

House Native Land Claims Bill-

Appears Probable House Will Pass Bill This Session: Begich

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Nick Begich said that the House Interior & Insular Affairs Committee, by a unanimous voice vote, sent to the House of Representatives the Alaska Native Land Claims Bill.

The bill which emerged from the Committee was essentially the same bill passed by the Indian Affairs Subcommittee.

"It now appears probable that the full House will pass this bill during this session of Congress."

The only substantive change was an amendment which provides for continued protection for all lands in Alaska even as the settlement goes forward.

There is no land freeze protection for all lands in Alaska even as the settlement goes forward.

There is no land freeze provision in this bill and if passed by the Congress, the State land selections would proceed on schedule.

"This legislation will allow

Alaska to move forward economically," the Alaska Democrat said.

After one hour and eleven minutes of debate over three amendments, Chairman Aspinall requested and was granted unanimous Committee approval to expedite movement of the bill to the Rules Committee.

Interest on Native Land Claims Bill was keen throughout the entire debate. When the meeting commenced 31 of 39

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members were on hand.

Representative Begich personally made 19 phone calls early this morning urging Interior Committee members to attend today's mark-up session.

"Needless to say, I am extremely pleased. All Alaskans, and I emphasize all, can share in applauding this bill. I think there is much hard work ahead but at this time, I believe we can be optimistic," the legislator said.

Congressman Begich noted with obvious pride that "never

before has the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee considered and approved a Native Land Claims settlement.

There are many Congressmen such as Chairman Aspinall and Subcommittee Chairman Haley who have great interest in the the bill and are working extremely hard on this legislation."

The bill is scheduled to be sent to the House Rules Committee next Thursday and then on to the House for full action later this session, possibly in the first part of October.