

# Plea for New Judgeship Made

A plea for creation of a new district judgeship has come from State Sen. William Hensley (D-Kotzebue). In a letter to Chief Justice George Boney last week, Hensley wrote:

"We understand that under Rule 31 (a) that the Supreme Court may change the number of district judges as circumstances require. The following reasons, we believe, constitute sufficient arguments for such a decision by the court:

- Persons from the Kotzebue area accused of crime are sent to Nome or must await the irregular and short court visits.
- The expenses of flying to Nome are prohibitive for witnesses, civil plaintiffs, etc.
- The population in the Kotzebue area is comparable to that of Nome and growing—larger than that of Barrow by far. We are geographically separate from

Nome. There are cultural differences."

Hensley also noted their local magistrate does not have sufficient authority and that criminal facilities and due process guarantees are lacking in his area as well as court facilities.

"In short, we feel that the state's commitment to the improvement of justice in the bush needs to be expanded to include the Kotzebue region."