

# Otitis Media Funding Approved

A \$348,000 allocation to combat otitis media, a middle ear disease that heavily strikes Alaska's native population, has been approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee, according to Senator Ted Stevens.

Stevens requested this money in testimony before the committee in April as the first year fund-in of a five-year Indian Health Service Comprehensive plan to eliminate the ravages of this di-

sease from Alaska's native population.

"In Alaska," Stevens said, "thirty-five per cent of our native infant population suffers an average of two episodes of otitis media before the age of one year. Ten per cent of these children under 15 have chronic otitis media as well as 10 per cent of our natives over that age."

Thus, in total, it is estimated that over 5,000 people in Alaska

now suffer from chronic otitis media, which often causes partial or total deafness.