

\$7.5 Million Tlingit-Haida Award Passes U.S. House Unanimously

The passage of a bill to provide for the distribution of \$7.5 million awarded to the Tlingit and Haida Indians of Southeastern Alaska was unanimously recommended Feb. 26 by the House Indian Affairs Subcommittee.

The money was awarded to the Indians in January of 1968 by the U.S. Court of Claims as compensation for lands taken from them but has not yet been released.

Rep. Howard Pollock, R-Alaska, sponsored the measure and testified before the group of which he is a member.

Pollock had asked for an early consideration of the bill back in January stating that the prompt enactment of the legislation would contribute greatly to the economic and social life of the Tlingit and Haida communities involved.

The land was taken from the Indians for such federal reserves as the Tongass National Forest, Glacier Bay National Monument, and the Annette Indian Reservation.

The judgment funds will go to the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indians which serves about 14,000 constituents in 18 member communities that extend from Oakland, California to Anchorage, Alaska.

The Council was organized

under an act of Congress and is granted congressional authority to develop plans for the use and disposition of the judgment funds.

Having recently moved its offices from Anchorage to Juneau,

the council has actively participated in the Alaska Federation of Natives land claims effort.

It is now formerly structuring its member communities so that it can operate as a regional native corporation.