

# Parr submits amended bonding proposal for statewide corrections

JUNEAU — Juveniles awaiting placement in foster homes no longer be committed to jail if an amended bonding proposal for statewide corrections is approved.

The House Committee on Health, Education and Social Services recently approved a move by Fairbanks Rep. Charles Parr to change planned juvenile facilities in Fairbanks, Ketchikan and Juneau to allow for a gradation of confinement. House Bill 618 had called for construction of conventional lock-up

detention centers for youths in those cities.

But up to half of the juveniles currently under court supervision in Fairbanks have committed minor infractions or no offenses at all. "We've had children as young as 10 years old in jail in past years," Parr pointed out. Anything from running away from home or truancy to need for parental supervision can land a child in jail in Fairbanks today.

Parr called this temporary jail commitment "a shameful

practice" and several weeks ago called for postponement of action on the bonding proposal to allow further investigation.

In the interim he met in Fairbanks with Judge Art Robson, juvenile intake officer Pat Aloia and architect Jerry Meyers, and recently presented a proposal that the new \$1.8 million facility in Fairbanks be built to contain 30 residents — half under confinement, half not confined.

The youth facility is part of \$3.6 million in correctional funds for Fairbanks. If approved by the legislature, the bonding proposal will go before Alaskan voters this fall.

Fairbanks Superior Court figures show that during 1975, 1,547 juveniles — 1,080 male, 467 female — were detained in the Fairbanks jail. Of these the majority (approximately 80%) were released with no formal action — either by referral to a social-service agency or with a verbal warning in conference with the parents.

The juveniles were detained on matters ranging from discharge of fireworks and littering to shoplifting and burglary. Drug violations and lar-

ceny make up the major types of serious offenses by males; female juveniles are most often confined for running away from home.

"We are derelict in not doing something about this situation," Parr contends. "This is my first opportunity to try to change this practice and I have seized it."

In addition to including the youth facilities on the bonding proposals, Parr indicated, "The HESS committee is specifying that the Department of Health

and Social Services must consult with local citizens and fit the design of the facility to the local program for handling children in trouble with the law — or just in trouble."

The bill goes now to the House Finance Committee for consideration.