

Though Not Always Agreeing, Reader Says Times Hits Points

Box 1125

Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

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Editor
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Sir:

I have been a faithful reader of your newspaper for some time and, while I have not always agreed with you, I felt that you usually pointed out the salient points of those issues of importance to the native peoples. With regard to one important recent issue, however, you do not seem inclined to comment. That is, the failure of the House Appropriations Committee to fund Senator Bartlett's native housing program despite the President's inclusion of it in his budget.

The item was eliminated because the House Committee felt "plans and standards for this program need further refinement..."

That reason that this all-important program was not funded is something to speculate on. Although former Alaska State Housing Authority officials have reported that plans and standards were almost completed before the Hickel administration took power, none were submitted. Therefore, perhaps some of the fault lies there. In addition, no state official was sufficiently concerned about the bill's passage to appear in support of the program at the House hearings.

On the other hand, we must remember that we no longer have that dedicated Alaskan public servant, Ralph J. Rivers, representing us in the House where his seniority, experience in congress, position in the majority party and devotion to duty

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helped pass Alaskan legislation during his time in office. Rather we have a freshman member of the minority party, inexperienced in congress, who did not even appear in support of the bill at the House Committee hearings. Possibly - Congressman Pollock's failure to get this bill passed by the House and his similar failure to get House approval of funding of the mortgage relief act may have been caused by one of his frequent absences from Washington on speaking engagements around the country. However, I tend to agree with others who feel that it doesn't seem to make much difference whether he is in Washington or not.

Yours truly,
Russel L. Brown