

Letters to the **EDITOR**

Alaska Natives ignored at political conventions

This is a presidential election year and already both the Republican National Convention and the Democratic National Convention have taken place. Did we hear any comments on Alaska Native or Native American issues at either of these conventions? We did hear from other minorities, but we did not hear any issues discussed on our national issues. Does this mean that we are of no importance or does this mean that we are alienated from the power structure of America?

It is time that we assert our Alaska Native influence and let both of these national political parties know that we do have issues and we do have concerns. How do we do this? Here are the presidential headquarters' addresses:

President Bill Clinton National Headquarters

ATTN: Ann Lewis

P.O. Box 19300

Washington, D.C. 20036-9300

Telephone: (202) 331-1996

Fax: (202) 496-4849

Internet: <http://www.whithouse.gov>

Bob Dole National Headquarters

ATTN: Scott Reed

810 First Street, NE, Suite 300

Washington, D.C. 20002

Telephone: (202) 414-6400

Fax: (202) 408-9468

Internet: <http://www.dole96.com>

What is their platform for Alaska Natives and Native Americans? You should voice your concern and let it be heard all the way to Washington, D.C. Let each of them know that we have specific issues and our livelihood and our very existence depends on the political decisions that are made in Washington, D.C. Our issues need to be heard and it is your voice that puts it forth. Not only vote, but send your cards and letters expressing your issues and volunteer for their campaigns. Get the voters to the polls and it is time we take control of our future and it is through your political involvement. Your time and your effort does count.

It is time that we see and realize some solutions to our issues and you more than anyone else know what you are confronting on a daily basis. Make it known. Your time and effort does count. Turn your village out to vote in the general election. Make sure that every eligible voter has signed up to vote and make sure that they vote on election day.

Is it because we are non-involved in the state and national conventions that we did not hear our issues at the Republican and Democratic National Conventions? You are now aware of each of the presidential candidates' national headquarters. Ring their phones off the hook and flood their fax machines and let both know that we do have issues that demand attention. Let them know that you are a registered voter and that you will vote in the upcoming election. You can influence the election and your active participation helps.

It is time that all of us Alaska Native voters make political history. The Alaska Native vote really counted in electing Governor Tony Knowles. Now, we have Alaska Native Commissioners and key staff that are starting to address our Alaska Native agenda within state government.

It is time to have our own Alaska Native representation in the U.S. House of Representatives. It is time to have someone that fully knows and has complete understanding of our Alaska Native issues. It is time that we have one of our own speaking up for us and fully presenting our Alaska Native issues. It is time that we start seeking out solutions to fully address our concerns and our issues.

How many more years will we tolerate bouncing the subsistence issue back and forth between state government and federal government? Who can better answer and educate the halls of Congress than an Alaska Native legislator that can speak to the specifics on our subsistence issues.

Besides our voting, it has to be said that our Alaska Native candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives does need more money to get elected. Her opponent is out spending her and buying the election. What does our candidate have more than her opponent? She has us and we are more important to her election than money. Our time and effort in helping her get elected is how we will make Alaska political history. Yes, a contribution, large or small, adds up, but your time and your effort in helping our Alaska Native candidate get elected and sign up more Alaska Native voters is how we will make Alaska political history.

Ask anyone of our candidate's headquarters to volunteer all the way up to election day and on to our candidate's victory. This is how we make Alaska political history. Besides voting, we stand behind our candidate with full support with our time and effort.

It is time that we have a true representative government and this is accomplished by electing an Alaska Native to the U.S. House of Representatives. If you have not signed up to vote, it is time and you can become a part of making Alaska political history. See you at the voting polls!

Terrance H. Booth, Sr.
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