

# UYDC Requests Seat in Alaska Legal Services

The Upper Yukon Development Corporation voted last month to request a seat on the Alaska Legal Services Corporation Board of Directors.

In the resolution, the development corporation stated that the board of directors of the Legal Services Corporation has the responsibility of providing direction for the program and conveying to the staff of Legal Services the needs of the various areas of the State.

There is currently no one on the board from any of the Interior villages, the board noted.

And as the spokesman for the people of the Interior, the Upper Yukon Development Corporation would like a representative on the board who could speak for

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# UYDC Requests

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the Interior, the resolution concluded.

In response to the request, William Jacobs, director of Alaska Legal Services, noted that the agency is interested in having cooperation and guidance from the Upper Yukon organization.

However, he continued, it would be difficult to arrange for them to have a representative on the board without slighting 10 or 11 other such corporations throughout the state that are not represented.

And, he said, if each of the 12 corporations were given a representative, the number of board members would climb from 3 to 25, and the mere cost of having board meetings would be prohibitive.

The 13-member board, Jacobs explained, consists of six lawyers—two each from Anchorage and Fairbanks and one each from Ketchikan and Juneau—and six non-lawyers—one each from Ketchikan, Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Southwest Alaska, and Northwest-Arctic Alaska. In addition, the president of the Alaska State Bar Association sits on the board as an ex-officio member.

The lawyers are chosen by other lawyers in their area. The non-lawyers are to be chosen in a democratic manner—either by community action agencies or other associations in the area concerned with poverty.

Of the six areas represented on the board by non-lawyers, Fairbanks is closest to the Upper Yukon region. Its representative is selected by the Fairbanks Native Association, Jacobs said.

The Alaska Legal Services Corporation, under contract by the Office of Economic Opportunity, is responsible for providing civil legal services for people unable to afford a lawyer because of poverty.