes to postpone Inuktut Language of Instruction till 2029 for Grades 4-9. That’s 12 years from now.

And rubbing salt over the wound the Government of Nunavut is proposing to indefinitely postpone Inuktut Language of Instruction for Grades 10, 11, 12. This is unacceptable.

With a proposed new target date of 2029, there is still no plan to get there. No plan to achieve Inuktut Language of instruction.

Indeed, without a plan, the number of Inuktut speaking teachers has decline between 2006 and 2016:

NB: This chart is produced based on public data. NTI has not been able to independently verify these figures.

Sources:

1. Office of the Languages Commissioner, Languages Commissioner’s Report 2015-2016, page 182, <http://assembly.nu.ca/sites/default/files/TD%20245-4(3)%20EN%20IN%20IKW%20FR%202015-2016%20Annual%20Report%20of%20the%20Languages%20Commissioner.pdf>

2. Then Education Minister Picco, NTI urges short cuts for Inuit teachers, Nunatsiaq News article, February 22, 2008, <http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/archives/2008/802/80222/news/nunavut/80222_946.html>

Today there are 9300 Inuit students enrolled in Nunavut schools and there are 125 Inuktut-speaking teachers:

Source: Department of Education presentation

An Inuktut speaking grade 9 student cannot speak in Inuktut when they attend school because there are not enough Inuktut-speaking teachers. How different is this than the residential school era?

The Government of Nunavut must utilize the existing legal right to Inuktut education as a tool to leverage resources required to facilitate access.

Out of 27 schools in Nunavut, 10 schools offer Inuktut Language of Instruction from grades K-3:

In order to offer Inuktut Language of Instruction for grades K-6, 290 Inuktut speaking teachers are required. If there are 101 Inuktut speaking teachers today, it means 189 Inuktut speaking teachers must be trained to be able to offer grades K-6 in Inuktut language of instruction:

In conclusion please withdraw bill 37 and focus education reforms on increasing the number of Inuktut speaking teachers, and creating curriculum and learning resources.

Taima,

[sign]