

RurAL CAP, ANF face cuts

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Two agencies which serve rural Alaska are watching the progress on one recently approved House bill which could mean their life or death.

That bill, House Bill 643, includes funding plans for the Rural Alaska Community Action Program (RurAL CAP) and the Alaska Native Foundation (ANF), both of which would be severely cut back if HR 643 is not signed.

The bill was approved by the Senate and House in the final days of the Alaska Legislature but it had not been sent to the governor for his ac-

tion as of early this week.

According to a spokesman for Gov. Jay Hammond, the governor was scheduled to review the bill for his signature on June 25 but would not if he hadn't received it. A spokesman for Hayes said Monday that the bill should be sent to Hammond by June 23.

According to the people who run RurAL CAP and ANF, many of their programs would be eliminated if the HB 643 isn't approved.

Frank Berry, new director of ANF, said that the Foundation will suffer greatly if it doesn't get state assistance.

ANF conducts programs

which provide training and technical assistance in the Bush including the Fisheries Loan Program which would be shut down in January if not funded; the Alaska Native Leadership Program which was dropped from funding; a Village Management training assistance program; a Native arts program; and a study of the effect of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act on Alaska Natives.

HB 643 includes references to fisheries management loan programs in several areas but doesn't specifically say that the Foundation will get the mon-

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Federal, state cuts hurting Native programs

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ey. The ANF program is the only one geared to rural fishermen.

According to State Sen. Nels Anderson of Dillingham, no specific organizations were named as recipients because Hammond promised to eliminate any specific reference to specific agencies.

Berry said that if the Foundation isn't able to obtain some of the lost money, layoffs of administrative workers might be necessary and the "brains" of the Foundation might be lost.

"Without the administrative employees the Foundation would collapse so there would be no 'house' for the programs."

No expansion of the Foundation would be possible, he said.

RurAL CAP also is hurting if state funding isn't granted. The agency has suffered a double-whammy this year because of federal budget cuts which cut all federal funding to the agency which has oper-

ated with lots of federal money.

According to temporary director Bob Loh, the agency has received money from state money for the Head Start program, Weatherization program and Alcohol program.

The Head Start money was granted through the Department of Community and Regional Affairs and totalled \$2.6 million.

Head Start was cut from the budget early in the Legislative session but scores of protests brought the funding back.

Loh said that the agency has received money to pay for its weatherization program which improves insulation and heat protection in rural homes so that program will continue.

An Alcohol and Drug Abuse

program also received money from the Health and Social services department.

But, Loh said, other programs might go lacking.

"We are looking at the federal budget cut impact fund to see if there is money there," said Loh.

About 45 percent of the Alaska Federation of Natives budget was not included in state budget, said Janie Leask.

Leask, executive vice president of the AFN, said the Federation's request for money to pay for the Land Managers Association, the AFN worker in that program, an AFN newsletter staffer, and a receptionist were not specifically included.

However, Leask said that negotiations are being conducted to see if the cut items can be included in the budget.