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Abolition of Court Challenges Program

Question by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

THE SENATE

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ABOLITION OF COURT CHALLENGES PROGRAM

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Last fall, the government announced cuts to a number of government programs, including the Court Challenges Program.

An article in *Le Droit* on May 2, spoke of a motion brought forward by a member of the government, suggesting that there may soon be a new program that would ensure recognition of the linguistic rights of official language minority communities.

However, the Leader of the Government said in the Senate on April 17:

I have absolutely no intention of campaigning among my colleagues, in my party or in the cabinet to bring back that particular program.

My question is this: can the Leader of the Government in the Senate confirm whether the government will support its member's motion that would implement a program to ensure recognition of linguistic rights and give a voice to official language minority communities?

[English]

Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government and Secretary of State (Seniors)): As I have said in response to previous questions on the Court Challenges Program, our government will continue to respect its legal and constitutional obligations and responsibilities. I believe our government is firmly committed and is shown to be so in its support of the development of official languages minority communities and the promotion of English and French in Canadian society. We are delivering on a four-year, \$120 million agreement for communities. In addition, last September, our government announced a five-year strategic plan to foster immigration to francophone minority communities.
