

TESTIMONY

SUBMITTED TO

THE ALASKA NATIVES COMMISSION

SOCIAL/CULTURAL TASK FORCE

AT

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JUNE 9, 1993

ALASKA NATIVES COMMISSION

Joint Federal-State Commission
on
Policies & Programs Affecting Alaska Natives
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P R O C E E D I N G S

JUNE 9, 1993

(On the record at 1:15 p.m.)

(Tape 1, Side 1)

TESTIMONY OF JOHN STARR

MR. STARR: You know, there (indiscernible) ATV's.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Could we get your name and where you're from, please?

MR. STARR: John Starr, from Tanana. And we put a resolution in the (indiscernible) March about it. Because there's no -- it's like everybody's scared, even the villages, they -- they're not -- they don't have (indiscernible) what age and what limit, you know. There's got to be a limit out there. You see little kids (indiscernible) that big what, just kindergarten, running over too (indiscernible) somebody (indiscernible) two kids (indiscernible) killed. And that's how (indiscernible) running their snow (indiscernible) and their parents are letting them go, because there's no ordinance on there.

And for instance, out in Selawik, was it, a guy run into a bunch of kids there; did they do anything about that or is there....

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, he pled guilty. He's guilty of two counts of manslaughter, I think. He's -- and he's in jail.

MR. STARR: Yeah, but that's --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: He's a --

MR. STARR: -- yeah, but that is -- see, things like that,

that's not the only (indiscernible). This happens all over Alaska, but they're reporting it but it isn't doing anything. They're putting -- it's snow-goes and....

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Three-wheelers.

MR. STARR: Three-wheelers are just like cars in the villages.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: It's for all the villages (indiscernible).

MR. STARR: I'm not talking only from Tanana, but from some of the villages. There's got to be an ordinance, there's got to be something done about it. Because like you said, I called up (indiscernible) see if something can be done about it.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Is it possible that the village itself make an ordinance that is appropriate to what really (indiscernible).

MR. STARR: That's -- the villages, they don't (indiscernible). They don't care what the village ordinance they put up. They're going to have a law, some kind of law that would fine them or do something about it, you know. They do it in cars.

FATHER ELLIOTT: John, Don Lee did call me also about this, and are you thinking in -- perhaps that there should be a state law?

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible) got to be a state law.

FATHER ELLIOTT: State law, not village?

MR. STARR: No.

FATHER ELLIOTT: That's why you're coming to the council --

MR. STARR: That's (indiscernible).

FATHER ELLIOTT: -- the Commission.

MR. STARR: That way they can really enforce it.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STARR: Because we got a Trooper down there in Tanana.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STARR: He take their keys away, and next day they go back and return it to them.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Who says returned it to them, John?

MR. STARR: What?

FATHER ELLIOTT: Who says return it to the State Trooper?

MR. STARR: I don't know what the -- I asked them about it too. I (indiscernible) there's no ordinance written up about it.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STARR: He say you don't even find it in a book.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STARR: In the state law or what -- that book he's looking at. (Indiscernible) many times (indiscernible).

FATHER ELLIOTT: I'm not sure if there's a state law on who can -- how -- what the age limit is to drive an automobile.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: There (indiscernible).

MR. STARR: There is.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You have to have a license (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: There (indiscernible).

FATHER ELLIOTT: I know, but what's the age limit?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Sixteen.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Fourteen with a student permit and 16 (indiscernible).

FATHER ELLIOTT: Well, maybe the answer, John, will be simply to add to the one that's existing for automobiles and include four-wheelers, three-wheelers, snowmachines, et cetera.

MR. STARR: That would be good.

FATHER ELLIOTT: It would -- because the law's there; all you do is add to it.

MR. STARR: Yeah.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Would you also include outboard motors, kickers?

MR. STARR: What we done a couple years ago, I think we brought that up, boat safety. And I think (indiscernible) I think (indiscernible) I think he signed a bill, the Governor did. So that's not a -- that's not (indiscernible), that's....

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: What do you think the penalty should be?

MR. STARR: Well, (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You going to put aside (indiscernible).

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You going to put aside (indiscernible).

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: By who, (indiscernible) or the

parent?

MR. STARR: The parents or anybody.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Anybody. Who's anybody?

MR. STARR: Oh, what other people (indiscernible) the snow-go. Because (indiscernible) just like cars, (indiscernible) go and put numbers on there.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: What kind of fine should be imposed?

MR. STARR: Well, I don't know. That's something that --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: How much could you pay if your grandson rode your snow-go?

MR. STARR: Well, I would make him work for me for 10 years, I don't care (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: How much -- and this is a very important question, John. It's the kind of thing that we're willing to impose upon ourselves. How much? Is it a hundred dollars, is it five hundred dollars?

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Is it the price of the snowmachine?

MR. STARR: Well, (indiscernible) how many -- just like first offense, second offense, and third offense; what will you do? Let this -- they do that in (indiscernible). First offense, second offense, and third offense. Drunk driving. UNIDENTIFIED MALE

SPEAKER: I'm not familiar with the law, but I think the law is opposed against the driver, not the parent. And I think that's a real critical point in your testimony. A seven-year-old child is much more difficult to impose a civil penalty against than a 16-year old adolescent.

MR. STARR: Well, just fine the parents. But letting them go, they got to have -- they -- that's why I say you got to have age limit, though.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: What is a fair penalty in your village?

MR. STARR: We never have no -- because there's no ordinance, you can't (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Let's say there is an ordinance; what is a fair penalty?

MR. STARR: Oh, I'd say start with \$50. And go from a hundred, and hundred and fifty and up.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: If a child's life is not enough to encourage a parent to restrict the child from riding the machine, is a \$50 fine going to make that much difference?

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible). I'd like to see stiffer fines (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Along that same line, I wonder if just a fine of any amount is going to, let's say encourage some responsibility on the part of parents in that way. Wouldn't it be a more effective thing for the village to publicly tell the parents that there is -- that this is an irresponsible action on their part

and that the village would ask them to act in a more responsible way? In other words, have it handled within the village by the village itself, either by a judicial council or by a -- the city council or some public entity.

My -- the reason I asked that first question before about local ordinance; in some of these things, you know, your response was that, well, they don't pay any attention to ordinances, they can't be enforced. But isn't it possible that the local police that are under the direction of the city council enforce the local ordinances?

MR. STARR: Well, now, this guy down there is a Trooper (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: No, he wouldn't. But your local -- do you have a VSO?

MR. STARR: No. (Indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible) so (indiscernible) we can't have a VPSO. We got a State Trooper there.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: I see. Is that -- I'm not aware of the fact that (indiscernible) restriction. Your village probably could have a local police officer if the village council so wanted it.

MR. STARR: Yeah, when I ask them, but -- I asked them, but I (indiscernible) lot of times for it.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STARR: See if he can -- he could make an ordinance, but

he said they -- it's not in -- it's not written in the books, so he seemed like he can't do nothing (indiscernible). He can't make the law himself, he said, I don't see where it's written down. I don't know what (indiscernible) maybe look (indiscernible). Because I know it's getting pretty bad. (Indiscernible) they even hot wire these, you know, (indiscernible) stuff. They just steal one right out of your yard.

FATHER ELLIOTT: John, what happened to the youngster who did actually operate that machine and run over that infant?

MR. STARR: They never did nothing about it.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Nothing.

MR. STARR: There's a couple of broken legs they have there too, couple people got hit with snow-goes and....

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Are there people in town that are upset about it?

MR. STARR: Sure, everybody's (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Do they --

~~MR. STARR: (Indiscernible) village (indiscernible).~~

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Do they bring it up to the city council?

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: And what does the city council do about it?

MR. STARR: They don't seem to do anything, because they can't enforce, I don't see where they can enforce it.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: But I mean, they haven't even

considered what they -- what their options are, what possibilities they have for changing the local situation? You know, by introducing possibly an ordinance and considering the fact of local enforcement?

MR. STARR: Well, maybe you -- maybe your group here can write to the village council, make them enforce the ordinance.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Do you see that it would be a desirable thing for the city council to consider these things seriously and take some local enforcement action?

MR. STARR: Well, if they got the backing, I think they will.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Mm-hm (affirmative). But I mean, do you think that would be a desirable way of going?

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible) anything to enforce it.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Can I ask a few questions along this line, and I'm very interested in how villages govern themselves. And to me, this is a village governance issue. Do you know the last law, the last regulation that was made in Tanana? Do you know what it was? Have you ever seen any governing laws posted anywhere?

MR. STARR: No, I've never seen (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: If you wanted to find out about a law in Tanana, where would you go?

MR. STARR: Well, they have (indiscernible) there, they -- there's a magistrate that stops there. He's stationed in Nenana right now. He comes down there once in a while.

FATHER ELLIOTT: John, do you have any Tanana laws just for

Tanana?

MR. STARR: Well, if they got laws down there, they sure are pretty darn weak.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STARR: I don't see no enforcements.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Is there, for example, a law about liquor in your village or town?

MR. STARR: Well, it's -- if they catch them with -- follow them downtown to the (indiscernible) they would find them, yeah.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative). So there is a law that you can't drink in town?

MR. STARR: (Indiscernible). Yeah, they got those. I don't know where they get the law from, but that's what I asked this State Trooper if he'll stop them. That's when I asked him about the snow-go.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STARR: There was anything on there. He say he can't find (indiscernible) books or....

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: So your main concern is for local public safety and to make sure that --

MR. STARR: There's --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: -- safe --

MR. STARR: Yeah, there's an age limit on (indiscernible), yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Safe operation -- and you're talking specifically about three-wheelers and snowmachines; but it

would probably extend to other things; that there be a way of enforcing ordinances that will help the safety of the village....

MR. STARR: Yeah. I'd love to see (indiscernible) all the villages.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, I think you're right.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Any of you have any other questions of John on this subject?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Do you have anything more, John?

MR. STARR: Huh?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You want to -- anything more you want to bring before us?

MR. STARR: No, not right now, can't think of anything.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

MR. STARR: Yeah, (indiscernible) bring them on over.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: There you go. Sure.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Okay. (Indiscernible) record, yeah. Thank you (indiscernible).

MR. STARR: Thank you.

(Side conversation)

MR. SCHAEFFER: Okay. Can't hear him very well. All right, who's next.

MR. STICKMAN: Me, I guess.

MR. SCHAEFFER: You, okay. And you -- can you sit in the witness box?

MR. STICKMAN: Sure, (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: It's the hot spot (indiscernible).

MR. SCHAEFFER: Yeah, (indiscernible).

MR. STICKMAN: I'm surprised I'm used to this stuff.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) this time you're a witness for the good side.

TESTIMONY OF FREDERICK STICKMAN, JR.

MR. STICKMAN: Okay. It's a pleasure to be here. First time, -- well, my name is Fred Stickman, Jr. I'm director of Doyon (ph.) (indiscernible) Corporation. President of the village corporation, Nulato Gana Yu (ph.). And I'm also mayor of Nulato.

My presentation here today would be in relation to my mayorship of Nulato. And my topic will be to address some issues on substance abuse. I just want to make a statement first and then give you some history. As mayor, I'm trying to address the issue of substance abuse.

Substance abuse is a local problem, need to be addressed locally. And the problem areas need to be designated or addressed. A group of people to address the problem need to be established, goals and objectives, and the end result that's desired. The village people need to be taught, beginning with the new generation, the Native spiritual values.

City and Native council programs need to be supported by the federal and state agencies that try to address the problem area -- issues. The schools need to be involved and support field trips in the wilds and teach the need of responsibility of survival and the importance of Native spirituality and how we can apply these values to respect oneself, and the importance to abstain from mind-

altering substance.

Because I am free from alcohol, by my being sober, am I free? No. Because it is all around us, no matter where we go.

I'd like to speak to some of the problems that the village or the city government has in trying to address some of these issues. I was mayor from 1977 -- 1979 for seven years; then I got off the council and at that time I realized that in order to have a productive leadership, a person needed to be sober. I was not a sober leader. I admitted that fact, and I got out of the city government.

The first year that I was out, I established and tried to establish a substance abuse program. They call it -- the only way you can get grants was to address the suicide issue. They call it suicide prevention grants. The first two years or 18 months I worked voluntarily in this process in establishing a program to address the suicide issue. Although we didn't address it directly, we addressed the alcohol problems. During that time we established, myself and another person established a program that was funded. And we call it the self-improvement program. We had different names in those 18 months trying to address the suicide issue and make it presentable to the state agency that -- so that we can get the funds.

Anyway, we came up with the name self-improvement program, which is still in place today. It's approximately six years now. And the problem we had in those six years and continuing, and last year we didn't get funded because lack of monies. Fortunately,

~~Galena had mental~~ -- I forgot the program, but it relates to the same thing, but it's a mental health program. So they continued with our program in Nulato.

But what I was going to suggest here today is that something be established to provide for blanket grants. That means that if I as mayor put in a request for a specific purpose, the things that I mentioned in here, that I don't have to follow a -- direct regulation requirements. When I apply for grants, I have to put in that grant not necessarily what I want the money for, but to satisfy the state government as to how I should spend that money. Then when we get the money, we have to apply it in that order. But it don't accomplish what I want to do or what the village council or city council want to do. They're restricted.

By blanket grant, I mean I should be able to ask for funds saying, I'm trying to address the alcohol substance abuse or suicide prevention or the spiritual Native values. And these are things that are supposed to help once an individual -- for an individual to try to help oneself.

The other thing I would like to suggest is the school system as a contingency funds. The other funds they have, they're budgeted for. So those budget items have to be spent in that -- the way they say they're going to spend it; that's what a budget is. A contingency fund should be provided by the state so that the school system could address an issue that they want to address. And one of them is the substance abuse. Sure, they have counselors, but they can't directly address the substance abuse

problem. One of the ways they can do that is provide extracurricular activities, and one of them I mentioned here is go out on field trips. They did last year in Nulato School. Person brought out -- a teacher or counselor brought out five or six students, they were out for five days, and that was a productive five days for those children. Not children, they were in my opinion grown men, you know, 14, 15 years old.

You heard some testimonies today over there that the children don't know how to carry water, they don't know how to carry in wood, they don't know how to cut wood, because they're not subjected to that. They don't -- you know, they get up in the morning and everything is taken care of for them. That's beside the point and -- when finally, I think to address the things that I have said, is to develop a questionnaire and direct it to the village councils or city councils, saying or asking how could we best serve your communities, or how can we help you ask for grants that you can spend and pursue your desire, you know, and thank you for your time.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Any of the Commissioners have any questions?

FATHER ELLIOTT: I do. You mentioned that rather than ask for a grant on the grounds of what you really want it for, you have to ask it in terms of what the state would be satisfied with; would you explain that? Could you give us an example?

MR. STICKMAN: Okay. I can only talk to this specific grant which is the suicide prevention monies that's available by the state. So when you put in your grant request, you have to put in

there how you're going to spend that money as it relates to suicide prevention. Whereas if I had got a blanket grant, I can address these issues that I mentioned to you earlier; that, teach the Native language, which is a valuable tool for the state. You heard it in the convention today. Learning the Native language is a tool that you cannot address in the suicide prevention grant.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STICKMAN: You see what I mean? So the spirituality, Native culture values need to be addressed in some way in order for the people to help themselves.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STICKMAN: I hope that answered your question.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Yes, you did. I can understand now that you're thinking in terms of preventative tools.

MR. STICKMAN: Mm-hm (affirmative).

FATHER ELLIOTT: But the state wants more specific directive action.

MR. STICKMAN: Exactly.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) wanted to pursue a little bit. Regulation and paperwork. How does Nulato have input into the process in determining the rules under which you'll report those funds?

MR. STICKMAN: I really -- to tell you the truth, I don't know. I think it's all done in Juneau and during the legislative session. And the people there decide how you are to spend your

money. When they give you X number of dollars on the side there, they tell you exactly how they want to see it spent. If you deviate from that, you either have to give the money back or you have to put in writing as, you know, to be in compliance with the regulation or the process.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: As an administrator in Nulato, of the village, municipality, how much time do you spend filling out papers that you (indiscernible) --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

(Tape changed - Tape 1, Side 2)

MR. STICKMAN: I think probably among his other duties, he's a budget director and he's not an administrator. We have a city clerk, but the person that does it, I would say probably four, five hours out of his six hours a day.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: In other words, filing and paperwork?

MR. STICKMAN: Mm-hm (affirmative).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Just sending it out?

MR. STICKMAN: Mm-hm (affirmative). Telephone calls and things of that nature. Myself, I probably spend an hour a day, which is about five hours a week.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: And you've never had anything in the way of input in what those reports do or say? Do you have any idea where they go, who uses them?

MR. STICKMAN: No. We send copies to -- for this suicide prevention, we'd send a copy to our representative, which is George

Janowitz (ph.), and copies to Irene Nicholi; and then we send copies to the office in Juneau, probably the Department of Health, which is the department that provides these funds.

FATHER SEBESTA: Okay. Have you ever reported anything that is not in compliance with the grant conditions in reports that you send in?

MR. STICKMAN: What we do, Father, is we put in a request that's in compliance with what is requested.

FATHER SEBESTA: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STICKMAN: And then we hope that we get the funds. After we get the funds, then we kind of amend them to our need to some degree that's allowable.

FATHER SEBESTA: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STICKMAN: What I talked about earlier, the stuff that's not allowable.

FATHER SEBESTA: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. STICKMAN: You see, you no way you can allow that stuff to be --

FATHER SEBESTA: Yeah, that's in -- but what I was wondering was whether they even read the reports that go in. If you had sent something in that was not in compliance with the grant --

MR. STICKMAN: Okay. That's a good --

FATHER ELLIOTT: -- do you ever get a response?

MR. STICKMAN: Yeah. That's a good point. I don't remember the person's name, but when I first started trying to start this program, I talked directly to the person that was involved for

approving. Her last name was Sole (ph.).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Susan -- yeah, Susan Sole.

MR. STICKMAN: Susan Sole. Yeah, I talked directly to her for a half-hour to an hour, trying to explain what I'm telling you now, you know. And there was no way that she would agree, because she has all these regulations and rules to follow. And she can't deviate from that. And that's what I'm asking you to do.

FATHER SEBESTA: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You need to understand, that's the most liberal program there is in the state as well.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: The suicide prevention.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: That's right. It was put in effect for just this reason, to allow villages to do things their own way without complying with the regulation requirements of the rest of the public health and mental health program and alcohol. And so what he's talking about is the best program they have that they can work with.

MR. STICKMAN: Mm-hm (affirmative).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: So all the rest are even worse to work with.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) state administrators, people that you correspond with, come to the village and talk to you face-to-face.

MR. STICKMAN: (Indiscernible) now for six months, and haven't seen anybody. Nobody, except in my previous experience, my seven years' experience, we kind of requested to Department of Regional

and Community Affairs, which was not directly involved, but they were available to you as a second-class city, and those were the people that helped us. But nobody from the state -- from the head of a department, commissioner, things of that nature.

MR. SCHAEFFER: I'd just like to make one comment. You talked about the people of the villages learning how to plan, how to develop goals, that kind of thing. Community and Regional Affairs does provide that service. They have in their -- not sure which -- I guess their community development area, they do provide people who go out and help you in the village to develop a vision.

MR. STICKMAN: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. SCHAEFFER: And that's -- I watched them do it in the Northwest Arctic Borough last year, and they do a pretty good job of it. So you can make that kind of request too, to help --

MR. STICKMAN: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. SCHAEFFER: -- help your own people develop a plan.

MR. STICKMAN: I think one final thing in getting the school involved; I attended their -- I made it a point to attend all meetings. As mayor in Nulato, I never did before. So I attended their meetings this winter for the school district, and my one and only issue was to address the Native language, to teach the Native language. So I talked to the principal, and I think if we had the money available to us and the school, you know, like in this contingency fund that they have, then it would be no problem for the principal to do that, because there's people available, you know, to teach the language.

We cannot go to the university and teach our language in Nulato because it's a different dialect, you know. What we want to do is teach our own people our own dialect and our own language, not the Koyukon (ph.) language. That's my personal opinion.

~~UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER:~~ Your school district does not have them teach your language in your school?

MR. STICKMAN: They have last year, but they didn't this year at Arctic. I don't think they did this year. They might have a couple years ago or year before last. But I know they didn't this year.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Okay. And I (indiscernible) regional school board be (indiscernible) here, but Nulato is in our jurisdiction. And teaching the Native language has always been (indiscernible) local (indiscernible). They're the ones that say we could get (indiscernible) teach it there, and the money's (indiscernible) to run the program. (Indiscernible) out of sight. So the (indiscernible), all they have to do is decide what program they want to do away with (indiscernible).

The contingency fund we talked about, the reason why we have a contingency fund in each site is from year to year, the state uses X amount of dollars per student. And from the spring time to the fall time we never know how many students are going to come back into our system in that site. So that when the contingency fund there is used as a buffer in case more of those people come back in, they can run the program for the year (indiscernible). And that's not very much, that's only basically 10 percent

(indiscernible) that 10 percent of the budget (indiscernible) put into the contingency fund. That's so -- you know, it's a very small, minute amount of money. And usually, that money is usually ate up towards the middle part of the year when we realize after the second (indiscernible) we got from year to year, it's put back into the program. But that's the (indiscernible) contingency fund and (indiscernible).

MR. STICKMAN: Anyway, I want to thank you for your time, and if you have any more questions, I'd like to answer them.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Thank you.

MR. STICKMAN: Thank you. Thank you very much.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Okay. Next we have Pat Madros.

MR. MADROS: (Indiscernible).

MR. SCHAEFFER: Anything you use will not be used against you (laughter). (Indiscernible) say will not be used against you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

TESTIMONY OF PATRICK J. MADROS, SR.

MR. MADROS: I spent the better part of the morning writing this so I get it all down in precise facts, the way I see it. So I'm going to read it, and then I'll be ready for -- respond to questions. Because when I -- or you start speaking, I get off on a tangent, and I lose my train of thought of what I'm trying to say.

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name's Patrick Madros, Sr. I do not envy you for the task you were sent out to do or first what we're -- first what you are -- what are the social or

economic problems in Native Alaska and second, how do we solve it.

The first thing we have to do is go back in history and find out where our problems started. In my old hometown of Kaltag, I can only go back to the middle '50's and early '60's when the first electrical generator was brought into Kaltag by a barge in the summer. I'll use this as a starting point of or change in the -- as our point of change in -- from my subsistence way of a life to a cash base economy, (indiscernible) read it.

In order to maintain a lightbulb in your home, you had to pay a monthly electric bill in cash. That changed the way of building and so forth, a major change in our society. Rather than pay our bills three and four times a month at the end of a season -- I mean a year at the end of the season, this bill was occurring monthly. If you didn't pay it on a monthly basis, you lost your electricity.

The second thing we -- that we had thought up is we became a state. And when -- with that, wedlock developed. A woman that had kids out of wedlock became eligible for assistance. You -- I figured some three to four hundred a month at that time. This \$300 are the point. Three hundred times 12 is thirty-six hundred dollars a year tax-free to a person in our society out of wedlock was a lot of money, especially when the per capita at that time was \$1,000 per person in our area. All of a sudden this person became a very rich person and the single-parent family became acceptable.

It was during this era that the role of Native male changed, and we did not realize it. Instead of being the (indiscernible) our culture called for, we took second place to welfare. The roles

we played were not really important anymore, as hunters, wood and water gatherers. We were replaced by PHS, BIA, free housing, energy assistance, food stamps, and the list could just go on and on and on.

At the same time, education started to play a main role. We sent our young men, such as myself, and our young women out to boarding homes throughout the state, throughout the lower 48 states. For four years we were taught, go get an education and you can go home and get a job. After four years when we got home, there was no jobs. The villages did not change. We had forgotten how to hunt, trap, speak our language. Our new cash base culture did not match with the society we came back to.

I think it was the big factor we had to deal with is the low self-esteem. We did not fit in. This played a big factor in the depression and alcoholism that started. With this came suicides, a way out for a lot of our young people, and they're still taking that easy way out. We have to change this.

I guess what we need to do is we need to do -- define what is the new role of the Native male and the new role of the Native female, because our society from what I see has changed in the last 30 years. We can define this problem, I think that's half the battle.

I can't go into economic development in a big way but I can go into it as a commercial fisherman, because I am a processor as well. I fish and process District Y-4-A, so I can relate to you some of the problems I have with getting funding. Y-4-A is a

relatively young industry compared to the rest of the state. Yet the state has not given any money to fisherman as well as processors to really develop this industry. We have to fight three agencies for an -- for any improvement. Fish and Game won't let us fish because they -- in their minds, the stocks are way down. The banks do not loan us any money because we fish for one week a year and there's -- to them, you go in there and they look at you like you're crazy. And then we have to comply with DEC. DEC requires stainless steel and up to standards for the everyday processors (indiscernible), which is a big amount of money.

Until DEC and these three people get together, it's going to be hard for us to develop this economy. DEC won't let us process until we meet their standards. And of all three of these organizations, they don't care what each other do. When the state or the federal government say they support local economic development out in the bush, they're referring to Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. I have yet to see any bank or organization that lends money to undeveloped areas go out to rural Alaska and offer their services to the people that want to develop these resources. It's always the same attitude. Come into town at your own expense and jump through our hoops, and we'll see if you're eligible for their program. One of the biggest concerns is how is the money going to be paid back. Show me a plan of operation. In the fishing industry, you show them one week's fishing with a 12-month payback plan, and it don't match up.

The agencies are supposed to help us with development. Say

you have to be co-sponsored by local government or village council. All of a sudden you have to go to your local village council or your city government and get a resolution for their support. All of a sudden your business now becomes a community project. No other way will you get money from these people. I have tried. I've walked through many organizations. I have -- I've given my C Schedule from my tax returns. There's just no way for an individual out there right now in rural Alaska such as myself to start a business other than get it community funded (indiscernible) or whatever, and that's -- that doesn't help us.

So in order for me to -- as an individual, to develop myself, the way the state does business needs to change. Either that or I can sit back and become a welfare dependent like everybody else, and draw all that easy money and watch the river go by.

I know this speech is short. (Indiscernible) everything. But before we can solve our problems in rural Alaska, I think we need to define what the problem is, that there alone by yourself is a major undertaking, because we hear a lot of the problems that have taken place. We never really find where does it start or how can we change it; that's your Commission's intent, and I applaud you for it. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

FATHER ELLIOTT: Well, I'm going to ask, what do you -- would you hope the Commission would do for you, what specific things can we?

MR. MADROS: Well, first thing we -- I think the Commission --

for one thing, you have no government authority to do anything for me, all they do is put the data together. So in a sense, in that respect you're -- you lost me there.

What we can look at, if people are going to have rural development out in rural Alaska, we need to bring the banks and the agencies out to individuals other than Fairbanks, Anchorage, or whatever, because it takes money to come to town. We have some good plans out there for development of our natural resources or renewable resources. But our people don't have the money to take a plane into town, to sit down there, go run from one agency to the next because they have no -- majority of them, no taxi money or anything else -- and develop these things.

And when you go to an agency, the first thing they ask you is what's your plan of operation, show me how you want to -- what -- who's your market? The first thing they ask you is where is your market? Who are you going to target?

In the fishing industry, the market changes on a monthly basis. In order to get money from -- for like from (indiscernible) grant, it takes three months. So your market has changed three different times in three months. And I know we only can fish in the summertime and that's just one part of it. The other part is, you know, is when you start looking at any kind of development out there, nobody comes out, sit down and talk with individuals. Like you're -- Mr. Stickman say, that there ain't never been a commissioner come out to rural Alaska other -- I mean, there -- to them rural Alaska is Fairbanks and Juneau and Anchorage.

So you know, it -- one thing we start to do is, if our people are going to start developing rural Alaska for resources, we're going to have to start getting these people that carry the money in their pocket out to us. And we don't need to be studied anymore. I'm tired of economic development studies. All it does is to put \$70,000 and two or three other state officials (indiscernible) to sit in Anchorage or Fairbanks and do nothing. And they study us to death. We have more economic studies than, God, almost as bad as suicide. And yet nothing's being done. Change the way that economic development is delivered.

FATHER SEBESTA: Pat, when you -- go ahead, (indiscernible).

MR. MADROS: No, I'm....

FATHER SEBESTA: Okay. In trying to develop this industry that you have been working on, have you been able to get any, let's say, technical assistance in setting up the business? Have there been -- has there been any encouragement on the part of any agencies that you have contacted or have you gotten any encouragement on the level of directing possibly how you might be able to get the funding and set up the business in a way that's acceptable to the banks, even?

MR. MADROS: I went to the Ready (ph.) -- or walked through the Ready program many a time; I went through BIA under low-interest loan; and they tell you all the same thing. Bring your Schedule C to any bank and we'll co-sponsor. You bring it to the bank and they say, for three or four days' fishing, less than a week's fishing, you want me to give you \$30,000 for about a 12-

month payback time? They look as if you're crazy. And yet, we say we're going to develop our resources, and so there's -- I'm not asking for a handout. What I'm asking for, if there's going to be monies out there for rural development, let's put it out there where rural development is, and....

MR. EATON: Pat, you've described a lot of economic conditions (indiscernible) geographic or strategic location or a lack thereof, communication and transportation issues. What about the Native issues? Do you think a non-Native going into business in rural Alaska faces the same challenges that you face?

MR. MADROS: No, not really. The same non-Native coming into my area wouldn't get the opposition that I got. And because our people have a tendency to put down one another when somebody else is getting ahead. Jealousy's there. I -- you see a Native trying to get ahead and you see five non-Natives beating him up, cutting him down, talking against him, instead of saying, hey, gee, we're glad you're doing a good job. You see a non-Native come in there, all of a sudden he's getting free funding, he's getting support from the city councils, he's doing things. And nobody's talking about it, nobody's complaining about it. You see it in the guiding industry over there, you see it in the -- in anything they do. The jealousy of one Native helping another in rural Alaska is there. They don't want to see one another get ahead.

MR. EATON: How do we deal with that?

MR. MADROS: If I knew, I'd be a rich man. We got to change the way we do business in our society, in our villages. We got to

quit putting one another down. You know, I tell my boys -- and this is not really an ethnic joke, but it's a realistic thing that I've seen, the simplest way I could explain to them. I said, you see -- you know why you see a lot of Native women with -- this is my example -- with a lot of Negro men? They said no. I said, because that Negro man is the only one probably that that woman has her -- told her in months, hey, babe, you look fine, you look really nice. That woman right there probably just jumps off her feet to that, that's the first person that ever told her she looked nice. Our culture does not really push that type of an issue.

I always try and make it a point, my boys, I tell them, you boys get up in the morning, you tell your mom thank you. She cooked you breakfast, maybe hug her on the way out the door. We've always been the dominant, where we're supposed to be macho type people. And that role has changed. And we need to change, I think, our way of doing business with that. And that's the easiest way I could explain to them that we need to start telling our female counterparts, hey, you look nice; you're a person, you're a human being, you are equal. And I think that's -- I don't know, maybe I'm wrong, but that's the way I've seen it.

MR. EATON: Do you think that the role of men in the Native community is an issue that's coming to the surface now? Do you see it coming to the surface?

MR. MADROS: I've seen it come to the surface more and more in the last two years to year and a half. I've started to -- even myself, I've started to study what has happened to us. Because I

have a lot of my friends on the hill in Nulato and up the river from Kaltag and down the river that are young men, my age, who couldn't handle it, and I says why. And the only thing I can deal with is, the first suicide in Kaltag was in 1963 --

(Tape changed - Tape 2, Side 1)

MR. MADROS: (Indiscernible) is available for, and everything else. So you're talking to somebody that's eligible for \$2,000 a month worth of help. You take an average male out there that's smiling at this same young woman, if he don't got \$2,000 a month to offer this woman, why is she going to get involved with him?

Economically, it would be unfeasible, because she would be losing her cash base to raise her family. Sure, it's a single parent. But -- and so the role of the young males in that respect, I call it we're becoming spawners (laughter). That's a -- it's a sad thing, we're just used for spawning and we're thrown out the door. That -- what -- that dependency on welfare has become that great.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: I prefer to be looked at as a bull, caribou bull (laughter). (Indiscernible) herd for about 10 seconds a year and the rest of the time you're decoration (laughter).

MR. MADROS: Maybe I'll change my theory. But -- so that's where the problem is at. That's why I say we need to define the culture, in our culture, we need to define what the role -- what the model of the young male is. Until we can start changing the way we do -- we are thinking, we're going to be putting a lot more

people away. Because the economic development out there is not there, to develop our resources, is not there. We say it's there, but it's not there.

If we say it's there, then you name one or two villages out of the whole state of Alaska that have developed in 20 years to where that they're a self-based, efficient economy. Out of what, 500-some villages in this state, probably two or three is the only ones you can name. So the development of the resources, as far as I could see, is not there.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Pat, let me get on another subject here and just ask you a question, the Native languages teaching in your district. Why isn't it mandatory?

MR. MADROS: It is not mandatory because our board has felt that that should be the option of the sites. We've given control of the budgets to the sites. We've given control to majority -- for stiffer requirements of the curriculum that's taught to the sites. And it's --

MR. SCHAEFFER: Including English? English is not mandatory?

MR. MADROS: English is a mandatory subject for the state. So that's a state requirement. So --

MS. SOMMER: That -- year before last, (indiscernible) --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Excuse me, ask you to state your name, please.

MS. SOMMER: Dorothy Sommer.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Okay, thank you.

TESTIMONY OF DOROTHY SOMMER

MS. SOMMER: Year before last, they asked me to teach the Nulato young dancers how to sing and dance. And the principal himself told me that, I don't care where I get the money from, you'll get paid good, Dorothy, you'll get paid good, if you'll take these kids out and teach them how to sing and dance, and you're going to be taking a trip over to Bethel. And when (indiscernible), and did really good. They went over to Bethel and everything. Came back and got my check for a hundred and something. It said \$7.15 an hour I got paid.

And I called up this principal and I told him, (indiscernible), you know, you yourself told me that I was getting paid good (indiscernible). And according to this check and letter that I'm looking at, I got paid \$7.15 an hour. I said, for this you could put this check up in the school, close it up or put it in your showcase or do whatever you want to do with this check.

And we got into a quarrel, not an argument, (indiscernible). And later on I got another check after I quarreled with him. But I felt really bad and I told him, don't ever call on me again for anything in the line of Indian, because I love my Indian, whatever it is in Indian I love to do, and I said, you know, you -- to me, I feel you just made a fool of me, so don't you ever ask me again, I told him, and that was the end of that. So this year, this past winter, they didn't ask.

MR. MADROS: What she -- that there is the sites' option that we leave to them. We -- our district is so large that we tried to govern at one time every site individually as a board. And because

we're fooling around with four different Native factions, the Lower Yukon -- like Lower Yukon dialect, the Tanana River dialect, the Minto dialect, and up around Taga (ph.) River dialect. That's four different dialects that are in our village area. It's hard for us to basically implement it unless they want it.

And it's -- Georgeanne (ph.) has -- I'm not opposed to Native languages, but Georgeanne has introduced a bill and, man, they've got into numerous arguments with it. Said if you're going to put mandatory Native language in our schools, fund it so it can be adequately researched out and taught to different -- four different dialects in our area. And why should the people in Tanana learn the Lower Yukon, why should the Lower Yukon learn the Tanana River dialect? You know. And you're talking a lot of money when you're talking about building a curriculum for Native languages. You're talking a lot of money.

Another thing I asked was, if we have the Native languages put into our school system, how is it going to be used? Are we going to have -- are all our potlatches are going to be in Native languages, or when we call up the city offices, going to be hello, how are you, or it's going to be in Athabascan; what's (indiscernible) requirements to teaching this, other than just teaching it?

Is TV going to become the Native language, are we going to start having the translator on our TV so we can start learning it? You know, I ask all these questions, because in a sense, they have to be answered. And the school board was tasked with this, and we

get beat up on Native languages all the time. I -- and I say, you know, and I say, it's not our fault we don't know our Native language. Where the ball was dropped is where the old folks who are (indiscernible) now, they dropped the ball on us in their time. That's where we lost it is right now. And we lost our Native languages in the last 40 years.

And it's a -- and unless they do something, the old folks do something, we're never going to get it back. Because people like me, how can I teach something that I don't know? So the ball is not in my court anymore, the court is in the old folks' court. You dropped the ball; you tell us how you're going to reimplement it back so we can use it.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Pat, the reason we're losing these languages is because people like you and I are victims. It's not because of the old people. The old people are victims as well. They were convinced, told by authority figures the same kind of problem you have now, where the same authority figures have more respect and worth than our own people. They -- what we sometimes call the BIA schoolteacher syndrome. This is where we think that anybody who comes from that kind of authority that's white has more worth than we do.

Those kind of people told our people not to teach this. And this was not done just with us, it was done all over the United States. Many languages were lost all over the United States. And we have still an opportunity to save some of these languages. But as long as people like you and I say of what use is it, what can we

do about it, it'll -- we'll lose it, it's going to be lost.

What we have to do is what they did with English. We have to make it mandatory. We have to do our best to support it even if we don't use it ourself. Because there's too much of our culture and our values tied up in our language that cannot be translated into English.

MR. MADROS: I have to disagree with you a little bit on that, John. Because where we lost our language, I think, is that way with respect to what you said. But at the same time too, we're losing it because there's -- now I lost my train of thought there. We're losing it because you're expecting the school systems to teach something that they cannot teach. We're going to have an English version, a way how to speak Athabascan, if we let the school systems do it. If we're going to bring it back, it has to be brought back under the old folks' rule, under the way they want to put it, implement it, and not necessarily in the school system.

Every time something in our society in the last 20 years has gone bad, we've said, put another program to school -- fund that program, and that'll solve our problem. That's not the way to solve our social problems. We have to go back -- I say any time we want to change our culture, it's going to take one life cycle, and I call a life cycle 15 years. Because -- and you got to start training these young kids from the time they're in the third grade all the way till the time they go out of high school and on to college, the change that you want to implement. During the time the -- all other folks pass on. So all of a sudden, what they've

learned all of a sudden has changed.

I figured in my lifetime there's six different life cycle changes, my life span. I plan to be here about 70 years on the average. Any more than that, hell on wheels, but -- so you know, that's what people don't realize the schools are set up to do. They -- every time we have problems with kids, it's the schools' fault. The schools get the kids for seven and a half hours a day. Sixteen and a half hours a day is with their parents.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) take a couple minutes?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible) address the issue of mandatory school. The reason I mentioned earlier, there was no money in (indiscernible) contingency fund was because I attended the school meeting last year, last six, seven months, and they didn't have a budget item for (indiscernible). And I was hoping that that would be changed.

Another thing I'd like to comment on is change. Change is (indiscernible) business. People dye their hair; people wash (indiscernible) soap, change their socks, change their pants every day. It's all changes, you know. How you're dressed (indiscernible) it's not important. What's important is do you want to change; if so, how. (Indiscernible) change. Any other questions?

FATHER ELLIOTT: I have one, John. You mentioned economic development. I've been talking to Calista Corporation. And among

some of their ideas is the need for transportation out into that area by road or by even railroad. And yet, I understand that there are some villages that would be opposed to that, because they feel it would open it up to exploitation by people who don't live in those villages. What are your thoughts on it?

MR. MADROS: Well, on economic development, if I was to send something back right now, like a processed fish from Kaltag, FOB Fairbanks right now, it's going to cost me over a dollar a pound. That's back home. That's not delivered to the market in Anchorage and not delivered to the market in Seattle, that's just FOB Fairbanks.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. MADROS: So until we're going to have really economic development, we -- maybe we need to subsidize our transportation to Southeast, get (indiscernible) by ferry system. The barge system (indiscernible) go up and down the coast or now they can do it at a lower cost than taking it Interior. The majority of the way that I could get my product out of fisheries is to fly it, the fresh caught up to the market, is where the market's at. Either that or come up with a by-product that you can -- we can utilize, finish it off there and go on -- at a -- on a barge system. But even if you bring another barge system to barge it out of there, say, that weighs -- what do they weigh, 15,000 pounds? That -- not including the load in there; by the time you get it up in Nenana at 18 dollars a hundred, it ain't feasible to barge it out. So if we're going to develop economically out there, we're going to have to

look at some kind of assistance in doing it. And here we're now looking at (indiscernible).

As for the road system, you're going to find -- and the railroad system, you're going to find people are going to be opposed to it, for the simple fact is that you go down to Manley, you go to -- and you go -- you see where the end of the road ends, you get crazy people there. And our people don't want to be -- put up with being at the end of the road because of the trash that it brings, so to speak. And I don't mean the trash outside the road but the trash that goes up the road to see the last -- 49th state, you know. So it -- you're always going to have people that are opposed to it. And you -- you'll hear it through resolutions from Evansville (ph.) that are opposed to building the road that's 38 miles from the haul road to Evansville. They're opposing it because they don't want people coming across there, jumping in their canoes and boats, and going all the way down the river and shooting everything else that moves, and leaving it there and walking away. Because what little economy they have is based on what they put in their freezer.

So that -- then they're talking about another road from -- going someplace from around Denali all the way over to McGrath. You're going to have people oppose that too because people don't want the roads to go that way. Any time you (indiscernible) roads, you're going to have people come up, tourists. Tourism's a big industry. Tourists are going to drive anyplace that they figure they can go from point A to point B to see the state. And they

become a burden to society. Some of them decide to stay there, they want to live to see some Alaska lifestyle.

But -- so I'm not really -- I don't know if I answered your question or not, but if it costs me a dollar more to get my same product out of my area, and you can buy the same product for a dollar less in Fairbanks, people are going to go buy the cheaper product, the market. So I have to be swift and think of ways of making by-products to help pay for the cost.

And I've been putting together a processing plant for the last four years now, and I've never got no help from anybody, any agency or anything, I've -- always been my own money to -- which I give to my plant. And as -- to comply with just the DEC regulations going from wooden tables to stainless steel, just a humongous price. And now if I'm going to be buying fish and processing it, I'm -- in the next four or five days I'm going to be pushing a barge down the river to (indiscernible) process (indiscernible) that's DEC approved.

That floating plant (indiscernible) is going to be on barrels, has already cost me \$7,000, and it ain't even floating yet. And it's just on barrels. And I'm going to have to recover that in three days' fishing, that expense, otherwise (indiscernible) again. And you know, and so it's -- once cent makes a difference between -- on the market makes or breaks me. That's how tight of a budget I am on (indiscernible) fishing and processing.

The only way I've kept out of jail is my -- I've subsidized for my wheel into my plant to pay off all my bills on my plant.

And so when I get through fishing at the end of a season, I'm lucky if I have fifteen hundred dollars in my bank. I'm lucky if I have that much. And I got to live a whole year on that. And because I have a permit, I'm not eligible for food stamps, I'm not eligible for assistance, and everybody looks at me like that's a -- that -- and that permit right now is valued at about \$10,000 for the state.

I'm almost ready to give my permit to my kids so I can get food stamps I need during the winter time. And I've never had -- I've never taken food stamps back -- well, I took food stamps when I got out of the military. Nineteen seventy-six, I got out for -- and I got home in September. I took one month for food stamps, I felt so bad about it I turned it back in, and I've never got assistance from there. (Indiscernible) I've gotten it on my own, I've struggled for it. I don't believe -- I believe when I'm an old man, I need help then, they'll give it to me. But I don't think right now I'm old enough to take it. And different times I had to tighten up my bills and just look for work in weird places. But this, you know, it's -- I just don't believe in assistance. I figure if I'm going to make it, I'm going to make it on my own. And sometimes it's a lonely place out there when you're doing it on your own.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you very much, Pat.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Yeah, thank you very much, Pat.

TESTIMONY OF POLDINE CARLO

MS. CARLO: I wanted to say something on what Pat said about the Native people being jealous of other Native people that try to make a goal of their life and try to make a better life for themselves and their families. I experience that a lot and my family also. We were at a mining place in the village, coastal village, and those people really gave us a bad time. This one young fellow, he had a wife and two kids, he even used to call us through the winter at home, when me and my husband were alone, 1:00 at night the phone would ring and there would be this guy from this village; we people don't want you in this town, we're going to (indiscernible) your house out into the -- on the bank.

So it's really true what he said, you know. The Native people, instead of helping one another, they don't like to see their own kind making a better home for themselves. And they're always cutting you down. But let a white man come into the village, and they're all out to help that person. Now, what is the difference? Why is that?

And then look -- we're talking about Native language also. A lot of times when people talk about Native languages, say, well, it's the BIA or it's the priests, that's the reason why we lost our language. I -- when I was growing up, we were not allowed to talk Indian in our school, which was a Catholic school, because we were going there to learn our ABC's, arithmetic, spelling, and why should we talk Indian when the nuns didn't understand us? There -- we were there to learn from them. But soon as we got out of the school, everything was Indian. Even the kids have Indian names.

And we just, la-la-la-la-la, blah-blah-blah-blah, in Indian, you know, not in school but outside of the school, that's all we talked was our Indian language.

People don't seem to understand that -- well, I'm speaking for Nulato. But that education that I got there from the nuns and the priests, there's no way that I could ever thank them enough for what they taught me. Because all through my lifetime, I had a beautiful life. There isn't anything that I regret that I have done. It's through the teaching of the nuns and the priests, and also my grandmother and my grandparents, my grandfather. They taught us the Indian of what -- which is right and wrong. The white man's way of what is right and wrong.

We were so scared of everything we did, you know, we were so afraid because of the strict ways we were taught in the Catholic way. But the first time I -- well, in our Catholic religion we have to go to confession in order to get excused for whatever wrong we did. So the first time a young man kissed me, I remember I was so scared to go to confession. I never went for about three months. And finally I had to go, you know, so I was telling the priest. And he said, well, it's not a sin, that's not a sin. But if you play around with fire, you (indiscernible), if you play around with fire, then you'll get burned, or something like that. But still, I didn't know what that was till long afterwards (laughter). I was telling my husband about it, and he said, this is what he meant (laughter).

So really, as I say, I -- there's just no way I can thank the

whole ways that I was brought up, because I think I had a beautiful, wonderful life, a nice family, a good provider, and good, good family. So that's something that I have to always be thankful for, all through my life (indiscernible). Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Could you please state your name?

MS. CARLO: Poldine Carlo.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. SCHAEFFER: Our next speaker is going to be Titus Peter, but before we -- before I ask him to come up here and sit down, I'm going to have to catch a plane. I've got another meeting in Austria that I've got to go --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

MR. SCHAEFFER: (Indiscernible) flying to do. And what I wanted to do is just mention a couple of things, just in case somebody doesn't bring them up here for the record. Because I -- like all of you, I've been talking to other people here. And I wanted to bring up a couple things. And one of the elders here talked to me about ANICA. And I hadn't heard that anywhere else before. But the comments he made was that ANICA should be looked at, since it was a program that the BIA put together for -- to assist villages to get cheaper groceries and better food services and other supplies. And he felt that it had exceeded its usefulness, that they were now -- had just built their own little bureaucracy, didn't even support the state, all of their 35 employees in Seattle. And they placed their orders with Carr-

Gottstein in Anchorage to send stuff to the villages. And not only that, but they put an extra mark-up on the costs so that they could pay dividends to their member stores every year. So they were actually charging more than the stores would get if they had some other system.

And he thought that if the -- the reasons that they first started were still valid, and that was to help the people get cheaper groceries, that we had to look at an alternative for ANICA. That was one.

The other one I wanted to bring up, one of the reasons I wanted to come here was -- and I hope John will talk a little more about it, but I still wanted to make a comment about it.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Off record.

(Tape changed - Tape 2, Side 2)

MR. SCHAEFFER: And took a look at it. And I think, having spent the last six years trying to work on sobriety, that this recovery camp is one of the few programs that has worked for alcohol and drug recovery. And so I was looking forward to it. And I was surprised to see that John Titus was no longer running the program and it -- they had now were getting funded by I guess the state or the feds, it doesn't -- really doesn't make any difference. And they were making them comply with their regulations. And if it continues, they'll probably ruin the program, because they'll spend more time and effort trying to comply with the regulations than work with the people who need the help.

In fact, what we were told last night was that you had to be physically fit to go to that camp. That camp was put up there for those who are not physically fit, who were hurting, who were sick (laughter). And now they had to be physically fit to go there, so you've already lost the ones who need the most help.

And so I wanted to bring this up. And that's what happens in the system. The same old problem we've had all over Alaska. The programs do not recognize the fact that you're -- we're tribal people, that we're a tribal people in the sense that we have to be dealt with as tribal people, not as individuals. We're a part of the whole, whether that's a family or a community, or a part of nature, however you want to look at it. So when we start to do something, they give us these regulations that try to make us like them. And it just ruins our program.

And I wanted to bring that up because I thought it was, you know, put together very well here. We have good people trying to do the right thing, good people trying to help out, and it's going to ruin the program.

And so those of you who are here, I want to -- I've had a good time visiting Fort Yukon again, and it's good to be at your elders conference, and I've really enjoyed myself. Who's going to be in charge, you going to be in charge?

He's ex officio member of our task force and co-chairman of our committee, so we'll put it in him. I don't want these two Fathers fighting before (indiscernible) (laughter). So, Perry, you take over --

MR. EATON: Okay.

MR. SCHAEFFER: -- please, and (indiscernible).
(Indiscernible) down the road (indiscernible).

FATHER ELLIOTT: Good-bye, John, good to see you.

(Side conversations)

MR. EATON: Mr. Peter.

TESTIMONY OF TITUS PETER

MR. PETER: I feel that -- whenever I sit on this chair, I need to be sworn in, so what I'm about to say is the whole truth, nothing but the truth, so help me, Father Elliott.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Raise your right hand (laughter).

MR. PETER: I can't hear very well, so if there's a question.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Titus Peter.

MR. PETER: Titus Peter. I'll probably have a hard time hearing you if you are asking a question. I want to ask Father Elliott to help talk if I hesitate. But (indiscernible) experience in talking to you then, so...I've just witnessed a lot of debate on languages. Seems to me like there's a little misunderstanding or disagreeable.

I myself at one time thought that, what's the use of our language. (Indiscernible) universal and it's not. I even blamed it as jeopardizing my English vocabulary to the point where I can't express myself very well. But there are things within the culture, and this is (indiscernible) culture, that people like to call their own.

I feel that it's very important that people do have things of

their own, that they can call their own. I got this feeling after watching the young people dancing in Fairbanks, the first time I went there I was very impressed. They all wore, you know, one costume. They (indiscernible) everyone, everyone dances with songs -- song in their own languages. And they were out there dancing with their faces actually shining. They (indiscernible). And this is the most important thing in people's lives, to be proud of what they own, things that they can call their own.

And I -- and again, after that, I work with people like myself, alcoholics. And a lot of these people get to the point where they don't have anything that they can call their own, the only thing they have is their clothes. But they still have their culture that they can call their own. And even with that, they can come back up and get them to their sobriety life, and in the community.

I just wrote a article (indiscernible) Tanana Chiefs come up (indiscernible) explain a lot of these things (indiscernible). Subsistence. We were talking a little bit about the (indiscernible) too, (indiscernible).

We used to (indiscernible) and Fort Yukon, we used to think that we should have a road, and that things would be cheap, that we can transfer it into our area with our truck. Every time -- I remember that time, every time somebody run for the House or Senate, all the politics. (Indiscernible) one of the things that they promised us is a road to Fort Yukon. Nothing ever come out of it. But lately, after a while, then they start thinking about

their subsistence, that it would interfere with their subsistence life. And everybody's against it now. They don't like the road, they don't like any connection with the outside world.

This also became a more -- more so after what happened at Manley Hot Springs, where a young Caucasian girl from there shot six guys, six people. So those things happen and people experience these things, and that's why they don't want them near roads into their areas.

And subsistence doesn't sound very important. There's a lot of food out there in Fairbanks and places like that, and all they have to do is get a food stamp and buy all the food you want. That's what I thought when I was young and my stomach was strong, healthy and (indiscernible) kind of weakened it with substance like alcohol.

But that wasn't the only reason, I don't think, because I heard people who never drank, elders, when I was young say that they can't stand or they can't just eat white man food. They have to have their own food, their cultural food. And that used to make me laugh, because that sounded funny to me. But now I'm experiencing the same thing, now that I'm an elder. I go to Fairbanks and I eat some really choice food. Steaks, T-bone steaks. I go to restaurants and have T-bone steaks and lobsters. I have spareribs. Still yet, in a week time, I start eating (indiscernible). I have to get that over here or somewhere in the villages and start eating fish, meat, and (indiscernible). So it's really something that's a necessity in our -- lives of elders, is

subsistence food. So that's what I came over here to talk about, to bring to your attention, those of you, and I appreciate your interest in such a thing. So if you have any question, I'd be happy to answer it.

MR. EATON: Father Elliott.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Titus, in Dillingham, they mentioned, one woman did, what she called a survival camp, rather than -- I had asked her a question about spirit camps, and she said they called them survival camps, because in addition to trying in -- to help alcohol and substance abuse, they were also teaching the Native culture. Has anything like that been done in this area, or have you thought about developing something, a camp? You have your camp for recovery, but has it ever been added to, or have you also thought about for the young people a camp that would teach Native values, Native customs, Native ways of hunting, trapping, and so forth?

MR. PETER: Yeah. My brother over there, John Titus, he's the one that started the recovery camp down here. And he went down there with a wild idea that he's going to run it in a subsistence way.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. PETER: And it seems to have good results, in my estimation (indiscernible) on alcoholism --

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. PETER: -- for quite a few years myself. And there's one guy who I at one time thought a hopeless case, is now closer. And

he developed that fight against alcoholism from that recovery center (indiscernible) with John. There's -- even this language could be something to go about and working toward a sobriety, help the young people. I can't say (indiscernible) alcohol (indiscernible) alcoholism as a target. There's a lot of things involved that we don't touch on.

And lot of times we take a person into a treatment center and nothing is being done about -- about this problem in their homes. You come back, and the environment is still the same, probably the environment that's gotten them to start drinking to begin with, before they got into it. All these things ought to be considered. The cultural way, teaching our culture can make a person very proud to the point where they wouldn't want to do anything else to feel better or -- see, I feel that a lot of these people have tried to make a world of their own by getting drunk and things like that.

The language part, again, I thought about it once, like I say, jeopardized my English vocabulary. I always thought that it makes us feel out of place, especially when we're in a big city. We go into a society where white folks talk in their own language, your friends, you get in there with them, and these white folks talk so much, you don't get a word in there edgewise. And they finally stop and ask you a question, the answer, you know the answer and it's in your mind, but you have to translate it into English. And then in the process of doing that there's a period of silence. And the white man who doesn't like silence will start talking again, sometime with an entirely different subject. And so the whole

evening would end with just conversation one-sided. And that makes a Indian person like myself very uncomfortable and out of place. This is why most of us would end up down in skid row, where we feel more comfortable and where we get drunk and make a world of our own, so to speak.

But the spirit camp or recovery camp done in a cultural way, and wouldn't be a waste of time. Could be very important.

Has that answered some of your question?

FATHER ELLIOTT: Yes, it does, Titus. Now, the second one, we've had hearings, as you may know, in Hiland Correction Center and also Wildwood at Kenai. And I think 98 percent of the people who talked to us said that although they may have been in there for abuse or whatever, assault, that alcohol was behind it. And one young man, and I won't mention his name, who was on a teleconference when we were in Kenai, is from Fort Yukon. And he said also that alcohol was the cause of whatever he did.

And I asked him what he was going to do when he came back to Fort Yukon, because of the liquor store here. And he said, I honestly don't know what I'm going to do, because it's there. And I don't want to put you on the spot now, because you are from this area. But when I asked him what he thought should be done, he said, well, close the liquor store; in fact, burn it down.

I don't know how that sits with the people of Fort Yukon and I'm not trying to get you to get an answer from it, but he did emphasize, all of them emphasized this business of alcoholism as being a background for it. And so your recovery camps are

certainly a tremendous help in trying to solve many of the problems, not just drinking but the effects of it.

Thank you, Titus.

MR. PETER: All right. I really don't feel that you can battle alcohol by trying to help someone. I know there's some places where they say, you drink too much, get out of the village. I don't like to do that in my village, my little village (indiscernible). I would rather hold them right there where I can keep an eye on them and maybe can -- I can help them, maybe sometime (indiscernible) to himself and find out that what he's doing isn't -- it's not doing him any good, and come to me for help. And if I send him out of the village, he might wind up in Second Avenue of Fairbanks, and drink until he dies.

Alcohol is behind a lot of problems. I experienced this in my own life. It -- there's also some other things that get us into an alcoholism problem. Myself, when I started working with people, I experienced a lot of things like depression, loneliness, and tiresome. I get tired and I'm away from Fort Yukon and that gets me lonesome. A friend of mine told me that maybe I should have a bottle, take a drink whenever I feel that way. And I took him up on it, I tried that. Every time I'd get depressed, lonely, or tired, I'd make myself a hot drink. And it really helped. I'd go to bed and I'd sleep good, I'd sleep soundly.

But the trouble with that is that the alcohol is like an aspirin. You got a constant headache, you're -- you take a lot of aspirin, as alcohol, one wouldn't help, you'd have to take two.

Alcohol is the same way. Alcohol, before I know it, I have to get drunk to forget my problems. And the way it, innocently, without my being aware of it, that got into my life. And I became an alcoholic. And after that, whatever I do is as a result of that alcohol.

So to me, seems to me like we wait until a person gets well into, hey, this man's drunk, he needs help, let's get up a rehabilitation plan. I feel that what we need to do is to go at them before they get involved, like young people. And one of it is culture, culture in a cultural and traditional teaching, traditional.

I just gave a talk over here at that other place, and said that we should really try to make this traditional thing and give it more significance. I even suggested that we have a Athabascan national song that they can call their own, and pay homage to some of our traditional heroes, chiefs. You know some of them, you know where some of them are buried; pay homage to these great people in our traditional times.

I know there's a lot of people waiting. Any more questions?

MR. EATON: Thank you very much. Elise Wolfe.

TESTIMONY OF ELISE WOLFE

MS. WOLFE: My name's Elise Wolfe, and I'm going to make this really brief, because I think there's people in the village that have things to say that are -- might be more important than what I'm going to say.

And I'm a 25-year Alaska resident. I've lived in the state a

long time, I've spent a lot of time in the villages. And there's two things that I think that I would like to see the Native -- this Commission do. Because the commissions have come and gone a long time in this state. And we have a lot of leftover garbage like ANCSA that have left their little paths of destruction. And I know that you're Bush appointees, and I'm not really sure -- I'm not really -- I'm really not very trustworthy about where the Commission's going to go with this documentation.

So I have some suggestions and I'm going to be pretty blunt, or brief about them. One is that I think that you need to take your testimony in a little different way; for example, maybe taking all the documentation of the (indiscernible) that we're doing personally, we could make that available to you as testimony for your Commission. But you're not going to get -- not everybody's going to come in this courtroom and sit in this chair. So that's one thing I would suggest. And I think we have a lot of testimonies, if you were to look into that material.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

MS. WOLFE: Okay. Good. So, you know, (indiscernible) village (indiscernible) was a good indication of how that was done.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Off record.

(Tape changed - Tape 3, Side 1)

MS. WOLFE: And I'll talk about being a white person in Alaska who's dated white men. Because I think the white people have a fundamental fear of Indians. And I've experienced that with men that I've dated, with people I've interacted with in Anchorage and

the cities. And so what you get is this polarization; well, we can't give the Indians their local control, we have to build roads, we have to do this. And it's kind of this paternal, what I call paternal caretaking role, and I think that really needs to change. And in the states, you know, that -- there was a lot of discrepancy over that change, and we got the IRA and the General Allotment Act, and things that have not turned out very well.

So -- but I think that that is one thing that I think the Commission should start to really take seriously, is to look at local control. And, you know, there's a continuum of the radical sovereignty act of this and then those who don't want any -- that are too afraid to take that control themselves. But somewhere in there, there's a middle ground, and maybe even more to the left of a middle ground, of local control. And that's already been talked about a little bit with I think what Pat was saying about economic development.

As far as subsistence is concerned, I think that Native Alaskans need to be given priority in the state, absolutely. The State of Alaska, when it decided that "rural Alaskans" was to be the terminology to represent both Natives and white people was a big mistake. Because what you have now is you have people that abuse the land. And all you hear about in Anchorage is, oh, the Indians shoot too many walrus, or the Indians shoot too many moose, or the Indians do this, or the Indians do that. And I will tell you personally that I have dated men who have gone out and hunted wolves, fly-over shooting, have gone out and hunted moose off

season.

I was driving down the Alaska Highway from Cantwell (indiscernible) and this guy was running down the road with a gun, loaded. I said, what are you doing? Well, he was looking for something to shoot. I don't think he cared what it was he was going to shoot. All right, and this guy wasn't even from the state.

But our game wardens up here are so interested in busting Indians who are trying to get some fish or trying to get a moose that they ignore the abuse of people from outside and the people that -- the white people in this -- and I say white people to represent a vast majority of other cultures, okay, but non-Natives. And I think that really needs to be taken seriously.

One moose a year is not enough. Fifteen fish for Eeyak (ph.) Indians in Cordova is not subsistence. That's a death sentence. And it's genocide. And we need to start looking at what the state and the federal government is doing about the genocidal policies that have continued for too long. And subsistence is the first thing we can do, is by giving preference to Alaska Natives.

All right. So I've said that. That includes roads. The road, the illegal road that Hickel was putting through to Cordova; what did we do about that? I mean, nothing. He got -- he didn't get even get fined for not even having the approvals that he needed to, the permits he needed to, for clearing that old train road into Cordova last summer.

We got six million dollars of the Exxon Valdez funding going

into a road to Nelson Bay down in Cordova. That's going to open 90,000 acres of clear cutting. It's also going to open up mining and things like this. That's not helping the Indians in Cordova. It's going to be helping a few board members. It's going to be helping a few white people. But I think we really need to look at roads. I don't think Alaska needs any more roads. Because we get people getting shot in Manley, we get people from Seattle running down the highway with loaded shotguns. I mean, that's what we get.

So I think subsistence, again, all this thing with the roads and stuff, is the Native Alaskans need to be given preference, I think we need to go back on that. And we need to say, okay, you got local control; set up your own.

The Gwich'in (ph.) have been doing really good on setting up their own regulations. I think there was probably regulations before we came along and started telling people what to do around here. So perhaps those can be supported, you know, and allowed to flourish. That's a local control. That's the other thing that I wanted to talk about, was local control, and economic local control.

The million-dollar cannery down in Cordova could be turned into a -- into a fishery processing plant for the Eeyak Indians or the Indians in the area as a communal thing. I think there's definitely economic alternatives similar to those that have been used in third world development countries that could be implemented here by people within their own local communities.

And that's about -- I think that's all I needed to say today,

and give the floor over to other people. And I just wanted to say that as a white person who's lived here for a long time, I think that we really need to get to a place where we are supporting and providing support, whether it's financial or personal or whatever, to communities in order to kind of take back some of the damage that's been done. Because I think there's a lot of work to be done and I think we can get answers to those solutions from the people in those communities. And the movement of cultural presentation is an indicator that there's a lot of good ideas out there. And you're obviously searching out some of those good ideas, and I'm glad to see that happen. And I'm hoping that the Clinton administration is able to do something.

But I did want to say that I'm a white person who doesn't think that rural Alaskans should have equal opportunity as far as shooting the animals or subsisting. Because white people don't subsist. They fundamentally do not subsist. When you work on the Slope or have a job in Anchorage, and you fly out and live six months and shoot whatever you want, (indiscernible), you're not subsisting.

Thank you.

MR. EATON: Questions.

MS. WOLFE: Questions.

FATHER ELLIOTT: No, except a comment, and that is, I think I read in the Anchorage paper that the road to Cordova has been restarted.

MS. WOLFE: Yeah. Yeah, it's a real problem.

FATHER ELLIOTT: But -- well, one question. You did mention that a road would open up mining and forestry. And then you said, but that would not help the Native people. Why would that not help? I know that one corporation feels that if there were to be a gas line put in, that they would be hiring Native people. Don't you feel that Native people would also be hired for the mining and the forestry?

MS. WOLFE: I believe that if we're going to preserve culture in Alaska, economic jobs -- jobs, white man jobs, are only half of the solution. Okay. So if you eliminate or destroy the ecosystem and make subsistence fundamentally impossible, then you're not going to help anybody. No, I don't believe that.

And I also -- if you look at -- the corporation in Cordova is a unique deal in the state. It's the largest village corporation, it's 327 people. It's also in a conglomeration of several different tribes, which was a mistake. There's 50 Eeyak left. The 50 Eeyak whose lands will be the ancestral lands, including burial grounds, village sites, and so on, that will get destroyed for this forestry, do not think that they'll benefit. And, you know, it would be a good idea for you to talk to Dune Langert (ph.) or Marie Smith Jones (ph.) who's the chief of that culture, of that tribe, because that's a real serious problem in Cordova. And it -- but it's an indicator, it's kind of like that indicator species. They will -- the Eeyak will be the first language to go extinct in this state. There's one Native language, there's one Native speaker left. By the year 2050, it's been estimated all the Native

languages in Alaska will be extinct -- Michael Crouse (ph.), University of Alaska Fairbanks.

So you have an indicator corporation who is basically going under, they're fighting bankruptcy right now. They've had to go through Chapter 11. And they are -- they got rid of their CEO and are barely staying alive. You have to look at why that corporation is barely staying alive. And, you know, that's something that, you know, you could look into independently instead of me taking up time here. I've written an article on, it was published in the Earth Island Institute Journal this spring, which I could give you a copy of, explains the whole thing. And they will be having a gathering in this July down there. So you might want to look them up.

But what you have is you have a few people, board members. The shareholders, the Eeyak Corporation, have not -- did not get a dividend fund last year. So they clear cut 12,000 acres last year of ancestral lands, nobody got a dividend check. Now, is that a benefit? The year before that, the dividend check was \$28. The year before that, it was about \$50. But that's it, over the last three years it's gone down. They do not project a dividend check for the next year.

And I think, you know, if you look at who's getting the jobs, you know, you got, yeah, a few Natives get employed. But who runs the corporations? Bob Stewart (ph.), who runs the White Stone Logging, is making the money; not the Eeyak. There's a couple of people working logging jobs. But they would rather be doing

something else. They'd rather be fishing. But they can't get a fishing permit, because they're \$150,000 apiece.

Why isn't -- why is -- why are Natives, why do they have their fishing (indiscernible)? Why do people from Seattle who can work a \$50,000-a-year job come up, get a -- buy a fishing permit, and they get all the fish; go back and live in Seattle, they don't even live up here? Why is that okay? Something's wrong with that. Natives should be out there fishing, whether it's commercial or not. They've always commercial fished.

It was a white man who said, this is commercial fishing and this is barter and trade. This is subsistence, this is commercial fishing. You're commercial fishing, you're barter and trading, you're doing this, you're doing that. Well, they've always traded. They've always done that. They've always commercial fished. That's what Dupe'll tell you, that's what the chiefs -- some chiefs will tell you. So why aren't they doing that, why do they have to pay \$150,000 a year to do that? They can't afford to do that. They've not -- they'd rather be fishing rather than logging. I know that, I've talked to them.

So eliminate limited entry for Natives; why not. You know, let's experiment. You know, we have a control problem. White people have a control problem. And it hasn't worked. So that's -- you know, I would really encourage you to look at the Cordova situation. And I can give you that article before you leave, okay.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Here's the address.

MS. WOLFE: Great. And -- because I think it's an indicator,

it's an indicator species of our corporations, you know. Okay. ,

MR. EATON: Any other questions? (Indiscernible) one thing.
(Indiscernible) correct in assuming that a 350-member village corporation is anywhere near the largest village corporation in the state.

MS. WOLFE: Three hundred twenty-seven. Well, yeah.

MR. EATON: (Indiscernible) over a thousand.

MS. WOLFE: Oh, okay.

MR. EATON: (Indiscernible).

MS. WOLFE: Village corporations.

MR. EATON: Village corporations.

MS. WOLFE: Okay.

MR. EATON: Thank you very much.

MS. WOLFE: Okay.

MR. EATON: Is Alice (indiscernible) --

(Side conversation)

MR. EATON: John Titus.

MR. TITUS: Who's foreman, you?

MR. EATON: (Indiscernible), John.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

TESTIMONY OF JOHN TITUS

MR. TITUS: Yeah, my name's John Titus and I'm from Venetie. I didn't even know I was going to testify, but since John Schaeffer asked me to so...we were talking about a recovery camp and also the liquor store. Burning down the liquor store in Fort Yukon is not going to solve the problem, because eight years ago when I sobered

up, the last eight years I never bothered to go down to the liquor store. Liquor store could be downtown and I can be uptown, if I'm around there; I don't have to use that alcohol anymore. As simple as that. And I don't think that -- do away with the liquor store is going to solve the village problem, because there's other ways that we can get the liquor. And a person wants a drink, he's going to get it, regardless of where he's at -- or where he's at. If we want it bad enough, we're going to get it some way, we'll find a way to get it.

The issue is that we need to -- we -- all we do is just talk, and talk about alcoholism and drugs. And really, we never do anything physically to try and find -- solve the problem. It's a good example that we see these youth survivor camp. I've been there and I watch these kids performing. They skin muskrat, they skin beaver, they learn how to set traps, how to beaver snare, put in fish net, cut fish, and they learn everything. And they're excited in doing that.

They seem to be reintroduced back into their culture, and they're happy and excited about it. And that's the same way with this camp, the alcohol recovery camp. When I first started it, I started it from just watching people and also myself.

I remember when I was drinking around Fort Yukon, the city of Fort Yukon, some friend of mine would say, let's go to fish camp, we're going to sober you up, or let's go to a trap line, or let's go out for a few days, to get over your drunk. I'll take a bottle of whiskey when I go out and go hunting for maybe a couple of days.

When I'm back, I'm sober. That's what it really amounts to.

It's like earlier it was said that we're trying to develop and structure (indiscernible) within our culture. And that recovery camp, it belongs to the people. It belongs to the people to find the healing within themselves and others also, that to combine that to make it work.

I left Tanana Chief, I resigned from my position about three years ago. And I'm not saying this because I'm trying to say anything to be detrimental to the program. The program is good and the program is running. But since I left three years ago, there's two people that work in the camp right now that I helped sober up three years ago. And these are the only two people that I know that work within the recovery camp that are sober since that -- since my resignation. I hadn't seen any result that the person had sobered up past three years. And I know that I would have found some people in here, but the evidence is -- the truth is on my side, that I hadn't seen anybody sober up that three years since I left the recovery camp.

It's not because that I left the program, it's because that the program, they gave the program, and I think that they're using too much western novelty in the structure and confuse these sick people.

I remember when I was drinking, I went to detoxification and I spent two hours -- I never stayed there to fill out the application that I was supposed to be in there for. Because who wants to fill out the application when you're trying to throw up

your stomach? And I never -- I just walk out. And even right now, that you have to pick up somebody, take them to (indiscernible) evaluation, take psychological evaluation and all these things, the process that you have to go through to be eligible to go to recovery camp.

You go to camp because you're sick. And you need to go, you need to go then. Not to go through all this processing, because in the processing, you lose interest in your recovery. You lose interest and just say, to heck with it, and you're going to walk away from it. That's normal, that's -- Indian people, we don't have any patience to wait. We want something to happen if we're sick. We want our medication, we want it now. Not after somebody else make a decision in our -- about our health, about our -- what is going to happen to us.

And I remember these program, it's good. Like I said, again I said this. I'm not saying the program is bad. The program is there for the Native people, it's free, and they're -- it's up to them to make up their mind to go ahead and utilize that program. But I'm really totally against that some other people would come into a camp and say, we have to run you -- we have to run this program like this. The program belongs to the Native people, and the Native people should be the ones to structure that program and develop that program and make it comfortable to make it easy for the Native people. Because the drug and alcohol is really taking its course in today's life. That -- those -- the people that work there should be dedicated, should be committed.

When I was working in the recovery camp, I'd pick up people off the street, I'd take them to my house, I bath them, I clean them up. That's what I do, because I feel I'm dedicated, because that person, I'm doing that to them, it's me, I was there before. And I don't sidestep these people because they are my recovery. I still hang around, you know, liquor store. I -- Fairbanks, I hang around downtown, I sit down and talk to these people. Because I didn't preach to them. If they need a couple dollar for (indiscernible) couple dollar, I give them couple dollar, to kind of -- to show them that I care and I love them. And I'm concerned about their health. And this is the role model part of it, to try and to help to -- to reach out.

And I'm not there for just every two weeks, my paycheck. I'm there because it also helps me. And that's the way that the people should handle these programs. And it's the name of the game, that we need to have people dedicated and committed to reach out to these people. Because these people are sick people out there. And they need help, they need understanding. And what more -- I can just sit here and just go on and on, but I would like to hear some other people talk too.

But we need more (indiscernible). We need more village participants. The local counselor which we have here in the village, that need to be -- we don't have to go to school. The psychologists and psychiatrists, our elder people, they are our psychiatrists and they are our -- a chapter of our life. And they're the one that we should turn to, talk to these people.

Because I was brought up by an elder woman. And she raised me up from ever since I was an orphan, (indiscernible) mother. And Titus and I, we had many fights when we were growing up, and every time some of us or both of us talked, we -- at the end, we always disagree with one another too. So -- but I really honor his speech and anything that he says, because he is my brother and we're -- always been close.

And thank you for allowing me to say a few words. Thank you.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Oh, John, couple of questions; in fact, three very quick ones. It was said by a doctor the other day that Native drunkenness is not alcoholism in the usual definition. An alcoholic is one who cannot stop drinking once he takes a drink. He rather said that it was called binge drinking; that is, a Native person could be away from alcohol, say on a trap line, for two months, three months. But when he comes to town, that's when he goes on a binge. And then he may be off of it for a month, and then comes back and has another binge. And that's what triggers this violent behavior. So I'd like your comment on that.

And secondly, a couple, I understand, came to Minto from one of the Lower Yukon villages to the recovery camp, spirit camp, and went through the program, were great. But when they went back to their Lower Yukon village, they had no support, and they immediately fell back into the trap of drinking again. And so what has been developed as way -- in the way of what support is given to a person when they come back from your camp into their local

village or town?

And thirdly, what can this Commission do to help you in your program?

MR. TITUS: I think that coming back from a recovery camp or things like that, that all these things are available. We need to have a aftercare open in the village, like group of people, a group of elder. And that could deal with these people that are coming -- just got out of camp or whatever, that treatment.

That's why it should be designed that the whole family should go to recovery camp. One family that are having problems with alcohol affects the whole family. And they all should be at the camp. When I was running the camp, I had whole family, the kids, wife, husband, all of them up there at one time, to make them understand that one of the person in the family is afflicted with alcoholism, and they have to learn to live with that person and learn to -- what to look out for, and stuff like that. And so that's why it's a recovery camp but it's also a family camp, family recovery camp, that's what it should be referred to.

And the same way with these spirit camps, same way with these youth survival; that the family should take -- to be involved in it and be part of it, to understand -- so the kids could understand at the same time that they learn, the same time.

And the question that you said that, why does a Native go out and come back and drink; and they always say, why does a Native people -- why does the Indian can't handle the drink; that was a man -- question many time was put to me. And I could never answer

that. Why does the Native drinks? And the only thing that I would say is that everything they sold at the store, they've got instruction on it and how much you're going to use, but they never put that instruction (indiscernible) (laughter) how much you can't or how much you can drink on the label, so...pretty well up to an individual.

You can't just come in and testify or say that -- you can't speak for anybody, really. I'm only speaking for myself, of what my feeling. Because within myself, I have my own program that kept me sober every day. And I can't be sober like Titus or Jonathan because they've got their own program within themselves. And it's hard to get up here and say to do this and that. That, you have to find for yourself, and anything you do in your life, you have to find that for yourself, to feel comfortable with it.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Well, he wasn't -- the doctor wasn't limiting this just to Native drinking.

(Tape changed - Tape 3, Side 2)

MR. TITUS: -- (indiscernible). I think that earlier, that Pat had said we trade off our culture for many things like food stamps and stuff like that, these welfare. You know, these are just some bribe that we're trading off our culture for these things. And today, everything is easy.

When I was growing up, everything was hard. And today, that all we do is go to state office and ask for help and they give you help. And the time I was growing up, it's not like that.

My mother has brought me up on ten dollar a month pension.

She don't want to accept any assistance from me because she said -- at that time I never knew what she was saying, but she said, I want to be the boss. I don't want nobody have control over my boy. I don't want the government to be control over my boy. I want to be the boss. And after my brother got in service, he put another 30 dollars or 40 dollars a month that we were getting was pretty good. And that's the name of the game.

Thank you.

MR. EATON: Evelyn James.

MS. JAMES: Yes.

MR. EATON: Titus.

MR. PETER: I think that (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Could you speak up --

MR. PETER: (Indiscernible) trying to (indiscernible) just mentioned. I had a guy once said that it's okay, there's no harm in it, that's a person that drinks on weekends only. And sets themselves up with (indiscernible). And another person (indiscernible) said to a person, that you are an alcoholic. And he went on to say, how do you know whether your (indiscernible). And what you are (indiscernible).

One thing about that liquor store, (indiscernible) experience (indiscernible) when I was a counselor on alcoholism, (indiscernible) working for (indiscernible). We (indiscernible) for one year. (Indiscernible). During that one year, I sent two people to detox that whole year. After they opened it up (indiscernible) petition to open it up. Within two weeks -- two

months, (indiscernible) sent (indiscernible) through the detox. So that's the difference it made (indiscernible).

--MR. EATON: Thank you. Evelyn.

TESTIMONY OF EVELYN JAMES

MS. JAMES: Hi. My name is Evelyn James. I grew up and lived in Fort Yukon all my life. I'm 27 years old. I'm the mother of three children. And what I would like to talk about is local control for the school.

I came back from college when I was...how old was I. I don't remember. Anyway, I was pregnant with my second child, Ruth (ph.). And Sheila was preschool age, and I sent her to preschool at the school over here. And we didn't have a PTA association, that's what we had when I went to school at the university, we had -- we -- all the parents would meet and we'd talk about kids, we'd talk about -- we'd talk with the teachers and we all became friends.

Well, anyway, when I came back to Fort Yukon, I was -- you know, I wanted to see a PTA, because we used to have it. But since the state, you know, gave the control over to the Yukon Flat School District, the PTA withered away, I don't know what became of it. And anyway, I tried to get a local PTA going so that, you know, we could get to know the teachers better. Because our teachers come and go, they don't -- you know, they live here, but then they don't associate in the community, nobody knows them. You see them in stores, you know, they step out of your way to avoid you. You know, you don't get to know the teachers that well; just maybe a few people -- I mean, a few teachers.

Anyway, that PTA association never went anywhere, because none of the teachers showed up. I went around personally inviting each one of them, telling them, you know, we need this. You need to get to know, you know, parents of these kids. And the teachers wouldn't even show up.

So I threw my hands up in the air and I thought, you know, how am I going to work, you know, with teachers, how am I going to work, you know, because I -- and I was very concerned about my little girl and her education.

I threw my hands up in the air and I just quit, you know, and I didn't enroll my little girl in the public school. She goes to Arctic Circle Christian School, which is run by -- in the Baptist Church. Because I get to pick her textbooks every year, I get to associate with the teacher and, you know, she comes to my home, she comes to dinner, she -- she's a close friend. And I couldn't do that with the public school.

The teachers come and go, you know. And the -- I was on the local advisory school -- local school advisory committee. We gave advice; like one year we wanted to change the calendar. We wanted the kids to have one week off during Christmas and give them a spring break, because every spring we have a traditional spring carnival where a lot of the village people come in and we share culture, you know, we go to (indiscernible) dances, the kids stay up late. And they won't make it to school the next day, so we wind up giving them a week off during spring so that our kids could enjoy the interaction and stuff. But no. All the schoolteachers

already made reservations to go to Hawaii for two weeks, you know. So, you know, we were -- I was on the LSAC and I couldn't even, you know, make -- I didn't make no difference. So I got off of that and I thought...but, you know, I just throw my hands up in the air, I'm disgusted with, you know, what was there.

And then now I attend...(laughter)...I --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible).

MS. JAMES: I attend school board meetings, and we have a REAA school board here, and we have one person from Fort Yukon, one person from Circle, one from Chalkyitsik, one from Arctic Village, Venetie, one from Rampart. And there's 11 schools, there's -- I think there's seven or eight of them that take care of, you know, 11 schools, they're supposed to do that, but it's not being done.

And they come -- like Rampart, girl from Rampart, she's a friend of mine, her name is Rosemary. She got off the plane the day of the meeting and she was handed a 60-page packet of items that needed action on at that meeting and at that day. She didn't have no chance to look over it, and that was like her second meeting and she -- you know, she shrugged her shoulder, and how can you -- how -- you know, how can you act on a 60-page packet when you're handed it an hour before the meeting starts.

And I say -- what I'm trying to say is the REAA school board just does not work for local control right here in Fort Yukon, for me. It doesn't work for a lot of other parents.

I'm also on the city council right now. And we're disgusting, you know, we're just disgusted with the REAA school board. We want

local control. We don't want a LSAC. We don't want a local advisory board. We want a local school board for our local school. And we -- you know, we need to get together, you know, on a monthly basis with those teachers. We need to -- we need this. And it -- we don't have it now.

When those seven or eight school board members come to town, they get their -- they get most of their information, you know, the minute they get off the plane of items that need to be acted on. And then they got their own little concerns to -- that when they get to the meeting, you know; how can you get together with them. They arrive like on the day of the meeting or the day before a meeting. They don't -- we can't, you know, have a meeting before that and...anyway, that's my concern is that local control, we need local control of our local schools. I don't like it that, you know, we don't even get to know some of those teachers.

And that's the -- I agree with what John says, when his grandmother said she didn't want no help, that she wanted to have control of her boy. I -- you know, I sent my girl Sheila to a private school and I have to pay out of my pocket for her books, and I get to choose her books, but that's what I want. You know, the teachers aren't going to have nothing to do with me, I don't want nothing to do with them. And I think you need to take me serious, because, you know, I want my daughter Sheila to go to the public school, I would like for her to enjoy all the books they have there. And, you know, especially all the kids that go there, because it's -- right now, it's only -- she goes to school with

maybe three or four other kids. And she feels like she's kind of like an outsider.

And you discussed earlier ANICA, is that -- ANICA, is that the company that owns the AC?

MR. EATON: No, it's a cooperative that was formed in the 1930's to help transport groceries, mostly on the coast (indiscernible) across (indiscernible).

MS. JAMES: Oh. And another concern of mine is that -- have you been to the AC store? My husband and I, we have three kids. We don't drink and we don't go out and buy drugs, you know, we -- penny pinchers. We try our best to keep track of every penny. We have a hard time putting two, three meals on the table every day, we don't drink, you know. I wonder how people in this town that drink take care of their kids, because, you know, it's hard for us, we don't drink, we spend a lot of time out in the woods with our kids and (indiscernible). And either the store -- if you go to the store, a gallon of milk is 5.79. When it's only two dollars, 2.29 in Fairbanks. And they want -- it's just ridiculous prices. Two ninety-nine for bread that -- local bread that costs 90 cents in Fairbanks. You know, you don't have to pay two dollars postage to get it up here. That's another concern of mine, is the prices at our stores.

Thank you.

MR. EATON: Thank you.

MS. JAMES: Do you have....

MR. EATON: Any questions?

(Pause)

Luci Abeita. Did I say that right?

TESTIMONY OF LUCI BEACH ABEITA

MS. ABEITA: My name is Luci Beach Abeita and like Evelyn, my primary concern is the lack of quality in the schools here.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Are you from Fort Yukon?

MS. ABEITA: Yeah, I live here now. I'm currently in graduate school, in limbo as far as where I live right now.

For example, several of the people that teach in schools don't even bank in the state of Alaska. They bank in Mississippi, Alabama, wherever they're from. When school was over, I think school got out at 3:00 in the afternoon, they were on the next plane out of town, and we're not going to see them probably until the day before school starts. You don't see the commitment with a lot of teachers. There are some teachers that are committed to the school, they're from the community and they care.

But as a parent, I had a grievance with the school, and I just felt like nobody was listening. And I sincerely wanted to see things work, you know, I was there to -- I've always volunteered in every school that my children have been at. I didn't feel welcome at the school. I rarely saw parents there. And when I went to the LSAC meeting, I was the only parent there that wasn't a teacher.

I feel like it's a gold mine, you know. Somebody said that Native people, you know, don't want gold mines in the communities. But those schools are gold mines. I think -- a friend of mine who's a principal in Fairbanks said that Alaskan teachers receive

-- are the highest-paid teachers in the world, next to people who teach, you know, children of kings and queens. They're making a lot of money, and I don't think we're getting our money's worth out of them.

I work at the university here, and a lot of people that come through have to take developmental math and English course. I don't think they should have to pay for those courses if they've been graduated from the school. They should have those skills when they get there. And if they don't have those skills, I think the school should have to pay for those courses. I think they should be up to standard when they reach the university level.

Along the same lines with education is the Indian education funds, the federal monies for Indian fellowships. There -- only for certain categories can you qualify to receive those monies. And I call them the doctor, lawyer, the Indian chief monies. They're only for people that are going into medicine, law, education. I mean, it's just real limited. And I think in order for people to become self-governing, self-supporting, we have to have people with graduate degrees.

I don't think things are going to change in the schools, in many areas of our lives, until we have our own people who are committed to this -- to the communities who are the principals, who are the superintendents, who are the teachers. And you have to go on. You have to go and get your master's, you have to get your Ph.D. But speaking from my own personal experience, it's tough to get money.

I have one more area of concern, and that falls in line with some of the earlier testimony; is that I really feel that a lot of the substance abuse programs don't work unless the entire family is involved in it, and a lot of the extended family too. Because you can't just take the substance abuser out of the situation and get them straightened out somewhat and send them back to a sick environment. The whole family's affected, and we're just perpetuating the cycle of abuse. The children -- there's a lot of angry children out there, you know. Help the entire family, not just the substance abuser.

And I'd like to speak on behalf of the Interior Aleutian campus at the University of Alaska. We're one of the least funded campuses in the state of the rural colleges. Yet we have one-third of the students enrolled in the university system. And we don't have a lot of the -- we're not able to provide a lot of the services that the other campuses can. For example, we don't have an academic coordinator who can coordinate courses and assist people with attaining the degrees that they need to.

That's all I have to say.

MR. EATON: I have just a couple of questions on the university allocation. It is an area of considerable debate of why (indiscernible) levels. Why do you think the system is as it is today, of allocation of resources?

MS. ABEITA: I don't know if it's because of politics or what. I really can't answer that. But it seems like it's a unfair distribution.

MR. EATON: If you get the least money per capita, who gets the most?

MS. ABEITA: Kuskokwim.

MR. EATON: Why do you think that is?

MS. ABEITA: Probably politics.

MR. EATON: Probably politics?

MS. ABEITA: I -- this is a new arena for me, you know.

MR. EATON: Okay. What kind of a policy adjustment needs to happen in your mind to equalize that? It's very hard for me to ask the questions without putting words in your mouth, which I don't want to do, from a testimony point of view.

MS. ABEITA: It seems like just off the cuff, probably enrollment. You know, if we're serving a lot of students, there must, you know, we must be doing something right, there must be a need out there, you know.

MR. EATON: Do you think being a predominant Indian region plays a role in the allocation of money?

MS. ABEITA: I don't know about that, because Kuskokwim has a largely Yupik population.

MR. EATON: Any other questions? Thank you very much. Jonathon.

MR. SOLOMON: After last night, (indiscernible).

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Now, maybe we should have you swear in (laughter).

TESTIMONY OF JONATHON P. SOLOMON

MR. SOLOMON: I want to talk about an issue that really

concerns me.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Could you state your name, please? Please state your name.

MR. SOLOMON: My name is Jonathon Solomon, I'm from Fort Yukon, Alaska. I'm secretary-treasurer of Tanana Chief and I'm the president of a -- the (indiscernible) Corporation.

My concern is Public Law 93-638, which really bothers me lately. I've been brought up all my life with tribal government, and raised in this town under tribal government authority. I'm 61 years old. I remember all my life living under tribal government, the chief and council of this village, where the decision makers was the chief and council decide, the chief executed. And if you go around the state, all the state organization is called -- call for action, is to Native people return back to the tribal government, form of government, self-determination. That's why Public Law 93-638 was passed.

But in that law, it's -- in the law of Public Law 93-638, they have a recognized -- organization can be authorized for contract. And they put a REAA council and traditional council. But I know -- I don't know the reason behind this, is that they included the village ANCSA corporation and the region ANCSA corporation. But in the recollections of that, you know, they put -- the region corporation in my area is Doyon Armon (ph.). Had the ultimate decision of who can contract 638. A profit-making corporation that's got nothing to do with tribal government can authorize another organization to contract 638, Self-Determination Act for

Native People, overriding whatever village council's decisions.

And I'm the secretary-treasurer of Tanana Chief. Tanana Chief (indiscernible) under resolution from all 43 village council to represent them. Still, that's got to go to Doyon, Limited for authority to contract 638, which is bullshit to me. No profit-making corporation in the United States has the authority to tell tribal government what to do or what -- who to contract with. And that should be corrected.

In -- right now --

(Tape changed - Tape 4, Side 1)

MR. SOLOMON: -- in D.C. And the man that's handling it is called John Bushman (ph.). And his number in Washington, D.C. is 202-224-2309. I think that if the Alaska Commission is really concerned about Native people and its issue in the State of Alaska, should talk to these people about correcting a law like this or regulation, which can be corrected by the Secretary of Interior with a stroke of the pen. Because it's regulation that's killing us.

And I can never understand the reason behind these things. Because if you look in the Anchorage, looking in the region, (indiscernible) Native Association or the Cook Inlet Native Tribal -- I mean, organization that we're contracted 638 under the authority of the village people, tribal government was done away by the Cook Inlet Region Corporation, ANCSA, and created their own. Right now it's all under the ANCSA corporation.

Is that's what's going to happen in my region, if we don't do

something about it. I need the commissioners to do something about these kinds of regulation and these kinds of law that govern -- governs our area. To me, tribal government is number one. The region and village corporations are here under them. The tribal governments around this state is the one that got the Land Claims Act, not the region corporations and the village corporation.

Thank you.

MR. EATON: Thank you. Questions?

FATHER ELLIOTT: Could you give -- Jonathon, could you give me an example of what you've just said, of the -- where you have to make an appeal to a corporation that can (indiscernible) tribal --

MR. SOLOMON: (Indiscernible) here. The Fairbanks Native Association (indiscernible) my area, okay, they deal with -- they were allowed to give them something, contracting some 638 program. But they went to Doyon and they wanted the Doyon Corporation to withdraw their resolution that would allow Tanana Chief to contract 638's, and that they would be authorized to do that except -- instead of Tanana Chief.

And the way the 638 reads now, Doyon can do that. Without consultation with the tribal government in the villages.

MR. EATON: I think, Jonathon, at some risk of putting words in your mouth, what you're talking about is jurisdictional issues.

MR. SOLOMON: Jurisdictional, number one is tribal government.

MR. EATON: Right. Who is in charge?

MR. SOLOMON: The tribal government is supposed to be in charge.

MR. EATON: I understand. And that is the issue that we're talking about.

MR. SOLOMON: Right, we --

MR. EATON: Six thirty-eight is symptomatic to the problem.

MR. SOLOMON: Yeah. Six thirty-eight says that no, that the region corporations and the village corporations will be in charge.

MR. EATON: The problem is, is that the federal and state government, from time to time, arbitrarily tell a unit, for lack of a better term, of Native leadership that they have certain preemptive rights. You get into jurisdictional conflicts, which are not necessarily the same statewide.

MR. SOLOMON: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MR. EATON: And 638 issue is symptomatic of the problem of outsiders giving that responsibility to one over another unit of Native identity.

MR. SOLOMON: Yeah. I can give you an example. You know, we have a Native council here which is tribal government REAA. We have a Native corporation here called the (indiscernible) Corporation. If a bunch of people get together and form an organization, the Chesey (ph.) Corporation can authorize these organizations to override the Native council. And we need that corrected.

If we're talking about tribal governments in all areas, are the people that represent their Native people on issues of social services, then we need to get rid of these profit corporations overriding them.

MR. EATON: Other questions? Thank you, Jonathon.

(Pause)

Jeanine.

TESTIMONY OF JEANINE KENNEDY

MS. KENNEDY: My -- I can't talk, my first time. My name is Jeanine Kennedy and I live in Anchorage, Alaska. I'm the executive director for an organization called the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Rural CAP. And it's located in Anchorage. We -- I have a board of directors from all over the state of Alaska.

And the reason I wanted to speak was because I was inspired by some of the other people that spoke before me. And I wanted to offer some comments on particularly the lady who was speaking about the school system. I know that you gentlemen, and you're listening to people all over the state, you hear a lot about what the problems are and why they don't work. And what I would like to do is offer some recommendations, and particularly in regard to education.

From an example that works, Rural CAP administers Headstart in 33 communities. And nationally, Headstart is recognized as a federal program that works, as one of the few federal programs that truly works. And the reason it works when it's properly administered and under the guidelines that have been established, is that it requires that the parents be involved. The parents are required to contribute a certain amount to make the school work and to function. They have to come up with a building.

The parents pick the teachers from among themselves. Some of

them have to be the teachers. And our job at Rural CAP, for instance, would be to train them to be effective teachers and about the different developments of the child and how to teach. So we teach the parents how to teach. And of course, (indiscernible) the teachers that parents have the most interest in the well-being of their children and the education of these children; they do very well.

A criticism at Headstart has been, well, by the third year it seems to wear off. And this is something that the school districts tend to perpetuate because of the fact that it reflects on their own achievements in the school. And now what's happening nationally that Headstart has been getting a lot of support, is that the school districts want to take over the Headstarts, and the first thing that they want to do is to get rid of the teachers who are unqualified and have no certificates, the parents. And they want those qualified people in there teaching those little children.

Well, I think you've heard in your testimony in Alaska that these qualified teachers, their solution to improving education is to create more education for themselves. I mean, I have a -- I graduated from the University of Alaska and I had -- my first interest was in teaching and I had a elementary certificate and a secondary certificate. And then I chose not to teach, I was doing something else, and I let my certificates lapse. And in the meantime I went to a community called Kasigluk. And the people there asked me if I would teach, and I said yes, I would,

(indiscernible). And so I thought, I'll apply to LKSD, I think it is. But I wasn't qualified because my certificate had lapsed. By the time I called up the University of Alaska, State of Alaska, I had to take 25 more hours of educational courses, things like rural something or other and this and that. And they ultimately hired a person from Minnesota to teach in Kasigluk, when I was there anyhow.

So my recommendation to the Commission is that you make a recommendation to the Congress that Native governments and native organizations be allowed to develop their own systems of education to teach their people and to support (indiscernible), or whatever.

The second thing I want to talk about is a program at Fort Yukon that is called Youth Survivors. Rural CAP was -- participated in this and it occurred about seven years ago. Rural CAP is engaged in a philosophy or a way of approaching problems, trying to work, and it's called community development. And basically what it is, is that we are willing to go anywhere to any community and assist them if they ask for our assistance, and we don't care what they're doing. It's not our decision or interest about directing anything in a certain way. It's just -- we see ourselves as servants.

And so at that particular time in Fort Yukon, what was occurring was the people were coming together and discussing their own issues. And they decided that they wanted to do such and so. And so we were just, you know, providing resources whenever there

was a program, or whenever we had some. And so about two years down the road, the community began to say, well, you know, what's getting in the road of our development here is the fact that alcohol hurts our workers. They won't show up for work and they won't help and they quit. And maybe if we had an alcohol program, that would help.

So we wrote a proposal, and that got funded and that worked itself out. And so then they met again and they -- at a community meeting and invited me. And they all brainstormed about what did they want to do. And what that ended up was, they wanted to have a program that would work on -- that would help the children, the youth, and also would include the culture. And so I told them that I would watch out for funding for this kind of project.

So in the meantime, the CATG had gone to Canada to take lessons in fur trapping, trapping animals. And I thought it was kind of weird. But the people came back and they were very, very excited, you know, that they had the learning to trap. And so I said, well, my God, if these adults are so excited about learning how to trap, I wonder if the kids would be excited if the people who know how to trap will teach them.

And everybody said yeah, that's a good idea. So we wrote a proposal, and I was kind of nervous, you know, I was kind of nervous, because we were recommending that we pay people in the community that knew how to trap animals to teach the kids how to trap. And you know how animal rights groups are and so forth. But anyhow, it kind of slipped through. And I also felt kind of funny

about paying people to teach their culture to their kids. But then I got to thinking about it, and the communities, in urban communities, don't people pay playground people to take care of other people's kids? So what's the difference?

And so this project got started and it got funded. And it was because of the community interest in the project. Nancy James, who's sitting here, has been the director of the project ever since its inception. And that project has been really powerful because of the fact that there was -- it was what the community wanted. It was what they designed. They ran it, they decided how they wanted to train their kids. Lot of times I wouldn't have agreed, I wouldn't have thought that was, you know, how I think it should be run. But it was how they thought it should be run.

They have a wonderful camp down there where the kids have built two cabins. They have a fish wheel. They are taken out regularly. I think the first trip they took, they shot a moose. And it surprised them and surprised the mentors too, I think. But, you know.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: I'll bet you the moose.

MS. KENNEDY: Yeah, and the moose was surprised (laughter). And the whole community supports this thing. Doyon has supported it, Doyon donated land for them to build their camp in. And it has -- you know, everybody supports the children in what they're doing. So my recommendation -- this is a long story -- but my recommendation is, because we get requests from all over the state; you know, why can't Rural CAP do this in our community, why can't,

you know, we put up funding for this.

Well, this was a demonstration project, OSAP, the federal government, had funds to demonstrate something new that worked. Because the things in the past had not been working. So my recommendation is that you guys make recommendations to Congress that they fund Indian programs that are culturally based where tribes can directly write to the government and get these things funded, because they work. The things in the past have not worked. It provides an avenue for local control.

And like I said, every Native community has something to offer. In Fort Yukon, it happened to be trapping and those kinds of survivor -- survival skills. But every Indian community, even, you know, like the Hopi or all those people down there, they have something that they can give their kids, because that's the secret. You've got to give something. You can't just be always taking. And I think that kind of a project would be good.

And what happens with federal programs is, once that they get started, they're kind of hard to end, you know. And the problem is, we got to get this one started.

MR. EATON: (Indiscernible) observation (laughter).

MS. KENNEDY: Yeah. And they just -- they need to have some of these kinds of projects where there's more local control, whether it's education or they're addressing alcohol, drug abuse, that are funded for Native people to expand that around and to work with. Maybe if they don't work the first time, that's okay; to have a little time to fail and to succeed. Okay.

MR. EATON: Thank you. Now that she's already gone, is there any question (laughter). Thank you, Jeanine.

MS. KENNEDY: Uh-huh (affirmative). Did you have a question?

FATHER ELLIOTT: No, I don't, thank you.

MR. EATON: We can get you in Anchorage too. Nancy. This is Nancy James, from Fort Yukon.

TESTIMONY OF NANCY JAMES

MS. JAMES: Nancy James, Fort Yukon. I wasn't going to speak, but just sitting here and listening reminded me. I am the Fort Yukon Youth Survivors coordinator, the project that Jeanine was talking about. And it's a good program. It has the support of the community, it started from the community grassroots.

And I heard a lot of people talk about alcohol and drug problem. Yes, we do have a problem here. And one of the things is, it's prevention. I think one of the things that drug and alcohol programs, is that you should -- I'd like to recommend the concentration on any drug and alcohol program that's funded should have a prevention program. Because I really believe that that's where the prevention of the kids and talking about alcohol, drugs, AIDS program, should start from just like in preschool, that's successful in education.

The other one is accountability. There should be more demand for accountability of your -- any kind of program in the rural areas. And that should be a must, and do an audit. And that goes back to REAA's that establish under Senate Bill 35. I remember at first when it was established years ago that it was mostly to give

local control to the community because they were not satisfied with the Department of Education. I really believe that REAA's of 21 school districts and in the whole state should be really looked at and audited. I think there's something wrong somewhere when we pay a superintendent that takes care of nine school districts and is getting paid 119,000; and when we -- when our own Governor in the State of Alaska gets less than that.

Here again, it's accountability within all school districts of REAA's. I believe that NEAA, that I realize that they also have a union, and they're really powerful. But I think the teachers' salaries are -- and it's really getting out of hand and there's no accountability of the students' standards of graduating. It's really sad to say that Fort Yukon probably is probably one out of the 21 school districts that's part of the bottom list for your standard SAT tests that's being taken.

And we're also the highest-paid, next to North Slope and Kotzebue. We're paying our teachers one of the highest salaries, and yet we got the lowest scores in the state. And I think -- I believe you have -- all I have to do is look at a book that says DOE, and the information's available.

And unless the parents are involved -- and the parents will not be involved when you keep continuously, when the bureaucratic people keep telling them that's none of your business, and your own administration, superintendent on down through the school districts and your teachers don't have their kids going to school right here in Fort Yukon or in the districts, that's not even required. They

send their kids to Fairbanks. They stay here and they travel back and forth. So they look at it as an economy and -- for themselves.

But I believe Ms. Evelyn -- Mrs. Evelyn James really had a good comment that we really need to be looked at and audited.

The other concern that I have in working with our kids and the youth program too is, we could do all kinds of things. It's just another government program, to really do something for our alcohol and drugs in the rural areas. But I believe we need to do something with our gambling. That's really got out of hand. This is nothing new. This is -- we have three permits here in Fort Yukon. The elderly have the permit, the City of Fort Yukon, which I believe has no business having a gambling business, it's already in the liquor store business. They're throwing money -- they're getting money out of the gambling permit business but the same time, to me, they're creating the problem. They're creating drunks and they're also creating gamblers. They're creating the social problem that we're trying to create money for. And there is definitely something wrong.

I believe that the state, when they give out permits, I know that there -- there's a new regulation coming out on gambling that is effective, but I will believe that when gambling permits are being issued by the state, that there should be a ceiling on who gets the permit. There again, it's accountability within the community. And who decides who should get a permit in the community? It should be up to the community on the vote. Because it really creates a lot of orphans, a lot of these kids that -- and

here again, it's creating a lot of the problems within our kids. These -- I'm talking about 11, 12 year old. And thank goodness, it's a good thing we have an Athabascan culture where we let anybody in and take care of each other. But how is it in other areas?

But this is one of the biggest issue that's really coming in the rural areas. It's not only here in Fort Yukon. As you know, the economy in a lot of these villages, we don't have an economy. It's a lot of government subsidized. Government subsidized means welfare, GA. That money that should go out to the family is definitely going out to support gambling.

And that's my concern, that I really like to see something done on bootlegging. And you talk about problems, I mean about -- it's not only in Fort Yukon, but it's in everywhere. We have drug peddlers. There's no law. There's nobody that's really keeping tab on these things. We have bootleggers. And this is not only a problem here, but it's everywhere. So I would like to see some options or somewhere where the bootleggers and the drug peddlers won't just be so easy.

I mean, it's a known fact that this conference has probably brought in quite a few. There's no way it's being checked at the airlines or whatever. And to be honest with you, these kids are 13, 14 that's being affected by these drugs, and I'm talking about cocaine. And it's sad.

Those are my concerns in working with the Youth Survivors. But I think it's a privilege for the Fort Yukon -- for the

community of Fort Yukon to have that program. And I would really highly recommend it for prevention and also to have more involvement of the community and especially the parents. But it's a starting point. I'm not saying it's an answer, but it's a beginning and it's been a good experience.

I think that's it. Thank you.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Nancy.

MR. EATON: One question.

FATHER ELLIOTT: What -- Nancy, in many of the places where we have had hearings like this, we have heard about fetal alcohol syndrome and how it affects the school grades. Would you say that that is something that really contributes to the low grades here in Fort Yukon?

MS. JAMES: I think that's another problem that I see, is that I think there's a special ed program. And unfortunately, I think in REAA's -- and I know for a fact here that a lot of our kids are not FAS, but they're being identified as FAS students and also special ed.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MS. JAMES: And one of the saddest thing that I see in working with these kids is that we're forgetting the kids that could go forth and could really excel. And we're not concentrating on that because we're concentrating on money, budget, what can I get out of it. If we identify this student as special ed or FAS, that means more money for me and it goes back to the teachers' salary. And I really believe that's what -- that's the way they're looking at it.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Thank you.

MS. JAMES: But I don't think -- I see it as a growing problem, but I really doubt the statistics that's coming out saying that there -- FAS is on an increase. It's just the way they label the students.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Thank you.

MR. EATON: (Indiscernible) questions. Thank you. Steve Ginnis.

TESTIMONY OF STEVE GINNIS

MR. GINNIS: My name is Steve Ginnis. I'm (indiscernible) the Chief of Fort Yukon. I'm also the Chairman of the Yukon Flats School Board. And I'm also an executive director of Tanana Chiefs Conference. And there's other things I'm involved in, but I'll stop there.

What my -- I'd like to just make a few comments regarding a couple issues. The first thing I would like to talk about is tribal government. I'm a very strong advocate of tribal governments. Unfortunately, the state government does not recognize us as tribal governments in this state. And it creates problems for tribal governments, obviously. And in the area that I've had some experience with problems with this recognition by the state government has to do with capital projects funding.

Because we're not recognized, it's funded -- or funneled through the City of Fort Yukon. And because it is funneled through the City of Fort Yukon, one of the problems I see with it is that we have no say in who gets hired on these particular projects. And

I do believe I have a solution to that, but I haven't really tried it, and that's to maybe do a memorandum of agreement between the City of Fort Yukon and Native village, to ensure that we do indeed have that responsibility of hiring local people. Because the way it's currently being done now is they just have a select few people that they have on their staff, and unfortunately, the money doesn't spread around --

(Tape changed - Tape 4, Side 2)

MR. GINNIS: -- issue of education. I was just elected chairman recently. And I can relate to a lot of what Nancy has been saying. She's been on the school board before. And, you know, we have our share of problems. And that's problems that I feel that the board need to address.

But when you're dealing with a split board, it's very difficult to accomplish those concerns or those goals. And one of the things that as far as education is concerned that's -- that seems to be a problem is the whole issue of teacher tenure.

You know, there's been some legislation I believe that's been introduced or -- how would I say -- move, I guess, the number of years where you acquire tenure. That now currently is three years, and I think there is some legislation that says five years. And we just feel like the three years just doesn't give us sufficient time. Because what happens is, we work our buns off, okay, first two years; going into that third year they become tenured, and you know what happens. You know, they kind of slack. So we figure that five years, first four years, we'll see how effective, I mean,

how -- whether they really are interested in teaching our kids or is it just a plain green they're looking at.

Also, one of the other concerns I have is the whole issue regarding teaching of our own language. Unfortunately, through our bilingual education program, kids are -- there's a formula that's utilized as far as the state is concerned for bilingual education. It doesn't specifically -- well, the way it's set up is that the people that predominantly speak the Native language is where these bilingual programs are supposed to affect.

But as far as I'm concerned, our language is -- we're losing it. And the thing I don't like about it is that we have bilingual aides in our schools who teach the language, who teach the culture, but have no recognition. And as a result, because they don't have the educational degree that's required. So they're treated differently. They're paid off a different salary scale, which is much, much lower than the current negotiated agreement. And of course, when we bring this issue up during our teacher negotiations, you know, they get riled up because they have the degree, they went to school to get it, and so forth and so on. And these folks are natural people that understand our language and culture.

I hope that something is done about this. And start treating our own Native people on the same level as you do certified teachers.

The other thing is, this is my own personal observation, is that as traditional people we all have values, our traditional

values that we all refer to. I believe that a lot of us don't really practice those values. And it's not passed on down to our children. And since being elected as Chief of this community, that is one of the things that I'm really working hard at, is trying to practice our traditional values, which I call traditional values. And that's sharing and caring for our people; respecting our elders. And we really need to do that, I think. Because this younger generation that's growing up have no concept of what we're talking about when we're talking about these things. They have -- because they don't understand that, it's my opinion that they don't know how to relate to the land, the use of the land.

This land out here is really important to all of us. And we do take care of it. Because we live off of it. And when somebody comes in and try to -- initiates some kind of enforcement policies that's contrary to our needs out here, you can be assured that we jump up. And I'm talking about the Fish and Wildlife. And our working relationship with these people has been all right. I mean, it's not like they come in here and try to run our affairs. But you know how the whole subsistence issue in the Legislature and statewide, the debate that goes on involving that.

And one of the things that really concerns me is that I just cannot understand how anybody, any legislator, any commissioner, can try to take away which is -- something which is rightfully part of our culture, part of our lifestyle. And it really frustrates me when I go to meetings and I hear some of the things that I hear, you know, regarding subsistence.

So that's about all I have to say, and I appreciate this opportunity to just express a few of my concerns. Thank you.

MR. EATON: Thank you very much. At this point we're going to take a five-minute break. And when I say five minutes, (indiscernible).

(Side conversations)

(Off the record at 4:25 p.m.)

(On the record 4:30 p.m.)

(Side conversations)

MR. EATON: Paul Williams.

TESTIMONY OF PAUL WILLIAMS

MR. WILLIAMS: My name is Paul Williams. I'm from Beaver. A lot of things been said already, you know. Don't leave me really much to say. A lot of times you talk to people and sometimes you talk with the wrong people and nothing happens. I hope I'm speaking to the right people today and that we see positive result of being here together.

I heard testimony on behalf of the kids' education. Like Nancy stated, you know, when Senate Bill 35 was first passed in 1975 and start implementing in '76, there was a lot of -- been changes, a lot of changes been made administratively. And I don't know how it happened. One of them is changing from local school board to local school advisory committee. So you know, you understand advisory committee. You don't have to do what they -- what you recommend or what you advise.

Another thing is voting, you know. The reason that we kept

our -- the whole REAA as a voting district was to make sure that the parents who are concerned will have that power to vote. And that's the only power we got is to vote. We see a lot of things wrong, we can't do nothing about it because we don't have the authority or the power to do.

We see teachers who are not doing their jobs; what can we do, you know? They said something about tenure. I don't understand tenure, but, you know, if I was in charge I'd kick them out, you know, hire somebody who's going to do the job. Too much money is being spent and we're producing kids who are not qualified. It's a sorry sight, I feel sorry for ourself. We were poor long time ago, but we were free. We knew how to make our living. Men were men, you know. Now they talk about men conference, how you going to be a man? You going to be a man when you get food stamp?

Our only way of survival is living off the land, like myself, I'm a subsistence person. And I go out and go trapping. That's what happened to my trapping. You know, you see the newspaper, you see newspaper about people who are against trapping. And they -- how we going to stop them, you know.

What about our economic development? How we going to continue to support our family and be a man? Maybe that's where our drinking comes from. You know you can't be men (indiscernible) you're hiding in the bottle.

We start the different ways to try to help ourself, you know, like we done in the past. We utilized our language and we utilized what our forefathers left us, my father and his father and so on.

Lot of people like that, most people are like that around here; how we going to survive?

They talk about the land claim. They talk about the story of oil up the North Slope. All that has different implications. Now I understand it's different, you know. They take it -- they take the oil all the way across Alaska and all the way across the Pacific Ocean and down into God knows where, you know. And cost a lot of money to buy gas now, you know.

How about the land claims, you know, is it working? What's wrong with it? I see a good report, you know, by Thomas Bircher (ph.). This is a reflection of what people want. You know, they don't want to talk about corporation. What we know about corporation? We want land for survival. We want to do what we're good at, we want to be happy. That's how -- that's where happiness and self-discipline and responsibility come from. How can we be responsible when we can't even start a fur co-op? A fur co-op is just to hire a few people where the trapper can sell your fur, and it's not working. Why is it not working? We need technical assistance. Where's the government? Who's going to look -- who's going to help us to help ourself?

They want us to continue to be Indian and stay down there where we belong. They said, you stay down there. Don't come up. Don't climb up. You stay down there. We're not going to help you. You continue to get food stamp and GA or whatever.

We're proud to be here. We're proud that our -- we're living. Life is very important. Kids got to know that, we're trying to

teach them life is important. It's only a one-shot deal. If you lose it, that's it. The kids is our future. You know, I'm 56 years old right now. I don't know how long I'm going to last. But I don't live my life, you know. I hope you are the right people that we speak to.

I want to say some more, but I'm not a very good speaker. When I'm -- when I get scared, you know, I get (indiscernible). You know, help me. Help me get the thing going, you know (laughter). That's what you're there for. Thank you very much (laughter).

I get nervous. (Indiscernible).

MR. EATON: (Indiscernible). Thank you (indiscernible).

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

MR. EATON: Irene.

MS. NICHOLI: Oh.

MR. EATON: Quit writing and start talking (laughter).
Representative Nicholi.

MS. NICHOLI: Mm-hm (affirmative).

TESTIMONY OF IRENE NICHOLI

MS. NICHOLI: The first issue that I'd like to talk about is subsistence. And our subsistence activities that is practiced by the people who reside in rural communities is a vital part of our lifestyle and culture.

The State of Alaska, Alaska Department of Fish and Game Department (indiscernible) thousands of dollars because they're not in compliance with ANILCA. The loss of dollars presents problems

for our local Fish and Game advisory committee members as they travel to the Board of Fish and -- Board of Game meetings, and it means loss of support for providing vital information for the proposals that are sent from our villages.

It is very important that message is sent to the Department of Interior Administration in Washington, D.C. that they are not to make any changes to ANILCA without the approval from the Native people of Alaska. As I know that there are some people in the state of Alaska that would like to see changes. And they're not the changes that the Native people want.

They like to -- they -- there are people in Alaska that don't like for rural people to have the priority for subsistence. And I think that it is very important that the rural people have a priority, because they depend on the moose and big game for their survival. It is -- it's not a game that they play. It's not a sport to them. To them, when they go out and hunt for moose and caribou and other big game animals, it's for survival. It's for their food. It's food on the table for their children.

The other issue that I think is very important that the federal government needs to do is to work with the village councils' Fish and Game committees and other village or community organizations to protect and preserve our trapping rights. Like it was said, there are organizations in Europe and other countries that would like to see that our trapping lifestyles are not used anymore or utilized. And it is important for our economy that they are able to go out and trap for the fur.

And they don't always trap to sell the fur, but they also use the fur for their clothing. And I know that there is an uprising in Alaska right now where people aren't happy with that type of lifestyle that we lead.

The other issue that I would like to talk about is alcohol and drug abuse. I know that there -- that it -- that does exist in our local communities. It is a problem. There is no enforcement. People don't like to turn in their friends or their relatives. But I think it is time that people come forward and do so because we are seeing the results. We are -- it's -- you don't see the babies that are born from F -- that are born with FAS deformities and -- because they're taken away from the mothers when they are born. And so the public doesn't -- they -- the public doesn't get to see those children. But they're there.

Just being in Juneau, I've heard a lot of stories, I've had people come down from the villages and the larger communities and talk about those children. And it's really sad. And then when you look at the pictures, it is even sadder. And I think that we need to put more funding into villages and village organizations to get them to -- started on prevention.

I think that when you put money into organizations in the urban areas and then send them out to the villages, that's not going to work. I think that when you put the money into the local communities and have them work on the issue and work with the people, it's going to have more meaning. And that people from the urban areas should not dictate to the people in the villages, but

come out and live with them for a while and work with them, and they'll listen.

It is a problem here in Alaska. We have the highest rate of alcoholism and highest rates of drug abuse. And this is not good for the future of our -- of Alaska for -- it's not good for our children and their survival.

And you also spoke about the students in schools. You know, it's really hard to determine if they are FAS and FAE. It's such -- it's a new disease that is finally getting known. It's probably been around here for years and years, but they're finally coming out and helping with it, and it's hard to diagnose those students. Because it could be a number of other things that could be wrong with them. But we do need to have that addressed in every school.

And there needs to be a program developed. They are starting to develop these programs, but they need to be developed and there needs to be more money put in for their development.

I'd like to talk about...let's see, what else can we talk about here. I didn't see the list of what else you can talk about here.

MR. EATON: On the notice, notice of meeting? Cultural and....

MS. NICHOLI: Cultural activities. That's another thing I'd like to talk about is cultural activities, is -- we have lost a lot of our languages. The Koyukon language is currently only spoken by people that are about 50 years and older. And that's the truth,

and it's very sad. I'd like to see more of these programs put into the schools where the elders can teach languages, and the elders are given teaching certificates.

I would like to see it required in the schools. Because you can give the suggestion to the school board members to have the language taught in the schools, but rarely do you see that the language are taught in our schools. It's not required in Fairbanks or Anchorage. You probably get Japanese or Russian or Spanish. But you won't see a Native language in their curriculum. I think that it needs to be instituted before our language is lost.

Our language is a vital part of our lifestyle for the Native people. It's a link to the past. Because I took a language course last -- not this past semester, but the first semester, the fall semester, from the University of Alaska, which was taught by Eliza Jones (ph.). And I learned a lot of the Koyukon language. But, more importantly, she told us stories every week in the Athabascan language. And there is a English interpretation (indiscernible) and the Athabascan language. And you learn most of those words, and then to listen in Athabascan was just enriching. Because, you know, it was even funnier. You know, you'd -- she read us funny stories, you know, that made you laugh and stuff. And it meant more when you understood it. And I think that if you teach our young children their Athabascan language in the schools, they'll be able to enjoy things like that, and they can come to these conferences and understand our elders when they do speak.

And another part of the culture is the Native singing and

dancing. You don't -- you rarely see any of that anymore. In some communities, it's very -- oh, it's a large part of their lifestyle. But there are villages where they don't even sing anymore. I'd like to see funding for that be established. I know Murkowski was working on the Native language funding, but he also needs to put more funding into the Native dancing and Native singing. Because the music that they provide is very beautiful when you're listening to it.

Earlier today at the elders conference, I heard Katherine Peters (ph.) sing a song, a song that she learned a long time ago. It was a church song, and she sang it very beautifully and it was so mellow. And it made you just relax. And I think everybody enjoyed it. But it is people like her that are the only ones that can really sing now.

We have a Native dance group in Tanana. But we only know about eight songs, eight or nine songs. And that's really sad, because it's fun -- it's really a great feeling to go out there and dance with the members of our group and sing those songs, and it makes us feel so proud. If you ever go to Tanana, you'll see about 50 or 60 young people out there dancing. And only singing those eight or nine songs. But to go -- to be together and sing is a healing part of our life.

The times that when we sing are at potlatches. And most of the time when we have potlatches is for somebody that died. And usually when somebody dies it's really hard on a family. And so then they -- what they do is they bury a person and then they go

and they have a potlatch. After everybody eats, then everybody sits around and gets ready to sing. And when that -- and everybody just has a great time singing and going around in a circle (indiscernible), and just being together. And that really helps the families out a lot.

But I know that there is a lot of songs that are being lost in our culture. There's washtub songs and songs that were made for people and made for great people. There's songs that were made for chiefs that are being lost. Every song that is sung has a story about something or someone. That is a very important part of our culture.

And the other part of our culture is the basket making, the canoe making, working with birchbark. Those are being lost. The last time that I saw a birchbark canoe made in Tanana was 1974. And that canoe was made in what they called survival school. Survival school is what the Tanana Chiefs Conference used to have for our youth. I was a youth at that time in that survival camp. And I'd like to see more camps like that around the Interior or around --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Off record.

(Tape changed - Tape 5, Side 1)

MS. NICHOLI: They may be our future leaders, and they can help us.

And I think that's about all that I have to say today. But thank you for listening to me. Thank you.

MR. EATON: Any questions?

FATHER ELLIOTT: I do have one question. You mentioned about subsistence and the need for that to be available in the rural communities because people do put meat on the table through their hunting. But there is another approach to subsistence which has also been brought out, and that is a Native preference in order that people -- Native people living in Fairbanks and Anchorage would also have an opportunity to go and hunt under a subsistence. What are your comments on that? Because this is not just rural, this is urban too.

MS. NICHOLI: Right. When I first heard about the Native priority, I supported it. I felt that was a -- the way to go.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Mm-hm (affirmative).

MS. NICHOLI: And realistically and politically, I don't think that that will be a reality unless there is a different administration in the State of Alaska. Currently, the state -- Alaska state administration would not even give us the rural priority that we went and sought for last summer, during the subsistence legislation session.

We tried to get that and the Republicans were adamant in not giving us that priority. And there was no support from the Governor. So I think that in the future, maybe there might be a possibility. But right now with this administration, that's not going to happen.

FATHER ELLIOTT: Thank you.

MS. NICHOLI: But I do support it.

MR. EATON: At this time, that is all that from anybody who

has signed up so far. Is there anybody else here who would like to talk, and (indiscernible) has joined us, Donna Galbreath. Are you interested in going on record?

MS. GALBREATH: Sure.

MR. EATON: State your name, rank, and serial number.

TESTIMONY OF DONNA GALBREATH

MS. GALBREATH: My name is Donna Galbreath and I'm a doctor. I work at (indiscernible), I work for Tanana Chiefs. I've addressed you before and I've talked with you about medical issue in Fairbanks. So I'm not going to focus on that too much.

Heard a lot about subsistence. And I think everyone here realizes that, you know, subsistence is really important for this culture, for our culture to survive, for all the cultures in Alaska to survive. You know, it's an integral part of them. It's a part of who we are and what we do and how we live our lives. And, you know, how we feel about our spiritual world, how we feel about God, how we eat, how we dress. You know, it touches every aspect of our life.

I assume that this Commission was put in place because you value the Native cultures, because somebody values the Native cultures. And subsistence is a big part of that. You know, it has -- it -- without subsistence, the cultures will go away. They will be gone. And I know there's people who say that, you know, we should just let all Native people become white people, so to speak. And that's the way it's headed now.

We need to support those things that are part of the culture,

and subsistence is a big issue. I know it's a -- politically a hot potato. And I don't know what to do about that. But I think that we need to look at Alaska Native people as a unique group of people, as unique as anything else in this world is. You know, we do all sorts of things for animals, to save them, to keep them from becoming extinct. Humans are animals too. And we're looking at populations of people being destroyed by what's going on.

So that's why I think subsistence is important, even though other people don't. And I think that if people actually look within themselves, they will agree with that. Maybe they -- even those people who are against subsistence; if they look deep inside themselves, they will find that they value other people, they value the difference in every one of us. Each of us is unique here. And part of that uniqueness is our culture. And if they really look, they will realize that it's important to keep those uniqueness, unique parts of us and the unique cultures that are out there. I mean, it's what makes us, it's what makes the world, it's what makes it so beautiful, so fun. It's pretty important.

All the other issues that you are dealing with: Education and cultural issues and health issues, I think that they're all related. I think that in order for them to be -- those areas to be strong and to continue, it has to be a combination of body, mind, and spirit. All those three components need to go in every single one of those issues in order to make them strong, in order to continue with them.

That's all I have to say.

MR. EATON: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: (Indiscernible)?

MR. EATON: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: How are we fixed on time, we have about 10 minutes?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: The last one, yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Okay, this'll be the last speaker, then.

TESTIMONY OF MARYLENE ESMAILKA

MS. ESMAILKA: Hi. My name is Mary Esmailka. I'm from Kaltag, Alaska, on the Yukon River, 90 mile -- 90 air miles south of Galena. Three hundred and some miles out of Fairbanks.

I've lived -- I grew up living off the land. My dad -- I'm going to talk about subsistence. I'm very close in that issue because I'm mother of -- oh, I have 10 children. I had seven of my own and raised my two brothers and my one sister. And we raised our 10 children on a -- my husband and I, off the land, back when (indiscernible) was very scarce. We did everything to keep a decent meal on our table for our children. The same way my dad brought us up.

Like now we have freezers. Now we have food savers, the freezer are food savers. We can kill a moose in September and eat it through the winter. With all the -- with the help of all the other games that's out there, like (indiscernible), like chicken, like all seasons, it's important to me, this woman. I never find any (indiscernible) season that I don't want. Like I enjoy the

summer because I could cut -- go out and cut fish, put enough fish away for my family for the winter.

I have -- nine of my children are living now. All are married except the youngest one. And all have children, all of them. They have this one -- is living with a girlfriend, he has a baby. I put all my kids through high school. I pushed very hard. At one time I had four of my children going to boarding home school in Fairbanks when we didn't have a high school in Kaltag. All four of them wanted to come home for Christmas, so I had to bring them all home, bring them all back.

Every weekend these four kids would call; they want to quit school, they want to come home, crying on the phone. But I urged them on through school. Today my -- four of my girls are working.

I have a little grandson who is seven years old. This winter he kept coming home from school, he want to eat pizza, he want to eat poor boy, fast foods. And I was very against that. So one day I talk to his mom and I told his mom, you can't feed him fast foods. I say, you can't do that. I say, he's got to eat what we cook, just like how you kids were brought up. I say, we have good food on the table. And that he's got to eat.

And I feel that if we ever lose our subsistence way of living, we're going to lose our culture. There -- our culture will be dead forever. Except for my age people, 50 and over, know our Native languages really good. My Christina (ph.), now, she's not 50, but she know our Indian language. She understand it but she cannot

talk it. My youngest daughter understand it but cannot talk it either, because my grandmother -- my Christina lived with grandmother part of her (indiscernible) years, her younger years. And, you know, Grandma used to talk in Indian all the time. And so, you know, she understand it but can't speak it. Just some words she could say.

The only way I figure the language will come back is going to the school and talking to them, telling them stories. Telling them about how we grew up. I think this will help our Native young people of today.

As you know, alcohol and drug is getting rid of all our young people around our home. I've live to see that and I've lived to say it too. Never drank all my life. But all my 10 children drank. I never taught it to them. It didn't come from my home. And today they say the young people learn it from -- I mean, today in the mental health department they're saying, you know, they saw this -- they saw -- the kids saw that this, so this is what they're doing today, from the home. No, I don't believe that.

I didn't feed my children alcohol, not one time. I didn't let -- I didn't allow people to drink in my home, not one time. Because I don't use it and I have no use for it. And I didn't want my children to use it either. Unfortunately, my nine children are living; I lost one, but not due to alcohol. He just drowned.

We have lost so many of our young people in my home due to alcohol. Now I just gave a speech over here this morning saying the Fish and Game would come down the river during commercial

fishing. And I hold a commercial fishing permit card that I use every summer for 19 years this year. I pay self-employment tax. And I work nine months out of the year for 20-some years. And I know what it costs to live in Kaltag. Now all my kids are grown up, they all have homes of their own. But still I barely make ends meet with my working.

This winter I began to think about it. I sat down and I began to think about it. I don't have any more little babies in my home. But still, I barely make ends meet. And my husband, he don't work anymore due to medical reason. Last year, March 14th was the last day he had worked because a doctor had told him that he can't go back to the warehouse as an operator for the city. So he don't work for over a year now. But that's all right. I don't mind about that.

I have three sons, the last three of my kids were sons, who -- the oldest son, ever since they were -- he was 12 years old, he started trapping. I taught him how to trap, I taught all my three boys how to trap. The way my dad brought us up, just so my kids will not drink, I thought. They'll be out there in the beautiful wilderness, to keep away from alcohol.

You think that stopped them from drinking? I did everything. I bought my oldest son a snowmachine just to keep him occupied and away from drinking. But just like everybody else's kids, they started drinking, at very young age too.

And the Fish and Game would come down every closing period, 5:30, just buzzing our camp so close. Oh, that just make me so

mad. Just like we're criminals. Just keeping a close watch. We know that -- we know how to follow the rules. They say close your -- stop your fish wheel at 6:00 Friday night; we'll go do that. Rain, big wind, or no nothing, we'll go do it. Everybody will do it.

Now, the alcohol and the drugs are coming into our village. We live 90 air miles away from Galena. Our young people back home, most of our young people don't have a job. Yet they're drunk every weekend. Where from? A bootlegger. I've been working on this issue for many, many years. It hurts me just to talk about it, because all the good people, there's a lot of good young people that's gone from drinking in my village.

And I try to teach the young people. I don't keep my education that I learn, experience that I learn to myself. I try to teach not my own children, everybody else's children around Kaltag, how to preserve our Native food, like here just a little while, that we're going to be allowed to go drifting for king salmon.

I went about five or six years ago, I went to Anchorage to testify before a full board of 13 board members in Anchorage. I knew that was the easy way to preserve the king salmon, one of the best fish that run up the Yukon River. And I went and testified and I got my -- what I went out to Anchorage for, I thought I'd fulfilled, my wish came true that we can go drifting for king salmon. We found out, all the young people found out in Kaltag, we can go across the river and put in 100 foot of king salmon net and

drift along and catch the amount of fish we need for the winter.

And everybody, all the young -- I noticed that more and more young mothers and more and more young people are beginning to call me up every June, Marylene, how you can fish? Marylene, how you can fish? So, you know, I...my busy time, I take off and go to that lady who wants to learn how to cut -- can fish, gladly pass on my knowledge to the younger people.

I've been an active grandmother in my hometown. I've talked to -- I've been counseling a lot of young people. I was just sitting here, over here at the youth, listening to one of the youth talking about suicide or -- he'll...and he made me cry. That boy made me cry. And then he -- then he's talking, he blame his mother and his dad.

Then I think about my own kids. That's what make me cry, I guess. Because his parents drank so much that he started drinking. But then I think of it, that's not right, that's not true. I did -- I never drank. And yet my kids drank. And so I don't know. I don't know what to believe, you know, I don't know what to believe.

And this morning I spoke on subsistence way of living. That's how I was brought up. My dad and my mother took us children out in September to what you call a fall camp and we'd stay in this camp till December 22nd or 23rd, come home for Christmas, spent a few days after the new year; immediately after the new year we'd head back to our camp, and never come back until March 30th, after the beaver trapping season.

And we'd stay a few days in Kaltag at home and then go back to

the spring camp, where my dad would -- now would go hunting for muskrat to get our groceries for the summer. During the summer months we worked at fish, we worked at fish, we worked at fish. Our fish wheels would run seven days a week. Now today, we don't have as much fish wheels on the Yukon River as when I was growing up. Today there's commercial fishing. Last summer we fished only 48 hours. Four 24-hour periods is all we had in Kaltag, Y-4-A. That was our commercial season right there.

Where is -- when I was growing up, 1949, 1950, that's not too far back, seven days a week and there was fish wheel from four mile above Kaltag to eight mile, almost every mile apart, there was fish wheel turning, seven days a week. We were cutting the fish, we were cutting it commercial, for commercially too. A trader from Koyakuk would come down and buy the dried fish, so we had to take care of. And that helped us buy groceries for the fall.

And this is what I try to put into the young people's head. Now, my oldest son, he makes his living off trapping. And they're saying they're taking away our subsistence way of living. I heard this -- this is my concern.

I know there's a lot of money out there because my son does it. And I think he's the only one in our home, in my hometown that does it, he and my son-in-law. None of the other people, none of the other boys his age or even a little older never do that, never go out trapping. But what I taught him from 13 years old on, he keep it up. He keep that up.

And I know that if the subsistence way of living is not ever

taken away from us, that other people will be -- I don't mind about President Clinton saying he's going to cut the budget on welfare. Now, I don't mind about that. I -- matter of fact, I feel more happy. Maybe it'll save more of our Indian young people. Too much free money. Maybe our young people in our village need to come out -- go out and work for their money. So I don't mind about cutting -- President Clinton's issue there. I want our young people to -- if they don't know how, then other people in my village will show them how.

In my hometown we have a -- we have women's club that's been going since 1952, every Wednesday. This winter, one -- more young mothers, single young mothers that have little ones, are coming to the women's club, where we teach beading, we teach crocheting, netting, skin sewing. All these years, they kept saying, the women's club, you know, (indiscernible) be over there too. They didn't know what time we had -- when all women get together, besides learning how to sew, skin sewing and do bead work and stuff like this. I would very gladly --

(Tape changed - Tape 5, Side 2)

MS. ESMAILKA: -- subsistence way of living. If you take that lifestyle away from the Indian people, we'll have no Indian people left.

MR. EATON: I think you can rest assured that this Commission will be very, very strong on issues of subsistence and supporting that position and recommending to both the Congress of the United States and the State of Alaska that implementation of these laws

and changes in regulations be made immediately regarding it.

MS. ESMAILKA: Yeah, thank you. I just -- I mean, you know, this one issue that I'm really, really stick to my mind, because of our young people. And our young people, you know, a lot of our young people, you know, just graduate from high school and they're set. Never go out to further their education. And here I am struggling for education. In my old age, I'm still going to school, you know. Because I didn't have that when I was growing up.

And it's not even education, even education would do anything to our young people. When the pipeline was available, I made a note to all those young people that were hired about the -- at the pipeline. Keep at it, don't quit, don't quit, just stay at it. No, everybody worked two or three years on the pipeline, big money, and now who's in operation at the pipeline? We have educated people going out to the pipeline, so you see what I'm talking about, how I try to talk to the young people, the young graduate people, to go on and further their education, to be something.

I just really don't know. The stories I hear, the talk I hear over here at the elders and the youth. I just really don't know. Got a mixed feeling now for every little thing. I don't think we'll have to use our subsistence way of living very much longer. That's my feelings, my inside feelings. Because the outsiders are coming in to rule us and tell us how to live.

Couple years ago I was commercial fishing. It was salmonberry picking time. We went 22 miles down the river with my little

children and in a motor and a boat that didn't even have a house. We just took our good chances to go and just be out for the day. When we got down to 22 mile and we went way up the slough, we went to a tundra, we went to another little slough, and we went on a tundra there where we knew, you know, it was good for salmonberries. We just got up the hill, we just got up the bank, and my husband said he was going to cook lunch there at the beach for the kids. And I say, well, while you're making a fire and stuff, I'll run on up here, look in the flats for salmonberries. And while we're going in this little slough, all the ducks with the babies, you know, just, you know, swarming all over the place.

Those boys were not even -- we were excited to see the baby ducks and stuff. We saw a lynx back there around the beach killing the baby ducks, eating it. I talked to my kids after we came back. We came up on the flats, it was hot. Here comes an airplane. Me and my one daughter, we had little plastic pitchers. I told them, if we find, you know, salmonberries a lot, plentiful, we'll come back and get the bigger buckets. And so we got up there and we just started swarming around all over the place, just like something was lost from us. No salmonberries.

Here comes an airplane, pontoon plane. I told my daughter, I said, I bet that's Fish and Game people. I bet that they're wondering what we're doing. Sure enough, you know, here comes this airplane right over the flats, right above the willows.

You see how close we're being watched? So, you know, we're coming back out of the slough, and I told my husband, stop at that

Fish and Game camp. I want to give them piece of my mind. This is where I grew up. This is where I grew up. And I know that in the summertime in the month of July, August, all bearing animals are not good to eat, because they have the young ones. We know that from growing up. I'm going to tell those Fish and Game people that. But eventually, I guess they just left our camp and just went on back up to Galena, I don't know. Because they never came back to the camp, we were up the slough many miles and many gallons of gas, and (indiscernible) our motor, looking for berries, just looking for berries, is all we were doing.

You see how close we're being watched? It's like we're criminals. And yet, people can come into our village with booze and drugs. What -- which are killing our young people at my home. Yet people can do that. Why are these things not being watched up on, the drug and the alcohol. Our city is a dry village. And we -- like I say, we live 90 air miles away from Galena.

MR. EATON: And we are due to be (indiscernible) out of here at 5:30. If you just maybe sum up your point, or if you've told us what you want us to know, we thank you very much.

MS. ESMAILKA: Okay. I just wanted to speak my piece on subsistence way of living.

MR. EATON: I enjoyed it very much.

MS. ESMAILKA: Uh-huh (affirmative).

FATHER SEBESTA: Marylene, I think that each of us have this (indiscernible) not only your testimony today, but what we're given at the conference also, are very much impressed with the need for

maintaining all the cultural values that have been expressed. And I think that you certainly have made a point with subsistence, which I do agree with Mary that certainly we'll be very, very firm in making recommendations to preserve that.

And I think the one thing that kind of was said earlier by (indiscernible) gave testimony; he's saying that, you know, the people have to say something that they call their own. And it's this life, it's the culture. And it's very much wound up with the subsistence lifestyle. And so those things are important, and I think that many people besides yourself have impressed us with that.

MS. ESMAILKA: And I wanted to add on to Irene Nicholi's statement about the Athabascan language. It's been tried at home. But you know, I don't know why the teacher has to write the Indian word and present it. I don't know if you say in -- the word will be this long when you write it down. The word will be this long, then (indiscernible) will be that long too or even longer, one whole page. One whole tablet, the one word, in our language.

I just don't know why the school districts or the school will not go by just, you know, talking and acting on our culture and our language. I think our people would learn it pretty fast if we just went to the school and said like, you know, Ena (ph.) means Mother, Eta (ph.) means Father in Indian. And it's better just to say it out and act it out other than to write everything down. Just like you're planning, just like a schoolteacher, a certified schoolteacher. This is why there isn't very much of our Indian

language today. I figured that out.

MR. EATON: Thank you very, very much.

MS. ESMAILKA: You're welcome.

MR. EATON: And thank you all for coming (laughter).

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Off record.

(Hearing adjourned at 5:30 p.m.)

END OF PROCEEDINGS

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