

Stevens says tribal sovereignty unlikely

Alaska's senior senator, Ted Stevens, says Alaska Natives' quest for sovereignty could endanger the Alaska Federation of Natives' attempts to get congressional approval for the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act amendments.

Stevens feels Congress will not readily deal with legislation that involves Alaskan tribal governments. Stevens said he will support amendments to ANCSA rather than dealing with tribal governments. Stevens feels most Natives support ANCSA.

AFN will meet Oct. 7 to deal with ANSCA and to decide what amendments could be presented to Congress.

While many Alaska Natives advocate a tribal form of government because they feel it offers the best land protection and self jurisdiction, Stevens says Indian country must be created under treaty with the federal government and not with Congress.

Stevens also said he would not advocate AFN's proposal to transfer ANCSA lands to tribal governments.