

# Passage of Housing Fund Expected

JUNEAU—Gov. Walter J. Hickel voiced optimism this week that this session of Congress will approve a \$1 million appropriation for initial funding of the Alaska Remote Housing Program.

The governor said "The drastic need for housing Alaska natives and others in remote areas has been fully documented by our congressmen, and by the administration's special task force which I sent to Washington in July.

"There can hardly be any doubt by now that this appropriation is desperately needed. It will begin a positive program to alleviate the deplorable conditions under which our rural people live in many instances."

Meeting last Friday, the Senate Subcommittee on Independent Offices, chaired by Sen. Warren Magnuson, D-Wash., returned the \$1 million appropriation to the funding request for the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966, the overall measure of which the Alaska remote housing program is a part.

The remote housing funds had been slashed from the bill's budget earlier this year by a House committee. The replaced funds will still require approval of a Senate—

House conference committee and the memberships of each body.

In an effort to secure passage of the measure, and at the request of Alaska Sen. E.L. Bartlett, Hickel sent a special four-man task force to Washington in July to testify before Magnuson's committee.

They were Morris Thompson, deputy director of the State Rural Development Agency; Ed Crittenden, executive director of the Alaska State Housing Authority; State Sen. Ray Christiansen, D-Bethel, and State Rep. John Sackett, R-Fairbanks.

Christiansen and Sackett are members of the state's Rural Affairs Commission created by the governor earlier this year.

Hickel added, "We recognize—that this program holds great promise for improving the health and living standards of many Alaskans, as well as encouraging self government and initiative in the villages.

"This Senate subcommittee approval of this funding request shows, I believe, that Congress is aware that we in Alaska are willing and able to undertake a program of ambitious and important dimensions."