

Larry Carr Outlines Position on Native Land Claims

Larry Carr, Democratic candidate for governor, said today the state government "must take the lead, aggressively and effectively, helping those who live in Alaska's rural areas. . ."

In a position paper entitled "Opportunity and Equality for Native Alaskans," released today, Carr outlined his position on the native land claims bill, and the role he believes the state should

play in helping the people of Alaska's village areas.

That role, he said, includes leadership to provide the villages with better communications and transportation services, a better

quality of education, recognition and support for the rich native heritage, and full cooperation with the organizations that will be created through the land claim settlement.

That settlement, he said, must be generous and designed to deal with a wide variety of problems.

"There should be sufficient money to compensate the native

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people of Alaska for land taken from them for private and public purposes. The native claim for compensation is valid and must be settled in a fair and equitable manner."

The Anchorage candidate said that Congress must guarantee to native communities and individuals the ownership and use of a sizeable amount of land.

"Provision must be made to permit native Alaskans to continue to live in traditional ways, to hunt and fish and range widely over the land."

The owner of a large grocery store chain, Carr said that the settlement must also include provision for continuing revenue.

"Considering the history of native relationship with the federal government, a revenue sharing program is a just program. Native people through no choice of their own, have been wards of the federal government.

"If they had not been natives, they would have owned outright, with full mineral and surface rights, considerable lands of value in Alaska.

"Payment of a small percentage of revenue derived from the exploitation of that land is just compensation.

"And the money will go for purposes with which no Alaskan can reasonably quarrel—efforts to upgrade homes, education and the general quality of life for a large portion of the Alaska population which so far has been left out of the mainstream of development.

The State's role in the land

claims settlement, he said, is to fully cooperate with the local, regional and statewide organizations erected by the Land Claims Settlement Act and to act as a continuing source of assistance as these organizations discharge their obligations.

In dealing with other problems affecting rural Alaska, the politician said that the State must break away from its dependency on the federal government and develop new means for providing education and health care to rural Alaska.

Carr said that the State must aggressively move to correct the deficient and inadequate system of rural education.

"Young lives are being handicapped each school year," Carr declared, "by a system that in the past has meant inadequate classrooms, unqualified teachers, texts not designed to relate to the child's experience, and a curriculum that fails to prepare him for adult opportunities."

He said that while improvements are being made, the pace must be much faster.

"We must fully implement the regional high school system, recognizing the need to bring the educational system as close to home as is humanly possible," he said.

He went on to say that in addition, educational television must be brought to the villages to provide opportunities for knowledge that are otherwise foreclosed because of remote village locations.

He said that as elsewhere in

Alaska, rural education must truly reflect the desires and aspirations of the local population; that this necessitates a significant policy-making role for local residents in rural schools.

"If we fail to provide a child an adequate education—have handicapped him in a way that can never be redeemed we have the obligation to do this job—regardless of where the child," stated Carr.

Furthermore, he said, "The state can and must improve transportation systems and other facilities necessary to achieve a lower cost of living in rural communities."

The candidate said that for too long the rural areas have been served by inadequate means of transportation that made deliveries erratic and expensive and result in a completely unsatisfactory marketing situation.

The State he continued, must cooperate with and assist programs already designed to serve rural communities, whether administered by federal agencies, local agencies created through the Office of Economic Opportunity, or by rural people themselves through statewide or regional efforts.

He also cautioned the State to be mindful of the fact that a rich culture and heritage has existed in Alaska for centuries, that many still will choose to live within that culture and that all Alaskans can benefit from association with it and knowledge of it.