

Would Amend Workmen's Compensation Act to Cover Natives

Representative Mike Bradner (D-Fairbanks) came out today in favor of the Alaska State Legislature passing legislation which would amend the Workmen's Compensation Act to provide for coverage of natives building their own homes under the Alaska State Housing Authority program.

"The idea sounds like an excellent one," Bradner said.

He said this in response to a query by the Tundra Times.

The process, however, said Bradner, could be quite complicated. It would be a matter of pinpointing who the "carrier" would be and how the system would work.

The absence of such legislation was brought to light when two natives—one in Point Hope and one in Tooksook Bay—were

injured while they were participating in an ASHA self-help project.

Participants working on their own homes under the terms of this program are not now eli-

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gible for Workmen's Compensation.

The chances of passing legislation amending the Workmen's Compensation Act to provide such compensation are "reasonably good," Bradner said.

"I don't think anybody would quarrel with the idea," he said, but they might disagree over the "mechanics of how to implement this thing."

He said that such legislation would "have no problem clearing the house, and the body of the senate would go for it," but the problem would be in committee, particularly the Senate Labor and Management Committee which has Anchorage Republican C.R. Lewis as its chairman.

Passage of such legislation, Bradner said, would "depend on whether or not the right parties push" for it, but "there must be similar legislation somewhere. We're not giving anything away. It's an insurance program."