

CANDIDATES' ACTION DISMAYING

We were dismayed and disheartened to see Republican gubernatorial candidates Joe Hayes, Walter Hickel, Bob McGrane, Dick Randolph, Bob Richards, Ron Somerville and Arliss Sturgulewski request the U.S. Senate to delay further action on the 1991 legislation this year.

We would have thought at least some of these candidates would not take such an obviously anti-Native stand.

Candidates are trying to sidestep this issue by saying they are merely asking for a delay and that this does not necessarily mean they oppose it. This is nonsense.

If they do not oppose the legislation there is no reason to ask for a delay. It's as simple as that.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has held more hearings and workshops in Alaska on 1991 than any piece of legislation in recent memory. People from Ketchikan to Barrow have been able to testify on this issue.

And it has a very solid record of support by non-Native businessmen, local political leaders and other interested people, as well as Alaska Natives.

Asking for a delay in this legislation will mean only more confusion for Alaska Natives who fear losing their land and control of their corporations in 1991 when the restrictions on the sale of stock in Native corporations are to be lifted.

The positions taken by the Republican candidates — the entire Republican slate except for Don Wright — are irresponsible and disappointing. We can only hope that at least some of them will reconsider their stand.