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## OFFICIAL LANGUAGES Bilingualism in the Public Service

**Question by:**

**The Honourable Claudette Tardif**

**Thursday, March 3, 2011**

## THE SENATE

Thursday, March 3, 2011

[*Translation*]

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

#### BILINGUALISM IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

**Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, today Graham Fraser, the Commissioner of Official Languages, released a study on the importance of leadership in the public service to create a bilingual workplace.

The Commissioner found certain shortcomings that the government needs to focus on and stated that even though linguistic duality is a fundamental value within Canadian society, creating a public service that reflects Canada's linguistic duality remains a challenge.

Commissioner Fraser also noted that it is imperative that managers in the public service consider federal employees as individuals with a specific culture, identity and language. Managers must also work towards a better recognition and attainment of their linguistic obligations under the Official Languages Act.

• (1420)

Can the leader tell us whether her government is committed to working with the commissioner and the minister in order to implement the five recommendations and, if so, how will it do so?

[*English*]

**Hon. Marjory LeBreton (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, the government is always most appreciative of the work of the Official Languages Commissioner. We are always mindful of the recommendations that he makes to government. In many cases, he has been very supportive of certain efforts of the government; in other areas, we realize there is some work to be done.

As is always the case, the Commissioner of Official Languages, Mr. Fraser, is an officer of Parliament. He is very dedicated to his work and the government would obviously want to ensure that we fully take into account all of his recommendations because this government, as the honourable senator knows, fully supports Canada's Official Languages Act.

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