

# Co-sponsors Legislation to Research Earthquake Damage

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Senator Mike Gravel today announced his co-sponsorship of legislation to stimulate and finance research aimed at lessening earthquake damage and developing techniques for earthquake prediction.

The Alaska Democrat said, "In view of the extreme instability of the North Pacific rim, Alaskans have a great stake in any research that could lead to a lessening of damage of earthquakes.

The legislation, introduced today, consists of two bills, both originally introduced by Senator Alan Cranston, Democrat of California.

One would amend the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 to provide \$60 million over three years for research into changes in the engineering of structures so they might better withstand the effects of earthquakes.

The other would provide \$14.2 million a year for five years to support research into techniques for earthquake prediction.

Senator Gravel said that three years ago the National Academy of Engineering issued a report recognizing the dangers inherent in current construction procedures resulting in inability of structures to withstand earthquakes.

Because of the great loss of life and property caused by earthquakes the report called for an engineering research program that could substantially cut such losses.

"The government has done nothing to implement this report," Senator Gravel said.

The \$60 million would be spent by the National Science Foundation on engineering re-

search along the lines recommended by the report.

Senator Gravel said the work would include developing more accurate and reliable methods of structural analysis for all types of buildings and a variety of ground conditions.

In addition, minimum construction standards, especially for hospitals, dams, schools, public utility structures and other buildings which must be in use during a disaster, would be im-

proved to provide greater resistance to earthquake stress.

Senator Gravel said that most of the money for research in predicting earthquakes would go to the U. S. Geological Survey for a five-year project along the San Andreas fault in California and related earth faults in that state and Nevada as well.

- He said the money would be used for instrumentation, data collection and related studies.

Additionally, the Office of

Emergency Preparedness would receive \$200,000 for each of the five years to study the issuing of effective earthquake warnings, the physical effects of earthquakes, and the behavioral and psychological effects of earth-

quakes have on people.

Senator Gravel said that experts in seismology have stated that within five years from the beginning of such research, they will have the ability to predict

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medium and major earthquakes up to three months in advance and to indicate within 20 miles where they will hit hardest.

He added that such a warning system would allow citizens to take precautions aimed at lessening human injury and loss of life and alleviating property damage that earthquakes now cause.

Senator Gravel said, "Alaskans, with the massive earthquake of 1964 still fresh in their minds, will benefit greatly from this legislation."