

Majority in Kotzebue favor 1991 legislation

KOTZEBUE, ALASKA- The consensus of northwest Alaska, based on testimony heard in Kotzebue on Tuesday, favors the proposed "1991" amendment package to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), according to Senator Frank Murkowski.

About 60 people attended the workshop, which was chaired by Murkowski, with testimony coming from representatives of regional and village corporations, Native council representatives, and other concerned residents.

"Most of those who testified called the amendments crucial to the future well-being of the Native corporations," said Murkowski. "I found the testimony to be extremely productive and informative and I want to comment those who voiced their opinion on this important issue."

The Kotzebue mention was the third workshop held in Alaska this year,

with additional hearings or workshops scheduled for Anchorage, Fairbanks, and other Alaska communities, as well as Washington, D.C. Previously, workshops were held in Hoonah and Barrow.

The purpose of the workshops is to receive testimony on the amendments introduced by the Alaska Congressional Delegation addressing various "1991" issues, including stock alienation, dissenters rights, and land protection.

Murkowski, who is a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, said the testimony will be included in the official committee files on the proposed legislation. Murkowski is also a member of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs.

"I was pleased with the turnout in Kotzebue," Murkowski said. "The area was well represented and the testimony will play a key roll how the energy committee shapes these crucial amendments."

Murkowski added that people who wish to submit written testimony on the amendments should mail it to the congressional delegation offices nearest their community.