

1991 legislation remains stalled in Senate committee

by Steve Pilkington

for the Tundra Times

Senate Energy and Resources Committee members met last week with members of Alaska Native organizations in an attempt to settle negotiations which have stalled progress the 1991 legislation.

The House version of the bill, HR278, was introduced by Congressman Don Young and passed the House on March 31 by unanimous consent. A similar bill, S1145, however, has been stalled in the in the Senate.

According to the Alaska Federation

of Natives, three key issues are delaying the bill under the Senate committee headed by Sen. Frank Murkowski.

The issues deal with sovereignty, the handling of rights of shareholders who want to sell their stock even if their corporation decides to continue restrictions and the way regional corporations continue restrictions.

"What we're working on is Sen. Murkowski," said George Irvin, executive vice-president for AFN. "primarily to get Murkowski to agree on the three principle issues."

Irvin also said last week that if no

(Continued on Page Five)

• 1991 issues

(Continued from Page One)

agreements on the bill's issues were reached during the negotiations, then "that may hang it up."

The results of last week's meetings will determine the chances of success for the bill in the future, he said.

Sen. Ted Stevens, former member of the committee handling the legislation, predicted the negotiations will not be settled before Congress takes its August recess.

"I don't think that's possible," he said in a telephone interview from his Washington, D.C., office last week. "I don't think we can get a time agreement until after the negotiations."

Congressmen Don Young expressed his concern for the swift completion of the Senate negotiations.

"We must not lose sight of the importance of the 1991 legislation," Young said. "We are running out of time."