

# Begich Backs Rural Job Development Ends Kachina Whiskey Decanter

Congressman Nick Begich of Alaska is taking a strong position in favor of the Rural Job Development Act of 1971 which would permit tax incentives to encourage employment providing new enterprises to locate in rural areas.

This no cost solution to the crowding of the big cities, the decline of rural and small town economy, also would aid, it is claimed, the collateral problems of pollution, crime, welfare and other ills besetting the nation.

Although Federal Bureaucracy has opposed tax incentives,

preferring instead to spend tax money, the recent change of the Administration from opposition to tax incentives to supporting them, is considered to have removed the last barrier toward a program to better balance the economy without spending any expenditure of taxes.

Congressman Begich informs the National Federation of Independent Business of his viewpoint on this legislation as follows:

"I understand fully your views and the importance of such legislation for the rural areas of our country. The State of Alaska, which I represent, is experiencing rapid population growth and shifts from rural to urban areas.

"I sincerely share your views and concerns about our rural problems, and the importance of

legislation such as H.R. 3511. Let me assure you after perusing the bill in its entirety I will give it my serious consideration. I am interested to see how such legislation will affect Alaska and other rural areas."

## Waiver for Wickersham

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Nick Begich of Alaska has announced that his bill (HR 10834) to provide a waiver of the Jones Act for operation of the Alaska ferry vessel Wickersham has passed today in the U.S. House of Representatives.

This is the first waiver of the Jones Act ever secured for Alaska, and the Alaska freshman termed its passage to be "landmark legislation in response to a very serious marine transportation problem in Alaska."

Begich's bill provides a temporary waiver for the Wickersham beginning when the State of Alaska signs a binding contract for an American-built replacement vessel, and ending when the vessel is complete, but in no event later than 36 months.

During this time, the Wickersham will be able to run between Alaskan ports and direct to Seattle, which is now forbidden by the Jones Act because the vessel is foreign built.

In a lengthy statement, Begich credited the unprecedented success of his bill to the mutual efforts of many people.

He mentioned specifically House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee Chairman Edward Garmatz, Alaska Governor William A. Egan, and Alaska Commissioner of Public Works, George Easley.

Begich predicted that the Senate will act on his bill very soon, and stated: "The practical effect of this bill will be to vastly improve service on the Alaska Marine Highway.

"The M.V. Wickersham can at last become an asset for the State of Alaska rather than a liability. All those who depend on the Marine Highway will begin to get the service they need and deserve."

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## Ends Kachina Whiskey Decanter

KACHINA DECANTERS? Sure enough—Kentucky's Ezra Brooks Distillery hit on the sacrilegious notion of packaging its spirits in the spirit-dolls of the Hopis, and the Hopis got into a huff.

"How would a Catholic feel about putting whiskey in a sta-

tue of Mary?" quizzed Chairman Clarence Hamilton.

Sen. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., backed the Hopis, got the distillery to halt production of the decanters after 2,000 were already shipped, and personally shattered the mold from which the painted bottles were made.

## Employment of Vietnam Vets On Rise

The February drop in unemployment for Vietnam Era Veterans to 7.4 percent nationally . . . the lowest figure in more than a year . . . was hailed today as a "real breakthrough" by H. D. Anders, Director of the Veterans Administration Regional Office in Juneau.

"To me it is a sign that the national jobs for veterans campaign is really catching on fire," Anders declared.

"It is also a tribute to private and public employers — the peo-

ple who make the jobs possible — who are responding in increasing numbers to President Nixon's appeal for a vital effort 'to provide the returning veteran what he has earned — a smooth transition to civilian life and meaningful work.'"

The latest Department of Labor seasonally adjusted statistics show a drop in unemployment for veterans 20 to 29 years old from 8.5 percent in January to the 7.4 percent mark in February.

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Alaska Village Electric Cooperative will hold its  
Annual Cooperative Meeting on March 31, 1972.  
The Meeting will convene at 1:30 p.m. at  
Carpenters Hall, 407 Denali Street, Anchorage,  
Alaska. All Cooperative Members, and others  
interested in AVEC are invited to attend.

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