

# Warble Fly on Reindeer May Be Controlled

(Special to Tundra Times)

Senator Ted Stevens announced today that the Bureau of Veterinary Medicine will allow reindeer to be tested with Warbex pour-on for control of the warble fly.

In a letter to John Kennelly, administrator, Reindeer Herders Association, Stevens called the FDA decision to permit the testing "a major step in boosting the economic feasibility of the reindeer industry in our state."

Several insecticides have been successfully used for warble control in cattle in the United States and it is reported that active reindeer warble control programs are underway in Russia and other northern European countries.

It had been estimated that the warble fly probably causes greater losses than any other pest of reindeer, estimated at \$50-\$100,000 annually.

The Reindeer Herders Association estimates that loss in reindeer hides alone could be as much as \$100,000 in a single year. In 1970, only 2,639 skins were sold, although 5,058 animals were slaughtered.

Since skins cannot be tanned with holes when infested with warble, 2,639 skins were not used.

The losses begin when heel flies lay eggs on reindeer. The

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reindeer run constantly to seek relief, do not graze properly and produce tough meat.

In 1971, the association asked the Department of Agriculture for assistance in eradicating the warble fly from Alaska.

Stevens subsequently called a meeting with the manufacturers of Warbex, American Cyanamid and it was suggested that a testing program be conducted by the Agricultural Research Service, the University of Alaska and the Reindeer Herders Association.