

'WHALE' vs Mammal Legislation-

Group Joined by Lawmakers and Well known Natives

A plea for letters and contributions has gone out from a newly-formed committee aimed at opposing ocean mammals legislation detrimental to Alaskan Native groups.

A bill that would prohibit the use of ocean mammals was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in March by a vote of 362-10.

A similar measure that would allow subsistence use of certain species and for continuance of the Native crafts industries for

local marketing only is now pending in the Senate's Commerce Committee.

The group, named the WHALE (What Happens to Alaska's Living Eskimos?) Committee, is composed of members of the State Legislature's Bush Caucus and other well-known Native leaders, artists, and hunters.

Initial members of the Committee, organizing in Juneau, are Senators William Hensley (D-Kotzebue), Senator Kay Poland (D-Kodiak), Senator Jay Ham-

mond (R-Naknek), Representatives Martin Moore (D-Emmonak), Ed Naughton (D-Kodiak), George Hohman (D-Bethel), Chuck Degnan (D-Unalakleet), Carl Moses (D-Unalaska), Frank Peratrovich (D-Klawock), George Charles, Emil Notti, Connie Paddock, Anne Walker, Brenda Itta, and Howard Rock.

One of the Committee members, Senator Willie Hensley said, "We hope to coordinate a successful effort to see that amend-

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ments are made to the bill so that Alaska's Natives can continue to utilize the ocean mammals as they have since time immemorial."

The bill, HB 10420 passed by the House of Representatives places a five-year moratorium on the taking of ocean mammals.

A Senate version, introduced by Senator Ted Stevens, SB 3161, contains amendments allowing for subsistence hunting and fishing of ocean mammals and for production of hand-crafts.

"It is our intention to see that amendments which take into consideration the needs of Alaska is in the final bill," Hensley added. "A law prohibiting the use of seals or whales could wipe out entire cultures, have a severe impact on local economies as well as adversely effect the economy of the State."

Members of the WHALE Committee have asked for financial contributions for an effort to publicize their cause. Contributions may be sent to: The WHALE Committee, 1800 Glacier Avenue, Juneau, Alaska 99801.

Additionally, Committee members urge Alaskans to write the following Senators in Congress, expressing their opinion on the matter: Senators Warren Magnuson, John Pastore, Vance Hartke, Phillip Hart, Howard Cannon, Russel Long, Frank Moss, Marlow Cook, J. Glenn Beall, Mark Hatfield, Ernest Hollings, Daniel Inouye, William Spong, Norris Cotton, James Pearson, Robert Griffin, and Howard Baker.

Hearings in Alaska have been set for March 11 and 12 in the morning in Nome and May 12 in the afternoon in Bethel.