

Murkowski offers aid to state in getting drug abuse funds

WASHINGTON D.C. — Federal money approved by Congress last year to help local communities fight drug abuse has yet to get to local law enforcement agencies in Alaska, and Sen. Frank Murkowski has offered Gov. Steve Cowper his assistance in seeing that the funds are distributed.

Murkowski notified Cowper recently of his concern that local law enforcement efforts are not benefiting from the \$823,000 provided to the State of Alaska but not yet spent in the state.

"When I was home during the recent Thanksgiving recess, I heard from regional law enforcement officials who wanted to know the status of the money provided by Congress in the Anit-Drug Abuse Law of 1986," Murkowski wrote to Cowper.

The Senator said he looked into the matter following his return to Washington, and participated in the Senate Narcotics Control Caucus hearing, which focused on the effectiveness of the Anit-Drug Abuse Act.

Under the act, the State of Alaska received \$560,000 for drug treatment and rehabilitation, \$500,000 for drug education programs, and \$823,000 for drug enforcement.

"While I was pleased to learn that all of the funds allocated to our state for treatment and education programs are in the process of being awarded, I am concerned with the figures presented regarding the State's efforts to disburse funds for anit-drug law enforcement efforts."

While treatment and education are important elements of the efforts to fight drug abuse, these must be accompanied by vigorous enforcement action," Murkowski said.

Murkowski pledged to the Governor that he believes there is mutual agreement on the necessity to disburse the enforcement funds as soon as possible.

"I am prepared to offer any assistance which may be necessary to achieve this goal."