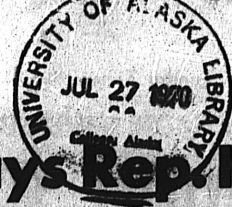


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# Claims Bill Agreement Months Away Says Rep. Haley

The chairman of the House subcommittee now considering the Alaska native land claims issue this week dampened, if not doused, the hopes of native leaders for passage of a land claims

bill during this session of Congress.

The native leaders expressed fears that if the bill is not passed before Congress adjourns, some of their momentum gained by a

long, hard fight in the Senate might be lost.

Chairman of the House Interior Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, Rep. James Haley, D-Fla., indicated after initial com-

mittee meetings Monday that agreement on a bill may take weeks or months.

The subcommittee, he said, has many other bills before it, and the Alaska native land claims

bill has no special priority.

Furthermore, he indicated, as reported in the Anchorage Daily Times, that his committee would not start with the Senate bill

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# Claims Agreement...

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but would its own.

Executive director of the Alaska Federation of Natives, Ebrn Hopson said in his Anchorage office Monday that the native organization had hoped the House committee would use the Senate bill as a base of action and go from there thus saving critical time.

The bill, as passed in the Senate July 15 provides for a \$500 million in royalty payments from oil and gas leases and about 10 million acres of land. Included in the 10 million acres, are 500,000 acres of full title land to the North Slope Eskimos.

John Borbridge, first vice-

president of the AFN, said Monday that the AFN wants to maintain a holding action on the desirable portions of the Senate bill and work to improve other parts.

Indications were that the organization would stand by its position of 40 million acres and try to improve upon the Senate grant of 10 million acres.

Also, it would like to see native representation on the Alaska Native Commission changed from 2 of 5 to 3 of 5 members and would like to delete a provision calling for termination of the BIA in five years. Both are part of the Senate bill.

The fight on the House side is not going to be an easy one, Hospon said. "We face a much more intensive battle there than we did in the Senate, and I am afraid that it will be hard to retain what we have now."

Hopson spent several days in Washington while the land claims bill was being debated in the Senate.

President Emil Notti said that the AFN needs at least 10 representatives in Washington to educate the House committee members but does not have the funds to send them. He added that the organization had not yet decided who would be going or when.

President of the Arctic Slope

Native Association, Joe Upick-soun, said that the North Slope Eskimos will be fighting "tooth and nail" in the House to retain the 500,000 acres of full title land and to improve the Senate bill.

Sam Talaak, executive director of the Arctic Slope Native Association, said, "We have a lot of work cut out for us as we try to get the sympathy of House members. We will regroup and go in again."

Terming the Senate bill, a "petty shallow victory," Talaak said, "We are not exactly happy and elated with it" but hope the House does not cut it.