

By Request—

Aspinall May Co-sponsor AFN Bill in the House

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee convened Tuesday morning for hearings on the Alaska native land claims and received testimony from only two witnesses.

The two groups represented included the Wilderness Society and the Aleut League. The Wilderness Society asked that land claims legislation include provisions for land use management. They indicated full support for the position advanced by the

Alaska Federation of Natives.

AFN President Don Wright indicated that no testimony was offered because the administration was not yet able to present its position.

"The administration was not ready. We didn't feel it was necessary for us to testify without giving the administration a chance to come out with the bill," stated Wright.

Senator Henry Jackson, chairman of the Interior Committee, has agreed to schedule another day of hearings in order to give the administration and the AFN a chance to present their positions.

As most AFN board members in Washington, the AFN is concentrating its efforts in seeking support from members of the House.

Three teams of Alaska natives began visiting congressional offices Tuesday. They hope to request every congressman to sponsor the AFN legislation which is expected to be introduced in the House on Thursday.

In addition to the AFN board members, Capt. Bill English and Capt. Thomas Richards, Sr. of Wien Consolidated Airlines are also in Washington lobbying for

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AFN Bill...

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the land claims settlement:

Don Wright indicated that Rep. Wayne Aspinall, Chairman of the House Interior Committee has agreed to co-sponsor the AFN bill by request.

Wright also stated the AFN board had voted Monday to request the members of the Alaska congressional delegation to support and sponsor the AFN bill.