

# ***Exercise your right to vote***

*(Reprinted from "Council," the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. newsletter).*

It is not news that the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 will bring to the Alaska native a power-base with which to bring to a resolution many of the deficiencies that we find in a way of life that is both highly established and, yet, very delicate. The economics and prestige that has been a result of successful management of the regional and village corporations by the native leadership has already proven to be a factor that has contributed significantly to this resolution.

It is also not news to find that the resolution of many of the issues that have previously faced us would not have been in our favor without everyone's support and ideas. Whether it be the lobbying efforts that were needed toward the passage of the ANCSA or the effort that was needed toward the implementation of the legislation, it could not have been done without input from many individuals. The same holds true for issues that are facing us today, and in the future, our native leadership is still highly dependent upon your support.

How can we support them?

We can do this very simply by utilizing a system that is the same when we, as stockholders of both village and regional corporations, as members of Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc., or a member of a village or city, elect people to sit on village councils, city councils, corporate boards of directors, and other committees—the democratic form of government that gives everyone the opportunity to vote. Not only is this an opportunity, but it is also an inherited privilege. We must use this privilege.

In the near future all residents of the state of Alaska will have their opportunity to cast their vote for candidates of their choice to represent them in Juneau. This opportunity is one of many ways that you could support people of your choice to carry your opinions and ideas to a level that could, hopefully, resolve the pressing issues you are now faced with. Registering to become a qualified voter within this state and using your privilege and right to vote in the next election is a positive way in which to help your people get things done.

Now that it appears that the Alaska natives have their foot in the door, it is now up to each and every one to start up a "get out and vote" campaign, so that the door is wide open and free to pass through.

Chris Anderson  
Executive Director