

own languages, additional support is needed. The outcome of the consultation should be legislation and policies that affirm the importance of Canada's Indigenous languages, and allocate adequate funding to ensure their preservation.

Calls to Action

- 14) We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:
 - i. Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.
 - ii. Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties.
 - iii. The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation.
 - iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.
 - v. Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.
- 15) We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote Aboriginal languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of Aboriginal-languages initiatives.

In addition to promoting the use of Aboriginal languages, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner would also educate non-Aboriginal Canadians about the richness and value of Aboriginal languages and how strengthening those languages can enhance Canada's international reputation.

Aboriginal people recognize how important it is for their children to speak and understand an Aboriginal language. Sabrina Williams, an intergenerational Survivor from British Columbia, expressed that need.

I didn't realize until taking this language class how much we have lost—all the things that are attached to language: it's family connections, it's oral history, it's traditions, it's ways of being, it's ways of knowing, it's medicine, it's song, it's dance, it's memory. It's everything, including the land.... And unless we inspire our kids to love our culture, to love our language ... our languages are continually going to be eroded over time. So, that is daunting. Yeah. So, to me that's part of what reconciliation looks like.⁹⁵

Language instruction may require innovative approaches, including the use of Elders and others as teachers and the use of immersion programs. Education institutions must