

Hosp. Planning Fund Asked by Stevens

A total of \$2.6 million in planning funds for hospital facilities at Anchorage, Bethel and St. Paul has been requested by U.S. Senator Ted Stevens.

Alaska's senior senator, speaking before the Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, said the replacement of present facilities at the three communities is needed.

At Anchorage, a 275-bed replacement for the native health service facility is a necessity, the Senator said. Estimated cost of the new hospital would be \$24.3 million.

The present hospital, a concrete building, was built in 1953 as a tuberculosis center. Since then, reductions in the tuberculosis bed requirements have resulted in a modernization of the facility to meet new health care needs, he said.

The earthquake of 1964 caused extensive damage to the hospital and the bluff behind it. A study of possible modernization of the present hospital

would cost approximately 90 per cent of the cost of replacing the facility, Stevens observed.

At Bethel, Stevens said the present hospital is in "terrible condition" and should be replaced with a \$980,000 facility. The 75 bed replacement would replace a wooden hospital that has serious problems with its pile foundation.

Cost of repairs have been high at Bethel, the Senator observed. Examples of recent expenses were a \$180,000 roof, \$70,000 sprinkler and fire detection system and emergency repairs ranging from \$69,000 to \$130,000 a year.

At St. Paul, the current wooden hospital would be replaced with a six-bed facility capable of handling out-patient and field health activities. The present hospital has constructed in the 1920's. Cost of new facilities is estimated at \$1.2 million.

Estimated cost of the planning programs for the three facilities would be \$1.5 million for Anchorage, \$980,000 for Bethel and \$90,000 for St. Paul.