

U.S. Senate bill would aid sobriety effort

The U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee has approved a bill which would fund the reopening of an Anchorage substance abuse treatment center which closed in July due to lack of funds.

In addition, the bill calls for funding to support a wide range of health studies and training for Alaska Natives.

According to Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, a major portion of the bill addresses the need for a public treatment center in Anchorage.

"Alaska faces one of the worst substance abuse problems in the United States, yet we are left without a single public detoxification center in the Anchorage area," Stevens said.

The bill, which would require matching grants from the state and municipal governments, would reopen the Clitheroe Center for treatment of

' This provision guarantees that the national program addresses Alaska Native concerns. '
— Sen. Ted Stevens

alcohol and drug abuse, he said.
The legislation also includes

\$170,000 for expansion of the Crisis Line, a suicide prevention line, and \$75,000 for a grant from the Municipality of Anchorage to develop a program to provide employment and training in Alaska.

The funds would expand computer and child development training programs for seniors and establish a program to address the high drop-out rate of Alaska Native youth.

"It's our hope that this project, along with other programs designed to reduce alcohol and drug abuse, violence and suicide will help solve the problems of many young Alaska Natives," Stevens said.

Another provision contained in the legislation would earmark \$3 million of a \$10 million rural and Native American research program to study how effective social and mental health programs are among Alaska Eskimos,

Indians and Aleuts.

"This provision guarantees that the national program addresses Alaska Native concerns," he said.

The study also may help to understand what social programs are successful and support the family, he said.

But the bill would provide funding for health studies as well.

The legislation would support studies on the transmission of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome from mother to child during pregnancy and the causes of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Stevens said the money backing SIDS research would benefit Alaskans since the state has the highest SIDS rate in the nation.

The appropriations bill, which passed the committee Sept. 13, now faces full Senate consideration.