

Gruening Makes Important Bill Amendment

An amendment by Senator Ernest Gruening as the Fur Seal Act of 1966 was passed last week by the senate and marked the first attempt to relieve residents of the Pribilof Islands of their wardship status.

As proposed in the bill, the Secretary of the Interior would be permitted to sell homes to the residents of St. Paul Island who could organize a municipal government. But the deeds to the homes would have been restrictive.

The Gruening amendment would provide the residents with unrestricted ownership of their homes 10 years after the legislation is enacted, a period of time set to give them experience in the management of their own affairs.

Senator Gruening called the bill, S. 2102, introduced by Senator Bartlett, "a constructive contribution to the improvement of living conditions for an important segment of the Alaska population."