

Letters from Here and There

Barrow Council on Alcoholism
P.O. Box 564
Barrow, Alaska 99723

To Tundra Times:

After coming to Barrow to help set up a comprehensive alcoholism program, I realized the need for the help of the problem drinker's family.

It is a possibility that your paper can print the article as a public health message.

If in the future your paper can use more articles on alcoholism, I will be willing to furnish more.

I am a certified alcoholism counselor interested in helping my people in their struggle against our number one health problem facing us in Alaska. I could have another article on what alcohol does to the body for the next future issue.

From the Barrow Alcoholism
Center (The Igloo)
Ralph Amouak

ALASKA STATE HOUSING
AUTHORITY

February 10, 1972

Congressman Nick Begich
House of Representatives
1210 Longworth House Office
Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Begich:

The Alaska State Housing Authority has recently received criticism from several of the vil-

lages and cities involved in the Native Housing Program and other low rent housing programs.

The basis of the criticism is that the amount of money paid in lieu of taxes is not sufficient to meet the added burden of services required by the new dwelling units. Most of these Alaskan villages have a limited or non-existent tax base and cannot afford to bear these additional costs unaided. The "in lieu" payment was designed to do this.

As you know, ASHA is restricted by Federal law to paying no more than 10% of net shelter rents to the villages. Net shelter rent is the amount actually paid to ASHA by a tenant after the cost of utilities has been deducted. If a unit is vacant or if for any other reason ASHA receives no rent (Brooke Amendment), then the village suffers a loss of its 10%.

Incidentally, the passage of the Brooke Amendment cut substantially the rent paid by the tenant to ASHA and thereby cut the amount of dollars paid by ASHA to the villages.

An example of the hardship this causes is the case of the City of Nome. On October 14, 1968, the City of Nome signed a contract with ASHA to provide 50 units of low income housing. At that time it was anticipated that the average net rent paid would be \$130. Thus assuming 100% occupancy the City would receive \$156 per unit per annum or a total of \$7800. A private dwelling would pay \$480 or a total of \$24,000. The subsequent passage of the Brooke Amendment reduced the average

shelter rent received to \$20 per month. 10% of this allows the City only \$24 per unit per annum, or \$1200 from the whole project. Apparently this figure barely provides for snow removal.

At the risk of being redundant—Alaska is different. If we are to provide decent housing for our remote areas, some steps must be taken to do so without placing an undue burden on the already insufficient economic base of the villages. The present HUD programs do not allow ASHA the flexibility to do this.

The Housing Reform Amendments Act of 1971, introduced by Senators Brooke and Mondale, has within it a provision allowing HUD through the local housing authorities to pay the assessed valuation. Obviously this would solve our problem here. Remember that public housing does not increase the population of the villages nor should the villages make a profit on the new public housing. It is fair, however, that they not lose their shirts.

We of ASHA are diligently working on this problem and if anyone has any ideas on a solution where we can aid, please let us know.

ALASKA STATE HOUSING
AUTHORITY
/s/Bob
Robert E. Butler
Executive Director

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Butler also sent identical letters to Senators Mike Gravel and Ted Stevens, Senators from Alaska.)