

# Nuclear transport sparks state suit

JUNEAU — Gov. Steve Cowper has directed the state of Alaska to sue the federal government over a Reagan administration plan to permit Japan to fly highly toxic nuclear plutonium to Europe with a refueling stop in Alaska.

In a 16-page suit filed late last month in U.S. District Court in Anchorage, the state says the federal government violated federal law by failing to take proper safeguards to protect Alaskans and their environment.

The suit seeks to stop plans to ship the plutonium until officials have fully complied with federal environmental protection laws which require an environmental impact statement before undertaking potentially hazardous activities.

"For months, my administration has attempted to reach a satisfactory arrangement with the State Department and other federal agencies that convinces me Alaskans and our environment will be safe if one of those plutonium-carrying planes goes down nearby," Cowper said.