



# NEWS RELEASE

The Honourable Senator Claudette Tardif, Ph.D.

## Senate debates bill on language skills for officers of Parliament

**Ottawa, June 11, 2013** – Today, Senator Claudette Tardif made a statement about Bill C-419, An Act respecting language skills, which is at second reading.

“As a Franco-Albertan who has been working for years on promoting French, on respect for our country’s linguistic duality and on strengthening official language minority communities, I support this bill, which would make it mandatory for the 10 officers of Parliament to be bilingual,” said Senator Tardif.

This bill provides that anyone appointed to these offices must be bilingual. It was drafted in response to the appointment of a unilingual candidate to the position of Auditor General. Commissioner of Official Languages Graham Fraser strongly rebuked the government for not having considered the bilingualism criterion during the staffing process.

“Canadians—both Anglophones and Francophones—want people in the senior ranks of the public service to be bilingual,” said Senator Tardif. “Officers of Parliament should have to show not only that they understand the complexities and nuances of national issues, but also that they have the ability to communicate in both official languages with parliamentarians and Canadians.”

“I want the government to take a strong leadership role in implementing this bill and in the appointment process for officers of Parliament,” she concluded.

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