

"I may not agree with a word you say but I will defend unto death your right to say it." — Voltaire

Tundra Times



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Backing for E. Ramos

Dear Editor:

By creating the Office of Vice President for Rural Affairs, University of Alaska President Robert W. Hiatt has announced that he recognizes the needs of Alaskans living outside our urban centers. However, the creation of the office does not, itself, meet those needs, for the position has not yet been filled.

In the next few weeks the powers that be at UA must appoint one of the candidates for the post to become a full-fledged vice president of our state university system. The person appointed will have almost frightening responsibilities, for rural Alaska is enormous, and its needs are great. Only the most courageous would even apply for such a job. However, among the candidates, one stands out by record of achievements as uniquely able to take on those responsibilities.

Elaine Ramos is that candidate. An Alaskan Native, Ms. Ramos has already done more for Alaskan Native health and education than most people could do in a lifetime—and she is still young. It would be impossible to list her accomplishments here, for many are known only to her and to those whose lives she has touched. But she has earned respect both inside and outside Alaska.

Former Governor Egan recognized her as "... an extremely unselfish person who has given generously of her time and talents to improve the health and educational opportunities of our Indian and natives peoples." She has among her papers a letter of praise from a President of the United States. Government officials she has worked with are impressed with her ability to gain the respect of people she deals with, Native and non-Native, in and out of Alaska. In 1973 she was chosen to receive the annual Indian Council Fire Achievement Award for "humanitarian services which achieve important benefits for Indian people". She was the first Alaskan to receive this national award. At the present, she is vice president for Institutional Development of Sheldon Jackson College. Ms. Ramos is not just an administrator. He record shows that she gets things done.

It might seem that President Hiatt's decision would be easy, but it is not. It is clear from her record that if Ms. Ramos is selected, she will study present programs with the practiced eye of a surgical nurse. Programs and personnel that are ineffective in getting higher education to rural people stand to be cut out and replaced by those that work. The pressures on President Hiatt to maintain the present system are very great. It will take great courage to make Elaine Ramos Vice President for Rural Affairs.

—Name on File



ELAINE RAMOS

Letters from Here and There

School Boards Under Senate Bill 35

September 16, 1975

Mr. Mike Harper
Department of Regional and Community Affairs
Juneau, AK 99801
Commissioner Marshall Lind
Commissioner of Education
Department of Education
Pouch F
Juneau, AK 99801
RE: SB 35—Election of School Board Members.

Dear Sirs:

In connection with the establishment and election of regional school boards under Senate Bill 35 providing for public education in the Unorganized Borough, I wish to protest any plan which might exclude qualified voters who live in communities where there are BIA schools from participating in elections to select the regional school board members. I understand that this possibility is under active consideration by your department.

Section 14.08.031 mandates that communities with BIA schools be included within the boundaries of a regional education attendance area and Section 14.08.111(1) states that it is the duty of the regional school board to provide an educational program for each school age child who is a resident of its district.

Yet, apparently, ambiguity about who may vote to elect members of the school board is created by subsections (b) and (d) of Section 14.08.041. These sections say that the school board is to be elected, not by all of the qualified voters of the regional attendance area, but by voters "of the communities receiving educational services in the entire regional educational attendance area."

As I understand some of the current proposals with respect to the Bethel area, this statutory language would mean that voters in thirty (30) or more BIA communities in this region may well be denied the right to vote for members of their regional school board, and that the board for the entire Bethel region will be elected by the voters of Bethel, Atmauthluak, Kongiganuk, and

Platinum, places where "state schools" are operated.

Further, I understand that the determination of fact as to whether or not a particular community receives educational services is to be made by the Advisory School Board—I presume the BIA Advisory School Board—in each BIA community. In other words, the BIA School Boards will decide who may vote to elect the members of the state-created regional educational attendance area school boards.

If this statute is ambiguous about whether all voters may vote for school board members, further ambiguity is created by the voting criteria "receiving educational services." There are not objective standards by which the BIA Advisory School Boards may decide whether or not they are receiving such services. Also, the statute does not require that the services be received from any particular educational agency. Could the phrase not include receiving educational services from AUBSD (former ASOSS), the boarding high school programs, the correspondence program, the educational broadcasting commission, the state library system, or even the BIA itself?

By what authority may a BIA Advisory School Board decide, especially without clear guidelines, who may vote in a state election for state officers? Voting in state elections is a fundamental constitutional right of all citizens of the state; it may not be conditioned upon the actions of informal, federally-sponsored BIA Advisory School Boards. From a legal standpoint, such a procedure is preposterous.

Since all BIA communities, as well as AUBSD communities, are included within the boundaries of the regional educational attendance area, and since it is the duty, if not the actual job, of the regional school board to provide educational services for every child within the district, regardless of the particular community in which he lives, it therefore follows that the only way to resolve the question of who may vote to elect the regional school board is that this right must be extended to every qualified voter within the boundaries of the regional educational attendance area.

Although it may be more difficult to conduct an election in thirty-five (35) communities than in five (5), when you look at this question from the standpoint of voters' rights rather than from the standpoint of administrative convenience, I think you will find that all qualified voters within the regional educational attendance area must be allowed to vote in the school board election.

Very truly yours,

RICE, HOPNER & HEDLAND
Christopher R. Cooke
cc: Avrum Gross, Attorney General
Alaska Federation of Natives
Yupiktak Bista, Inc.
B.A. Weinberg, Regional Superintendent ADSBD
Alaska Legal Services

Corporation
Tundra Times
Tundra Drums

Gasch's Clerk Answers Writer About 13th Reg.

U.S. District Court
for the District of
Columbia
Washington, D.C.
September 8, 1975

William Albert Autur Tahl
P.O. Box B-40988
Folsom State Prison
Represa, California 95671
Dear Mr. Autur Tahl:

Judge Gasch has asked me to respond to your letter of August 29, 1975.

We have no knowledge nor record of your letter of June 10, 1975. I will, however, attempt to bring you up to date on the status of the 13th Region law suit.

On December 30, 1974, Judge Gasch ordered the Secretary of the Interior, among other things: 1) to establish a thirteenth region under Section 7(c) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act; 2) to enroll certain designated Alaska Natives in that region; 3) to establish the Thirteenth Regional Corporation, pursuant to Section 5 of the Act; and 4) to distribute a designated sum of money to that corporation from the Alaska Native Fund.

As of this date these actions have not been performed. There is presently before this Court a motion by the plaintiffs in the original suit for an order in aid of judgment and for an order to show cause. In essence these motions are to compel the Secretary of the Interior to carry out the actions ordered by Judge Gasch on December 30, 1974. A hearing has been set on these motions for Monday, September 22, 1975.

I trust that this information has been helpful.

Sincerely,
Richard E. Galen
Law clerk to Judge Gasch

Involvement Coordinator

Nunam Kitlutsisti
Protector of the Land
Box 267
Bethel, Alaska 99559

Dear Reader:

During an October, 1974 Nunam Kitlutsisti Board meeting in Bethel we found that Fish and Wildlife Service had 80,000 on their budget for the purpose of hiring a state-wide Native Involvement Co-ordinator (N.I.C.) and three Native Liaison personals. We also found out that F & W had not yet hired those people. Yet the eighty grand was appropriated for 1975 fiscal year. (For those of you who don't know about government appropriations, begins July 1 through June 30th of the following year.)

We immediately wrote F&W and asked them why they hadn't advertised those positions. We also wrote other groups, agencies, etc. and informed them of our discovery. There was a lot of

(continued on page 12)

Poem—Pillow Fight

The swish of numberless
snowflakes
Beguiles me in my tracks.

Someone's had a pillow fight
Up there in the clouds,
And the swirling feathers froze—
To make a frosted blanket
For sleeping Earth.

Soon—
The quiet is disrupted
By the groaning of spruce
branches,
Oppressed—
By the white visitors.

—Alvin Manook
Sept. 15, 1975