

Women want justice change

The Alaska Commission on the Status of Women has voted unanimously to request the Alaska Court System to study disparate treatment of women in Alaska's criminal justice system.

The action was taken last weekend in Nome, site of the Commission's fourth regular meeting.

Commissioners directed Lynne Woods, Executive Director, to write the Judicial Council requesting that data compiled as part of the court's current racism study also be broken out according to sex, and that a new study be initiated to look at disparate treatment of women.

"The Commissioners were concerned about reports that women are treated differently by the courts, whether they are the accused or the victim," Woods said. "One person testified for example, that there has never been a rape conviction in Nome despite the fact that there are several reported rapes a year there. This is the kind of data they want looked into."

The Commission addressed a variety of women's issues during the three-day session, and also heard testimony from a representative of several women's organizations.

In other action, the Commission:

Alaska's homemakers. Estimated cost of the study is \$20,000.

- Decided to hold public hearings in conjunction with its October meeting in Anchorage, and tentatively identified hearing topics as welfare reform, displaced homemakers, sex bias in education, and violence against women.

- Authorized a contract for an assessment of the needs and concerns of Black women in Alaska, utilizing a workshop format.

- Decided to co-sponsor with the Business and Professional Women's Club political action conferences in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Sitka.

- Decided to co-sponsor with the Anchorage School District Human Relations Office a workshop on new careers for women, and to look into the possibility of holding similar workshops in Petersburg and Fairbanks.

- Authorized a study of the problems and needs of Alaska's