

# NSB mayor supports Itta

North Slope Borough Mayor George Ahmaogak Sr. has announced his strong support for Brenda Itta in her bid to fill the Alaska Senate seat being vacated by Sen. Frank Ferguson, D-Kotzebue.

Ferguson cited health reasons for his decision to resign Jan. 19.

Others who have been mentioned as possibilities to fill the position include former Sen. Willie Hensley of Kotzebue, former Rep. Jack Fuller of Nome and Rep. Al Adams of Kotzebue. Adams, however, has indicated he prefers to retain his current position in the House, where he serves as chairman of the House Finance Committee.

"I am urging the Democratic Party and Gov. Steve Cowper to give Brenda Itta the serious consideration she deserves as they review the candidates seeking Sen. Ferguson's seat," Ahmaogak said in a prepared press release.

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# Itta gets NSB support

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"Brenda Itta has well served the people of Northern Alaska. Today, we still enjoy the benefits she brought home during her years as a state legislator from 1975 to 1977," Ahmaogak said.

Ahmaogak emphasized that Itta is familiar with government structure on local, state and federal levels. In the past, she has served as the director of the North Slope Borough Liaison Office in Washington, D.C., after an appointment from borough founder Eben Hopson.

"She proved her leadership abilities during this time by not only earning a spot as a member of the powerful House Finance Committee, but also by serving as chairperson of the House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Social Services," Ahmaogak said.

"Brenda has deep, first-hand knowledge of the entire region covered by Senate Seat L. Born and raised in Barrow, she has spent time visiting and working in not only the villages of the North Slope Borough, but also those in the Nome and Kotzebue regions," he said.

Earlier, Itta worked as a secretary to U.S. Sen. Ernest Gruening, becoming familiar with Washington, D.C., and also traveling to 67 villages in Alaska, where she learned of their needs.

Ahmaogak said Itta, who now works as the public information officer for the North Slope Borough School District, has served as the city manager of Barrow, and she has held many other important positions in state and local government, in the Arctic Slope Regional Corp. and the Alaska Federation of Natives.

"Here in Barrow, we have been especially pleased with the effort she has given our students, in helping them to set up and run a successful corporation of their own," he said. "These students have benefited greatly because of Brenda Itta's care and concern. I am confident that we would all benefit from her service in the State Senate."

Ahmaogak said he is taking steps to ensure that the Democratic Party and Cowper are fully aware of Itta's strong backing with the entire North Slope community.