

Letters to the Tundra Times

Conditions at

Chevak airport

Chevak, Alaska 99563
November 10, 1979

Dear Sir(s):

In the past few years, I understand, there has been money appropriated to upgrade the airstrip here in Chevak. What has happened to the money?

—As you probably know by now, our airstrip is in terrible and dangerous condition during the fall and spring seasons. It also needs beacons and some sort of reflectors for safety. It is in dire need of upgrading.

Last year during the spring, my baby and I were stuck in Bethel for over two weeks due to the conditions of the Chevak airstrip. There have been times when there has been no planes, passengers, or mail for extended periods of times. What happens when there is a medical emergency during those times? What happens when a person has an emergency outside of Chevak and can not get out?

I have seen numerous correspondence posted around Chevak written by individuals who have written to a number of people who could help, but to no avail. I have also seen the responses to these letters. They just seem to go around in circles and no one seems to want to take the initiative to help us.

Would you take the initiative to start?

Thank you very much!

Sincerely,
Cecilia R. Martz

cc:

The Honorable Ted Stevens
The Honorable Mike Gravel
The Honorable Don Young
Mr. Lyndol L. Pruett
Mr. William Dalton
Representative Vern Hurlbert
Senator John Sackett
The Honorable Jay Hammond
Mr. Lyle K. Brown

support postage

stamp rates

Old Harbor City Council
Box 109 Old Harbor, Alaska
99643
November 23, 1979

Dear Senator Ferguson:

On behalf of the village of Old Harbor and all the people of our neighboring sister-communities in rural Alaska, I am writing in support of your proposal to establish the "Postage Stamp" Light rate for electrical utilities. With rising fuel costs and the ensuing high cost of electricity, our communities spend double, triple and even quadruple the amount that urban residents pay for electrical power, while the cash income in our villages in generally much less.

This makes electricity or dependence on it practically infeasible for smaller rural towns. Individual households are often forced to rely on small, inefficient portable generators for their limited use of electrical appliances and village schools are obligated to pay the same exorbitant rates to run their facilities, at a tremendous extra cost to all local taxpayers, urban as well as rural.

Representatives from larger population areas may not realize at first, that a reduction in the high cost of electrical power in village Alaska would result in commercial advantages (in the sale of electrical appliances, freezers, refrigerators, and groceries) and considerable savings of energy and tax dollars (in reducing operational costs for public schools) for all their constituents.

Small businesses and light industry presently unable to operate economically in rural Alaska would be able to expand our state-wide tax base with the opening of canneries, restaurants, hotels and lodges and the growth of tourism. Cheaper electrical power means a rise in the overall standard living for all Alaskans, at a very slight cost to larger cities, which will in any case benefit by the general improvement.

The Postage Stamp Light Rate concept is, therefore, in the best interests of all the citizens of our state, and we urge its immediate adoption by our legislature.

Sincerely,
Sven Haakanson
City Mayor

cc:

Anderson,
Buchholdt,
Hohman,
Kertulla,
Osterback,
Tundra Times

support gov.

Rural Alaska
Community Action Program, Inc
November 20, 1979

Governor Jay Hammond
Pouch A
Juneau, AK 99801

Subject: RurAL CAP Resolution
No. 79-29 (Attached)

Dear Governor Hammond:

I am attaching, for your information, a copy of a Resolution recently adopted by the Executive Committee of the RurAL CAP Board. As you can see, the Resolution supports your position regarding repeal of the State income tax and conceptually endorses the "energy tax credit" plan that you have proposed as a method of distributing some of the surplus oil revenues to the citizens of Alaska.

Although, as you point out, repeal of the income tax may appear to be an attractive policy option during a time of budget surplus in the general fund, such an action would clearly not be in the best interests of low-income Alaskans, nor would it provide significant assistance to full-time resident Alaskans. Therefore, we endorse and support your position on this important issue.

Likewise, though the details are not yet fully available, we conceptually support the "energy tax credit" plan that you have proposed. Certainly, this plan is more equitable to low-income rural Alaskans than any other scheme that has thus far been advanced. You will note, however, that the Executive Committee endorsed the plan "in principle" not wholeheartedly. I believe there are two reasons for this qualified endorsement, as follows:

1- So far as the plan is not fully developed, it is as yet unclear what the specific benefits to

Alaskan citizens will be and precisely how those benefits will be distributed.

2- We are concerned that the "energy tax credit" plan not be viewed as a panacea for all of rural Alaska's ills (it is demonstrably NOT an energy policy, for instance).

Notwithstanding the above qualifications, however, you may be assured of our support as these issues move to the legislative arena in January.

Finally, by means of this letter, I would like to thank Gladys Reckley of your staff who provided the documents that we needed in order to make this judgement.

Sincerely,
Phil Smith
Executive Director

cc: Tundra Times