

Native museum would display 1 million objects

The Smithsonian Institution in Washington would build a museum to house Indian, Eskimo and Aleut artifacts under legislation co-sponsored this month by Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska.

The legislation would authorize the construction of a museum on the Mall in Washington, between the Air and Space Museum and the Botanical Gardens. It would house the Smithsonian's Native American collection and one million art objects and artifacts from the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation now located in New York City.

"This legislation would bring together two of the great collections of Native American art and provide the space to display them," Stevens said.

The new museum to be built on the Mall is expected to have a total floor space of at least 400,000 square feet. In addition, a portion of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation will be housed at the Old United States Customs House in New York City and at the Smithsonian's Museum Support Center in Suitland, Md.

The legislation to build the new museum on the Mall and acquire the Heye Foundation collection is pending in the Senate Rules Committee, on which Stevens is the ranking member.