

AFN Testifies Before Indian Affairs Subcom

"The historical relationship of the Federal Government and the American Indians and Alaska Natives over the last 200 years has been guided by the theory of "Guardianship" of the United States Government over Native Americans.

"Inherent in this theory is that the U.S. Government has the responsibility, morally and legally, for providing "Health Care" services to American Indians and Alaska Natives," states Gordon Jackson in his opening statement when testifying before the Indian Affairs Subcommittee of the House headed by Congressman Lloyd Meeds.

After citing the historical and current health status of Alaska Natives, Jackson concluded, "It is irrefutable that according to statistics cited in HR 2525 and those compiled by 2(c) study that Congress and the Subcommittee has the inherent responsibility, and to carry that responsibility to insure that the quality of life is maintained equal to all its citizens

and to exercise its obligation to the first Americans."

Carl Jack, Director of Health Affairs, testifying with Jackson went title by title and its subparts of HR 2525 and stressed those provisions in S522 but omitted in HR 2525.

These provisions include 102, 105 and 106 which relate to recruitment assistance and externship programs for Alaska Natives.

In addition, Carl Jack stressed that the "Secretary utilize the negotiating authority of the Act of June 25, 1910 (36 Stat 861) to give preference to any Indians or business organizations owned and controlled by Indians or Indian organizations in the construction and renovation of service facilities pursuant to Section 361 and in the construction of safe water and sanitary waste disposal facilities pursuant to Section 302." Both Jackson and Carl Jack, in their concluding statements, strongly recommended DO PASS of HR 2525.