

# Support Sought for High Level Indian Housing Post

*(Editor's note: The following is a statement issued by the Americans for Indian Opportunity)*

Senator Mike Gravel, for himself and co-sponsors Humphrey and Bayh, has introduced S. 1523 to amend the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to provide for an Assistant Secretary of HUD for Indian and Alaskan Native Affairs.

We've all worked for years to get administrative changes in HUD which would give Indian Housing the attention it needs and that the Congress intended in passing special housing legislation. It never happened. Instead of building houses they buried us in bureaucratic basements.

We were--and still are--hopeful that Secretary Harris was going to make a difference. A recent meeting with Mr. Burstein, her special counsel with the responsibility for designing a delivery system for Indian housing programs, didn't give us much hope. In fact, he seemed ready to reject out of hand any recommendations for elevating the Indian housing programs in the national office. Further, he was unaware that an earlier version of S. 1523 (S. 1287) had been introduced and when it was

called to his attention, he told us that HUD would not take a position on the Bill.

Send telegrams (if possible) and letters immediately to your Congressional delegation, President Carter, Secretary Harris and Senators, Gravel, Humphrey and Bayh. The Bill will be up for vote very shortly. Telephone calls will also count.