

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

Protect Inuit Rights: Reject Bill 25

(November 4, 2020 - Iqaluit, Nunavut) Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) today called on Members of the Legislative Assembly to reject Bill 25, An Act to Amend the *Education Act* and the Inuit Language Protection Act.

"When Inuit created the Territory of Nunavut in 1999, Inuit had high hopes of a school system based on Inuktitut, and a government workforce which reflects the population in Nunavut, consisting of Inuit fluent in our own language," said President Kotierk. "That aspiration was reaffirmed by Inuit and District Education Authorities during the consultations in 2007, 2016 and 2019."

Bill 25 was primarily drafted to relieve the Department Education of responsibilities mandated by the *Inuit Language Protection Act*. The Bill sidesteps accountability for a decline in attendance and student achievement rates and its lack of services for inclusive education.

The latest version of Bill 25 remains substantially the same as the first version introduced in June 2019 and does not account for feedback provided to the Standing Committee on Legislation from NTI, the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities (CNDEA), the Office of the Languages Commissioner and the Nunavut Teachers' Association.

"As Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), the Government of Nunavut is asking you to reduce Inuit language rights, by largely limiting Inuktitut to a classroom subject and they will tell you that you have no choice," said Vice President James Eetoolook. "You do have a choice. Vote against Bill 25."

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