

Gravel Receives Assurances Land Claims Bill Top Priority

WASHINGTON—Senator Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) has received assurances from Congressman James Haley (D-Fla.), Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, that the Alaskan Native Land Claims Bill has "top priority" on the subcommittee's agenda.

Senator Gravel received the assurances during a lengthy meeting held with Chairman Haley last week to review the prospects for final Congressional action on the land claims measure.

The Senator said Chairman Haley told him that he is aware of the legislation's importance to Alaska and promised to work

"diligently" to get a bill before the full House Interior Committee "as soon as possible."

Senator Gravel said he was "tremendously impressed by the Chairman's sincerity and his intense desire to do something worthy and beneficial for the entire Alaskan community."

"I was greatly encouraged by my meeting with Chairman Haley today," the Senator said,

"and am now more hopeful than ever that the Land Claims Bill can be acted upon before the end of the current session of Congress."

"Certainly, I intend to do everything within my power to see that this is done," he declared. "The issue is too vital to Alaska's growth and social development to be delayed any longer."