

# Murkowski bill seeks protection of languages

Alaska Native languages would be protected and encouraged under legislation recently co-sponsored by Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska.

The bill, the Native American Languages Act, would ensure recognition of the rights of Alaska Natives and other Native Americans to use their languages in their schools. In addition, it would encourage states to make exceptions in teacher certification requirements for Native language speakers and grant academic credit for Native language studies in schools and colleges.

"In order for the Alaska Native culture to be preserved and kept alive, the Alaska Native languages must also be preserved," Murkowski said.