

# Gravel Backs Bill to Promote Sale of Native Arts and Crafts

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Senator Mike Gravel has co-sponsored legislation in the U. S. Senate designed to promote the sale of Alaskan arts and crafts in the United States and in other countries.

The bill, S. 3785, was introduced recently by Senator Charles McC. Mathias of Maryland.

According to Senator Gravel, the legislation would establish a special Office of American Arts and Handcrafts within the Department of Commerce to assist American craftsmen in promoting and selling their work.

The Alaska Democrat said that craftsmen around the Nation, but especially in Alaska,

have asked for such assistance and would take full advantage of such an office once it is created.

He added that there is a world-wide demand for the crafts which is not, at the moment, being met.

"Alaskan craftsmen have developed many unique crafts and art forms that have gained world-wide recognition for their beauty and originality," Senator Gravel said. "The distribution and sale of these products has however, been limited not by lack of ability to produce, but by the lack of expertise in advertising, distribution and marketing."

Last year, a limited program was begun in the Office of

Economic Opportunity to help Native Americans distribute and market handcrafts. Senator Gravel supports the OEO program, but feels that additional expertise should be available.

The Alaska Democrat said,

"Alaskan artists and craftsmen should have available to them other avenues than this small program of OEO. For this reason, I am cosponsoring and will work for passage of this new legislation. The assistance

that the Office of American Arts and Handcrafts will provide Alaskans will be significant. The legislation will provide a much needed bridge between the craftsman and the consumer."