

Bartlett Calls Conference On Housing for Nov. 16-18

Senator E. L. Bartlett announced that he has called a conference on Alaska native housing in Anchorage Nov. 16-18.

Senator Bartlett said that federal and state officials and representatives of Alaskan natives from across the state would be invited.

"The conference will afford an opportunity to review and assess

existing state and federal programs in relation to native housing needs and to evaluate new proposals," Bartlett said.

One purpose of the meeting will be to gather information from the various agencies and individuals concerned with the housing problem in preparation for hearings on a bill Bartlett introduced this session.

The bill would authorize \$10 million for a native housing program. The Housing Subcommittee of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee plans to hold hearings on the measure next year.

Bartlett pointed out that existing federal programs were not applicable in Alaska because required building standards and the high cost of construction in Alaska combined to push the final price about the unit allotment.

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Native Housing Conference Set

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Bartlett's program would be operated by the Alaska State Housing Authority. Natives would pay in cash or by working on the projects. Timber from the area, if available, would be used for construction. Prices would be determined by a native's ability to pay.

The work would be carried out by natives, whether on an individual basis or by community action.

The Alaska Housing Authority and the Bureau of Indian Affairs are cooperating in setting up the conference. Authority officials Tolbert E. Elliott, executive director, and Charles Blomfield, assistant executive director for housing, discussed preliminary plans for the conference with the Senator when they were in Washington last month.

Senator Bartlett said that invitations have been sent to Mrs. Marie C. McGuire, commissioner of the federal Public Housing Administration, and to Carl A. Coan, chief counsel of the Senate Housing Subcommittee.

Senator Bartlett said that the need of a native housing program was great.

"Many of our native people live in shacks that are in worse condition than ones found in the most deplorable big-city slums," he stated.

"Our native villages have many of the same characteristics of city ghettos — overcrowded conditions, disease and despair."

"I hope this conference will launch a drive which will result in eradication of those characteristics," he said.

"I hope, too, that the conference will serve a broader purpose. I hope it will stimulate all of us to increase our efforts to improve all aspects of life in the rural areas of our state. Let us make this conference the beginning of a concerted campaign by state and federal officials toward that end," he said.