

# Stevens says JOM funds to remain stable for Alaskans

The Bureau of Indian Affairs originally planned to delete the Johnson O'Mally program from its budget proposal but after strong lobbying efforts the program was put back into the budget.

According to Joan Fisher, "BIA deleted JOM completely. JOM was wiped out by BIA."

Among the bills yet to be approved by the the U.S. Senate, and Congress is a \$20 million appropriation for JOM.

Last year Alaska received approximately \$6.5 million that was distributed to 22,005 students in the form of counseling programs, cultural youth programs and tutorial programs, to name a few. Some of the money went directly to 32 tribal governments and 16 school districts. The school districts and tribal governments contracted for services which included funding educational field trips, counseling, Youth Olympics, artists in schools, career preparation, Native music and language studies and other Native cultural programs.

While Sen. Ted Stevens has introduced federal legislation which would appropriate \$20 million Fisher says, "We're hoping for \$23 million."

In a press release Stevens said, "Johnson O'Mally education assistance program funding would be set at \$20 million nationwide. Alaska JOM grantees will not see a reduction in per pupil payments. Alaska is one of the few states which will not receive JOM program cuts below the fiscal year '85 level because there are no BIA schools in

operation in the state."

Stevens' appropriation, which is earmarked for Alaska, will go to a full committee, then to the Senate floor, then to a House-Senate conference committee, back again to the Senate floor and finally to the president.

Fisher pointed out that the U.S. House Appropriation Committee is making a \$23 million request which she feels will be more beneficial than Stevens' proposed \$20 million.

Another item included in

Stevens' bill is a \$22.7 million appropriation for nationwide housing. The BIA Housing Improvement Program monies would result in approximately \$10 million for Alaska. Among other construction monies are \$4 million for Dillingham's Kakanak Hospital and \$1 million for Kotzebue's hospital.

Stevens' bill also deletes two House provisions which would have prohibited land exchanges in Alaska and similarly prohibited the renaming of Mt. McKinley.