

# CIRI severs tie with CINA

Concern that non-tribal shareholders were taking control of the tribal service of the Cook Inlet Native Association has prompted the Cook Inlet Region, Inc. to sever its relationship with CINA.

CIRI is the recognized tribal organization for the Native people of the Cook Inlet Region. CIRI for the past years has obtained social services contracts from federal and state agencies and sub-contracted those services out to CINA to administer.

But, CINA provides membership to any Alaska Native or American Indian living in the CIRI region which draws its main membership from the Anchorage bowl area and soon CINA membership outstrips CIRI membership.

CIRI lists 6,200 members while CINA serves about 10,000 Natives in Anchorage.

CIRI's shareholders on Saturday voted to withdraw their support for CINA and to create a new non-profit group that would function as CINA had but would serve CIRI shareholders.

Their vote came two days after CINA held its annual meeting and elected three new board members. While no one from CINA was making comments to the press on Monday, it is believed that the board now holds a majority of non-CIRI shareholders and that shift prompted the CIRI action.

According to CIRI president Roy Huhndorf, "The shareholders of CIRI have been watching Cook Inlet Native Association very closely for the past several years. CIRI shareholders were worried that they were losing control. They were worried that

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# CIRI shareholders want old organization

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CINA would not be as sensitive to those programs as it should be."

The CIRI action seeks the transfer of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Educational Assistance program and the Indian Affairs Educational Assistance program and the Indian Health Service program to CIRI.

CINA also administered Housing and Urban Development grants and Health and Human Services grants, according to George Kriste, executive vice-president for CIRI.

He said that Huhndorf has asked Robert Rude, CIRI vice president and former CINA chairman, to handle the establishment of a new CIRI-controlled non-profit social service organization.

Kriste said "This (action) is an evolution of thinking. The shareholders have talked for many years that they need an organization of social and cultural activities in Anchorage for CIRI shareholders . . . CINA is broader than just CIRI shareholders."

Kriste said the transfer in services will be handled so no services are cut off. He estimated that most of the services will be transferred within 90 days but others may take up to a year.

Max Dolchok, executive director of CINA for the past two years, said the CINA Board was to meet Tuesday to discuss the action and had agreed to not comment on the action until then.

New board president Jacqueline Guzialek could not be reached for comment.

CINA board members elected last week include Harriet Beale, Chuck Akers, and Seraphim Stephans. Guzialek and Debbie Fullenwider were re-elected.