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TRIBUTES

The Honourable Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis

Statement by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Wednesday, June 3, 2015

THE SENATE

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[Translation]

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THE HONOURABLE SUZANNE FORTIN-DUPLESSIS

Hon. Claudette Tardif: Honourable senators, I am pleased to rise today to pay tribute to the Honourable Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis.

Senator Fortin-Duplessis, as you prepare to leave parliamentary life, I would like to thank you for your hard work and all that you have accomplished within our democratic institutions, and particularly for the contribution you have made to the Senate.

Elected as the federal Member of Parliament for the riding of Louis-Hébert twice — in 1984 and again in 1988 — you made a name for yourself in the area of foreign affairs and international trade. You had the courage of your convictions and the determination to become actively involved in politics and represent the people of Canada at a time in the not-so-distant past when very few women were going into politics.

You have been a staunch defender of the French language during your time in Parliament. Your commitment to the Francophonie was recognized when you were named a Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Pléiade in 1991 by the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie. Your involvement in the APF allowed you learn more about many of the problems and issues concerning the French language.

I had the privilege of working with you on the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages. You have been a member of that committee since 2009 and its deputy chair since 2013.

I saw how determined you were to advance linguistic duality in our country. You always made a commitment to propose solutions to the communities that you represent.

I would like to point out two studies that were carried out by the Official Languages Committee because of your determination to learn more about the issues facing official language minority communities. On your own initiative, you identified needs that had to be filled.

Because the challenges facing the anglophone community in Quebec are not very well known, you very enthusiastically proposed that the committee carry out the study entitled *The Vitality of Quebec's English-Speaking Communities: From Myth to Reality*. What is more, given your desire to learn more about official languages learning in Canada, you rightly insisted that the committee study best practices in language policy and second-language learning. It was vitally important to you to encourage bilingualism among Canada's youth. Given your training as a teacher, you found this cause to be very important and contributed a great deal to it.

Dear colleague, throughout your political career you have distinguished yourself. I would like to wish you health and happiness with your family as you begin this new stage of your life. You can be proud of everything you have accomplished.