



**The Hon Jenny Macklin MP  
Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services  
and Indigenous Affairs**

Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Telephone: (02) 6277 7560  
Facsimile: (02) 6273 4122

MC09-015571

10 AUG 2009

Mrs Julia Irwin MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs Irwin *J Macklin*

Thank you for your letter of 9 June 2009 about a petition regarding Indigenous languages which was submitted for consideration of the Standing Committee on Petitions.

As Minister for Indigenous Affairs, I am aware of the complexity of issues relating to Indigenous languages. However, policy matters relating to Indigenous languages fall within the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, the Hon Peter Garrett MP. I am advised that Minister Garrett's Department is working on an Indigenous Languages Action Strategy.

The petition includes a request to support the provision of Indigenous interpreting and translation services. You may be interested to know that, through the 2009-10 Budget, funding will be provided to the Northern Territory Government for three years to support Indigenous interpreting services in the Territory.

Additionally, the Council of Australian Governments has agreed to the development of a national framework for Indigenous language interpreters and translators under the Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement. Components of the framework will include increasing the supply of interpreters and mentors, training and accrediting Indigenous interpreters, developing a national recruitment and retention strategy and increasing the demand for interpreters through training for government and non-government employees.

Yours sincerely

**JENNY MACKLIN MP**