

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION



CHEF DE L'OPPOSITION

June 24, 2010

The Honourable Alison Redford, Q.C., M.L.A.
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
403 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Redford:

Thank you for your letter of June 3, 2010, regarding Bill C-232, *An Act to amend the Supreme Court Act (understanding the official languages)*.

Liberals believe an understanding of both official languages is necessary to be nominated to the Supreme Court of Canada. Canada is a bilingual country and therefore its highest court must be able to hold proceedings and deliberations in either official language. Every Canadian should be able to be heard in his or her first language before the Supreme Court and not through simultaneous interpretation. It is also valuable for judges to be able to interpret jurisprudence in its original language.

In addition, it is worth noting that according to the *Official Languages Act* every federal court, other than the Supreme Court of Canada, has the duty to ensure understanding of the official language chosen by the parties for proceedings without an interpreter. One need look no further than the highest levels of the civil service or the office of Prime Minister where an understanding of both official languages is expected to see that the same expectation should apply to the highest court in the land.

Once again, thank you for writing. Please accept my warmest regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Ignatieff".

The Honourable Michael Ignatieff, P.C., M.P.