[Insert Date]

The Honorable Steny Hoyer The Honorable Kevin McCarthy

Majority Leader Minority Leader

U.S. House of Representatives U.S. House of Representatives

H-107, U.S. Capitol H-204, U.S. Capitol

Washington, D.C. 20515 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

Speaker of the House of Representatives

U.S. House of Representatives

H-202, U.S. Capitol

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Hoyer, Minority Leader McCarthy and Speaker Pelosi

I am writing to urge you to include the establishment of a Native American Language Resource Center in the next coronavirus relief bill. The framework for establishing such a center in any legislation related to COVID-19 has been outlined by U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) in a document available [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DnDiUqb5CQmF5_5dt5wzL-DkGsAEHCYs/view).

As a linguist (insert details about your background/expertise), I am concerned about the impacts COVID-19 has had and will continue to have on Native American language education schools and programs. The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in job loss, school closures, the dismantling of Native American economies, and, even worse, a disproportionate number of lost Native American lives. The 30 years-worth of progress Native American communities have made in fighting language loss has already been affected by COVID-19 and will continue to be affected in ways that are detrimental. At this time, these schools and programs are in need of support in terms of being able to financially run their establishments, providing outreach to students and families, accessing resources to facilitate distance learning, and continuing their work with language documentation.

The Native American Language Act of 1990 (NALA), established federal policy allowing Native Americans to use, practice, and develop their languages. NALA opened the door for small, often insecurely funded early childhood immersion programs, family and student language immersion camps, and Native language K-12 and higher education programs to fight language loss. While these Native American Language schools and programs have yielded excellent academic outcomes and propelled culture maintenance and language reclamation, they are in need of federal support.

In 1990, the first Language Resource Center (LRC) was established by the Department of Education. Since then, sixteen LRCs have been funded by Congress, providing support to foreign language learning. Currently, despite 30 years of NALA, there is no center for Native American languages. Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, now is the time to provide Native American language programs with the support of an LRC.

I urge you to support emergency assistance for Native American language programs by including the establishment of a Native American Language Resource Center in the next coronavirus bill.

Sincerely,