

SB

696

"An Act making a special appropriation to the Office of the Governor, office of telecommunications; and providing for an effective date."

COMMITTEE REPORT

HOUSE

3/25/76

FINANCE

Mr. Speaker:

Date April 17, 1976

The Committee on JUDICIARY has had SB 696

under consideration. A Majority of the members of the Committee

recommends it DO PASS

recommends it DO NOT PASS

recommends it DO PASS WITH ATTACHED AMENDMENT(S)

recommends it BE REPLACED WITH CS FOR _____ AND THAT
CS FOR _____ DO PASS

"and" recommends it BE REFERRED TO THE _____
COMMITTEE

reports it back WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION

"other"

Members signing the Majority report:

<u>Terry Hardin</u>	<u>Do Pass</u>	_____	_____
<u>Speck</u>		_____	_____
<u>C. F. ...</u>	<u>Do Pass</u>	_____	_____

Members NOT concurring in the Majority report:

_____ recommends:

_____ recommends:

_____ recommends:

_____ recommends:

_____ recommends:

Terry Hardin Chairman

Letter of intent

HOUSE JOURNAL

LETTER OF INTENT FOR

HCS SB 696

It is the intent of the House Judiciary Committee in offering HCS SB 696 to provide a pilot satellite television project for the state of Alaska.

The \$1.5 million appropriation is designed to provide a full-time satellite transponder leased for one year. This will provide one channel of television for selected villages, and bring live satellite coverage to the urban areas. The transponder may also be used to implement Health and Education video services to Alaska.

The priority use for a state-leased transponder is to provide television coverage for public and commercial facilities in urban and rural areas. To the extent that time is available beyond this basic intent, the GOT shall utilize the satellite time for any use in the public interest. The GOT shall include in the report to the legislature a plan for comprehensive satellite use, not limited to television broadcasting.

The appropriation goes to the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT). The GOT is responsible for the completion of the project, however they have the authority to contract with any other state agency or private contractor for assistance with the project.

The village site selections shall be made by the Alaska Federation of Natives telecommunications committee, with the concurrence of the GOT. The AFN committee will work with the GOT and the AEBC in determining programming.

Commercial and Public broadcast stations with access to a large earth station will have the opportunity to receive network programs via the state-leased transponder. This will offer same-day viewing for many network programs, and allow live satellite broadcast for public affairs and special events state-wide.

This pilot program will offer the opportunity to determine the best technical and administrative procedure for a state-wide program. The GOT shall report to the next legislative session their recommendations for the implementation of a state-wide satellite television system.

Section 2 of the bill is to appropriate \$150,000 from the general fund to the GOT for the purpose of establishing a state-wide public radio network. The GOT is responsible for the project, however they have the authority to contract with private contractors or other state agencies for assistance. GOT shall work closely with the Alaska Educational Broadcasting Commission in the establishment of the public radio network.

A radio network is an economic way of bringing the state together. Existing radio stations can be interconnected in a network to make new informational material available so that all Alaskans can be informed as to what Alaska is doing.

Terry Gardiner, Chairman
House Judiciary Committee

Memo: Terry Gardiner
From: Eric Eckholm
Re: legislative intent, SB 696
4/16/76

As per your request, here is suggested addition to Senate letter of intent for SB 696.

Add, after paragraph **B**;

The priority use for a state-leased transponder is to provide television coverage for public and commercial ~~stations~~ ^{facilities} in urban and rural areas. To the extent that time is available beyond this basic intent, the GOT shall utilize the satellite time for any use in the public interest. The GOT shall include in the report to the legislature a plan for comprehensive satellite use, not limited to Television broadcasting.

or something like that....ee

adopted

SB 696 telecommunications

24 Rural Communities

Brown, O.T. & RCA

transponder - reflector in satellite

foot print - coverage area for satellite beam

25,000 miles - satellites stay in same place now

1 ATT

2 RCA satellites 12 transponders each

1 transponder - 1 TV channel

12 FM Radio

1,000 long distance calls

On Western Union satellite now

5 hours of Programming to 20 villages

ATT committee will advise

1. what communities

2. What Programming

19 hours left

\$800 an hour \$57 an hour for 24hr rate

500,

ATT has monopoly on lower 48 long lines transmission

MEMO

TO: TERRY GARDINER
FROM: RICK SVOBODNY
RE: Larry Golden's concerns with SB 696.

After reading SB 696 and the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee's letter of intent it appears clear to me that the legislation deals solely with satellite television. In order to use a satellite transponder for other than television I would suggest that SB 696 be amended to read as follows:

"The sum of 1.5 million dollars is appropriated from the general fund to the Office of the Governor, office of telecommunications for a satellite transponder lease project to demonstrate the feasibility of satellite communications in Alaska, priority being given to satellite television."

Along with this amendment would go a letter of intent explaining that the transponder lease project should not be limited solely to television.

The letter of intent should be something like the following:

The House Judiciary Committee by amending SB 696 has intended to expand the nature of the transponder lease project. The committee, recognizing such a project as an experiment intends that the Governor's office of telecommunications consider the use of satellite communication in a more flexible manner than originally proposed. The lease of a satellite transponder for television communication is highly desirable, however, there are many possible applications of satellite communications and it is the desire of the House Judiciary Committee that the Governor's office of telecommunications consider some of these possibilities in addition to satellite television broadcast.

In a pilot project of this nature, experimentation should be commenced regarding alternative methods of communication and should explore the applicability of satellite communications to diverse groups of Alaskans.

I had spoken with Fran ~~and~~ about my concerns with 696 and gave her a bit of background on Satellite communications. She expressed concern with the Bill as it had been initially presented to her by GOT & Brown. Was there justification for state funding of a satellite project when goals were to extend ~~the~~ network T.V. ~~throughout Alaska~~ to rural Alaska and reduce delay time for programming into urban Alaska? As it turns out the Governor had some concerns revolving around creating an expectation for continued state funding to ~~aid in the~~ ~~broadcasting~~ provide network broadcasting to the bush etc. Fran and several persons in the Governor's office expressed interest in the kinds of ~~public~~ ~~additional~~ additional public uses I had mentioned. In the meantime Robert Walpe (Director of GOT) indicated to me his philosophical commitment in favor of trying such utilizations. The Governor, Brown, Ferguson and GOT worked out some sort (Tuesday 4/13) of informal agreement that some of these utilizations should be looked into during the pilot project and that no commercial broadcast would ~~be~~ have to make some kinds of compromises for transmission time.

Commercial Broadcasters

G.O.T. - Walpe - Shaganaw

Fred Brown

Frank Ferguson

Fran Ulmer

Potential Govt. Users. D.O.E. Health & Social Services

Brad Watson (information officer)

} should be notified about hearings and invited

How when or when ~~this~~ this informal agreement would be implemented, I don't know

Larry

4/17
Milton

Introduced: 3/9/76
Referred: Health, Education
and Social Services and
Finance

BY THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

1 IN THE SENATE

2 SENATE BILL NO. 696

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 NINTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act making a special appropriation to the Office
7 of the Governor, office of telecommunications; and
8 providing for an effective date."

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

10 * Section 1. The sum of \$1,500,000 is appropriated from the general fund
11 to the Office of the Governor, office of telecommunications for a satellite
12 ~~teletype transponder lease~~ *teletype* *feasibility* *communication*
television project to demonstrate the viability of satellite television in
13 the state. *AK Priority to TV*

14 * Sec. 3. This Act takes effect July 1, 1976.

15 *Sec. 2. \$150,000 for AEBG.*
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letter of intent

file 58646

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ALASKA EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING COMMISSION

JAY HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

308 G STREET— ANCHORAGE 99501

March 16, 1976

Representative Terry Gardiner
Pouch V
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Representative Gardiner:

There has been legislative interest in finding funds that would bring television to the bush. This will take better advantage of the money that has already been appropriated for satellite communications. Among these efforts are House Bill 778, Senate Bill 696, and Senate Resolutions #63 and #74; there may be more. Some estimates of the cost of these services range around \$3,000,000.

A radio network would take full advantage of money appropriated and would serve more with an attractive cost-benefit ratio. For less than \$150,000 the first year and with a declining amount yearly, existing radio stations could be interconnected via satellite to make news and informational material available so that all Alaskans could be informed of what Alaska is doing. It could encompass the various 'Legislative Reports' and let Rural Alaska know what Urban Alaska already knows of the happenings in the distant capital as well as let the capital city know what is going on in the distant villages.

Attached is a rough draft.

I would be delighted to refine this concept articulated by knowledgeable Alaskan Communicators. I would gladly testify on the merits of this concept compatible to the efforts to bring television to the bush.

March 16, 1976
Page Two

Had there been more time, it would have been prepared for the Governor's budget. However, I was not on duty until September 2 and was not aware of the needs of existing radio stations so fully, nor was I aware of the many who had messages they wished to intimately and instantaneously communicate with the entire state.

A radio network is an economic way of bringing the state together. It would improve existing public radio services and save costs. Radio, the 'kid brother,' is less romantic than the gaudy and four way stacked (color, sight, sound, motion) glamorous 'big sister,' but radio could let a lot more people know a lot more of the time about what 'inside' Alaska is about for a lot less money. Television is mostly 'outside.' TV costs so much to produce, it has to be that way. Broadcasting is a good family and plays well together. Don't forget the 'kid'!

Perhaps either in the Free Conference Committee or by amendment to existing bills or resolutions, consideration might be given to a complimentary and related Alaskan Communication need: An Alaska Radio Network.

Respectfully yours,



James G. Croll
Executive Director

bkm

Attachment

SIGNON

... an irregular newsletter whose frequency is on the state of public broadcasting

EDUCATIONAL
BROADCASTING
ALASKA COMMISSION

Feb. '76 Volume 1 Issue 5

AN ALASKAN RADIO NETWORK:

WHO? Produced and/or contracted for by the AEBC which was enabled by legislators to be and which is politically insulated. AEBC a part of Department of Education.

WHAT? A radio central studio capable of receiving, editing, and distributing the best of National Public Radio, Radio Canada International, and existing Alaska Public Funded Radio Stations costing not more than \$150,000 per year.

WHERE? The product is as near as the nearest radio set with Radio Central located in the existing office space leased by the AEBC in Anchorage.

WHEN? To start September 1, 1976, with service consisting of not less than 4, nor more than 12 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- WHY?
- 1) To interconnect Alaskans with other Alaskans with an instantaneous and intimate sound.
 - 2) To make the Capital City as close as the nearest radio set and to let rural Alaska hear a portion of the information made available now to urban Alaska.
 - 3) To bring sound reports of the happenings of the nation and world, relevant to Alaska, to all Alaskans.
 - 4) To bolster and assist all distant Alaska stations with a skeletal news, educational and informational format.
 - 5) To have an Alaskan voice available to transmit to other state and national networks and stations.

" Were it left for me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter" Thomas Jefferson

" Bethel receives no DAILY NEWS, no FAIRBANKS MINERS, no SOUTHEAST EMPIRES, and only 26 DAILY TIMES on an average day when any papers at all get there. The Bethel service area purchases 235 TUNDRA DRUMS (local paper) every two weeks. It takes up to 10 days for a TUNDRA DRUMS to get from Bethel to Kwethluk (17 miles away) through the mail. KYUK broadcasts three expanded and 5 capsule news shows per day and there are over 5,000 radio sets in the coverage area" Jim Croll, former KYUK Mgr.



Alaska State Legislature

Senate

JUNEAU, ALASKA

The Honorable Chancy Croft

It is the intent of the Senate Health, Education, and Social Services committee in introducing and passing Senate bill # 696 to provide a pilot satellite television project for the state of Alaska.

The \$1.5 million appropriation is designed to provide a full-time satellite transponder leased for one year. This will provide one channel of television for selected villages, and bring live satellite coverage to the urban areas. The transponder may also be used to implement Health and Education video services to Alaska.

The appropriation goes to the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT). The GOT is responsible for the completion of the project, however they have the authority to contract with any other state agency or private contractor for assistance with the project.

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**Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications**

conversations dovetailed directly into the development of what RCA calls the "mid-route" earth stations. These are satellite earth stations which are larger than the small ones now being installed in rural communities, and smaller than the very large stations at Talkeetna or Lena Point. They will be used for trunking telecommunications services throughout the state in the areas which do not require a Talkeetna-sized earth station but which must carry a substantial amount of traffic.

Professor Merritt has been examining the specifications for these mid-route stations, and is making suggestions to both RCA and the U. S. Air Force regarding them.

Professor Stanley has been present at many of the Kansas City meetings regarding the negotiations over the lease of the WACS.

Trips to Washington, D. C. have been necessary, as usual, because of a substantial amount of activity before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). There are several cases which substantially affect Alaska. One of these cases involves the authority to serve Alaska on an interim basis with communications satellites, pending final decision by the FCC in various cases now before it. Recently the Legislature, at our urging, passed House Resolution 4 and Senate Resolution 2, directed to the FCC, addressing this particular case. We expect a decision by the FCC on the applications for reconsideration of the interim authority within a matter of a week or so.

The other cases pending before the FCC address the permanent authority to serve Alaska with communications satellites. These are highly complex and drawn out, and the FCC may not be deciding them for many months or even a year or so. Basically, the dispute is between RCA companies and American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T). Other applicants have satellites which do not, in our view, seriously address the needs of Alaska.

II. DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING TELEVISION

The Television Advisory Committee, established at the request of the Subcommittee of the Council in December, met twice in February in Anchorage. This committee is made up of representatives of the private sector in broadcasting, representatives of cable television operators, public broadcasters, and state agencies which include the Alaska Educational Broadcasting Commission (AEBC) and the Alaska Public Utilities Commission (APUC). Of course, the GOT is also represented, as well as the Legislative Select Committee.

Alaska Legislative Council Subcommittee on Telecommunications

The TV Advisory Committee was established to address the practical problems involved in eventually providing television programming on a much broader and timely scale throughout rural and urban Alaska. It seemed clear to me that the state would eventually become involved in activities of this sort. I was concerned that this be done in an orderly and reasonable way.

The December 15 meeting of the TV Advisory Committee was addressed in the report submitted by the Subcommittee of the Legislative Council at the beginning of the current session.

At the February 6 and February 27 meetings of the TV Advisory Committee, we became much more involved in the particulars of providing television programming to rural areas and to the urban areas in a more timely way.

At first we talked about a three-step procedure. Under this hypothetical situation, the state would begin by providing support (part or whole) for the purchase of television programming from the urban broadcasters which would then be played on video tape machines connected to mini-TV transmitters in rural areas. This is very much like the kinds of services that are provided to the Alyeska Pipeline camps by Northern Television and Midnight Sun Broadcasting. At first this seemed to be a very modest proposal. It was thought that "bicycling" video tapes by mail throughout rural Alaska would be much more inexpensive than the use of a satellite.

Continuing in this hypothetical, the next step would be the provision of this programming by satellite from a center in Alaska. The programming center would obtain programs from the stations in, say, Anchorage, and transmit this out to the rural areas through the use of the small earth stations with the added "black box" that makes television reception possible.

The third step has many variations. It is the much more grandiose operation which I suggested in October and which was then reported in the press. That would involve the state and the private broadcasters jointly operating a tape delay center somewhere in Alaska to provide services to the private broadcasters in the urban areas and to the rural communities through the use of the small earth stations. This would probably require several television channels on satellites, one or more up-links from the lower 48, and extensive investments in video tape equipment that is compatible with the highest signal quality expected in commercial

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

broadcasting. There are many ways this last step can be done, and we do not expect that the state or the private broadcasters would be involved in such a program or any of the suggested variations for several years.

After the discussion of these matters in the February 6 meeting, several of us investigated costs. The Legislative Consultants were looking carefully into the matter of the "black box" to be added to the small earth stations, as were representatives of the GOT and RCA Alascom. At the behest of all three, RCA Laboratories has been testing various units presently available on the market. Additionally, Mr. Donald Bond, who is a consultant to the various RCA companies in these matters, has been examining cost figures, and so has the staff of the GOT.

As a result of estimates from these various sources, and particularly as the result of projections made within the staff of the GOT, the TV Advisory committee came to the tentative conclusion that the first step may not be economical. That is, that the bicycling of video tapes by mail to various mini-TV stations may be more costly in the long run than beginning with the use of a satellite transponder. This occurs largely because of the cost of obtaining satellite time for only a few hours, rather than continuously.

We are told by RCA Alascom that a transponder can be obtained through lease for one year, including some terrestrial line charges, for \$500,000 if it is "unprotected", and that we can obtain one for \$720,000 if we wish one to be fully protected. One satellite transponder can carry one television signal to a small earth station. It may well be able to carry two television signals simultaneously to the larger earth stations in the urban centers in Alaska. The usual charges for satellite time for television range from \$200 to \$800 per hour. On the other hand, a transponder leased for one year, which will always have the capacity of one or more television signals, including some line charges, comes to \$57.26 per hour, based on the \$500,000 figures.

For this reason, we started talking about the leasing of a transponder and starting at what had been termed Step 2.

As we all know, things move incredibly fast in a legislative session, particularly toward the end. Since the discussions on these subjects, a bill has been introduced in the Senate to provide appropriation for \$1.5 million to the GOT for

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

lease of a transponder and the provision of mini-TV transmitters and the television "black boxes" for 24 rural communities. A bill already in House Finance has been amended to include these same amounts for the same purposes. Each bill has passed through the committee system and is sitting in the respective Rules Committees for calendaring. I understand the Senate Bill is calendared for floor action some time this week.

The advantages of the demonstration project anticipated by this legislation are many, in my view. Rather than have the state jump in with a huge program without any experience in the area, it provides for a modest program, many of the facets of which would be financially supported by others. In each prospective application of the transponder, someone is having to pick up another part of the tab. By providing services to the urban broadcasters for obtaining their time-value programming (newscasts, etc.), we can obtain the consideration of program rights to network programs not otherwise available for the rural areas. By providing the bare bones station to the rural communities (only the "black box" and the mini-TV transmitter), we are encouraging each village to obtain other equipment itself. A village could have a tremendous amount of flexibility by purchasing for itself two video tape machines (the smaller ones can be obtained for approximately \$1300 each) and appropriate switching capacity, in order to have much more control over the source of programming being transmitted in the rural area. That is, a village might not want or like one particular program being transmitted from the satellite. If it had a library of video tapes, it could then play another video tape, which might be an entertainment program or an educational or news program. The second video tape machine could be used to record the program being transmitted from the satellite, in the event that it was, after all, desired for viewing by the residents. The extent to which such additional activities or equipment were used would depend upon the village itself.

The same thing holds true for the private broadcasters, in that some, but not all, of their line charges and terrestrial charges would be included in the tariff. They would have to pick up some of the tab in this respect. State agencies, like the University of Alaska and the Department of Education, would have to develop all of their own programming or software, and probably should pay the GOT for any satellite time used. Their uses would be subject, of course, to the priorities of the rural project and the urban broadcasters.

Alaska Legislative Council Subcommittee on Telecommunications

In the demonstration project, only 24 rural communities would be included. This starts us on a very small scale to determine what the problems are and what may be wrong with this way of doing things. The legislation anticipates that the GOT would then report back to the 10th Alaska Legislature and explain what these problems have been and make proposals for future activities. It might be that a different kind of partnership between private and public sectors is required; it might be that certain unforeseen legal problems arose; it might be that certain unforeseen technical problems arose with respect to the use of the small earth stations and the television-receive "black boxes"; it might be that such a project might be useful in ways not at all anticipated at the present time.

The House Select Committee on Telecommunications very much supports the legislation which would provide for the demonstration project at a cost of \$1.5 million. We feel this is a much better idea than waiting one, two or three years and finding a great amount of pressure for an un-planned and possibly unwise project that would cost many millions more. This way we can find out what we are doing and what we are talking about doing, and what will work. Then, a future Legislature can decide whether it wishes to do this on a large scale or in a different way.

The Television Advisory Committee will meet again here in Juneau on Friday, March 26 at 2 p.m. We are told that most of the participants can be there. Considering the timing of the Senate calendar, this will probably come after the Senate has considered and (hopefully) passed the appropriation for the television demonstration project. Therefore, we will probably be talking about the nuts and bolts details of the television demonstration project, and it may be of substantial interest to both urban and rural members. That meeting will be held in the House Resources Committee Room.

III CURRENT LEGISLATION

Other matters which have been pending before the Legislature regarding telecommunications have had the attention of the House Select Committee and of the Consultants.

House Bill 633, adding to the standards by which the APUC decides rate cases, has passed the House and is now in Senate Committee. HB 631, which creates a communications carrier section within the APUC, has been approved by the House Judiciary Committee and the House Finance Committee. The House Finance Committee did amend the fiscal note attached to that bill to cause a substantial reduction.

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

17 March 1976

To: Senator J. Kerttula
From: Robert P. Merritt, Legislative Consultant
Subject: Television Demonstration Project

The information contained in this memo was compiled from material presented to the House Select Committee on Telecommunications, the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc. Telecommunication Committee, the Governor's Telecommunication Advisory Committee, and members of the Alaska State Senate.

A demonstration project to accelerate the delivery of "same day" television programming to urban areas of Alaska and provide access to television for 24 rural communities not now receiving television will cost \$1,500,000 for the first year.

This project will lease a satellite transponder from the common carrier for \$500,000 per year for distribution of about 5 hours per day of television programs to the 24 rural communities. The AFN Telecommunications Committee supports the television demonstration, and has agreed to accept the responsibility to assist the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT) to select the 24 communities and advise the GOT of the villagers' wishes on program content.

The 24 television receiver units (demodulators) will be installed at existing bush earth station locations. The receivers cost \$10,000 each, installed, and represent a technological break through stimulated by this procurement. At each village, the television program will be broadcast over a mini-transmitter to the homes and community center in the village. The transmitters cost \$10,000 each, installed, including the transmitting antenna, video switching panel and audio control.

Additional expense will be incurred in obtaining program material from the four national networks and tape and film libraries.

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

17 March 1976

Some of these programs will be tape delayed and then transmitted up to the satellite from the lower 48 states or from an Alaska programming center.

The cost of programs, delay centers and management will be \$520,000.

Lease of one full time transponder	\$500,000
24 Earth Stations at \$10,000 each.	240,000
24 Mini-transmitters at \$10,000 each	240,000
Programs, delay center, management	520,000
TOTAL	<u>\$1,500,000</u>

The state-leased transponder will be available 24 hours each day. When not being used for the bush transmission, the transponder will be made available to commercial and public broadcasters to bring same day network programs to Alaska. The delay and schedule arrangement would be arranged by the urban broadcasters.

Some programs may be broadcast in real time to both urban and rural locations on the single transponder. A developmental project will be initiated for transmission of two simultaneous television programs into large (10 meter) earth stations.

The television demonstration project will not delay the implementation of the vital bush telephone system, nor will it divert any funds from that system procurement.

The GOT is required to report to the next legislative session their recommendations for the implementation of a state-wide satellite television system.

Included with this memo is the statement of legislative intent prepared by the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee for Senate Bill #696.

Memo: Terry Gardiner
From: Eric Eckholm
Re: legislative intent, SB 696
4/16/76

As per your request, here is suggested addition to Senate letter of intent for SB 696.

Add, after paragraph 2;

The priority use for a state-leased transponder ^{facilities} is to provide television coverage for public and commercial stations in urban and rural areas. To the extent that time is available beyond this basic intent, the GOT shall utilize the satellite time for any use in the public interest. The GOT shall include in the report to the legislature a plan for comprehensive satellite use, not limited to Television broadcasting.

or something like that....ee

My file
SB 696

TO; Fred Brown, Terry Gardiner, Frank Ferguson
FROM; Larry Goldin
RE; SB 696

Senate Bill 696, appropriating funds to the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT) to lease a satellite transponder for a one year pilot project is a meritorious piece of legislation by virtue of its ability to help improve the quality and efficiency of television communication for entertainment and educational purposes. There are however many possible applications of satellite communications technology besides carrying network programming to Alaska. These include but are by no means limited to;

- Teleconferencing involving several persons far distant to each other
- Data and facsimile transmission to and from outlying areas
- Local government or citizen access via satellite to information stored in distant computers
- Ordering and transmission of audio-visual and possibly printed library materials
- Coordination of information and planning of local governments
- Two way communication between citizens and beureaucrats
- Legislative reporting to constituents
- Two way legislative communication such as making testimony before committees via satellite without leaving home communities
- Facilitation of a statewide educational radio or TV system

If the pilot project is to demonstrate the viability of satellite communications within Alaska, it should explore the applicability of some of these other uses at the same time it benefits Alaskans by bringing them improved national network TV. Access to transponder time and GOT expertise should not be limited solely to broadcasters and government. Non-profit or public interest groups should be allowed to explore the applicability of satellite technology to their day to day communications needs as they carry on business accross the state and with the lower 48. Expenditure of tax dollars clearly justifies granting access to consumers' groups, fishermen's cooperatives, villiage corporations, The League of Women Voters, The Capital Site Selection Committee, The Alaska Growth Policy Council and other like groups. More efficient and extensive statewide communication within and among such groups will increase citizens' abilities to carry out projects and make input to public policy, thus making our democracy more participatory.

While it would be unwise to encumber SB 696 (and subsequently GOT) with a long list of specifics and procedures, it might be advisable to draft a letter of legislative intent which in general terms expresses the legislatures thinking on the kinds of possible uses mentioned herein. Such a letter could also spell out legislative intent concerning public institution and citizen group access to the State leased transponder, recognizing the needs of the network broadcast segment of the pilot project. An earlier letter of intent from the Senate H&SS Committee refers to uses beyond network TV only by stating, "The transponder may also be used to impliment Health and Education Video services to Alaska." Perhaps a statement is needed which expresses a more active concern. There is presently no statement concerning public access to the transponder.



Alaska State Legislature

Senate

JUNEAU, ALASKA

The Honorable Clarence Croft

It is the intent of the Senate Health, Education, and Social Services committee in introducing and passing Senate bill # to provide a pilot satellite television project for the state of Alaska.

The \$1.5 million appropriation is designed to provide a full-time satellite transponder leased for one year. This will provide one channel of television for selected villages, and bring live satellite coverage to the urban areas. The transponder may also be used to implement Health and Education video services to Alaska.

The appropriation goes to the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT). The GOT is responsible for the completion of the project, however they have the authority to contract with any other state agency or private contractor for assistance with the project.

The village site selections shall be made by the Alaska Federation of Natives telecommunications committee, with the concurrence of the GOT. The AFN committee will work with the GOT and the AEBC in determining programming.

Commercial and Public broadcast stations with access to a large earth station will have the opportunity to receive network programs via the state-leased transponder. This will offer same-day viewing for many network programs, and allow live satellite broadcast for public affairs and special events state-wide.

This pilot program will offer the opportunity to determine the best technical and administrative procedure for a state-wide program. The GOT shall report to the next legislative session their recommendations for the implementation of a state-wide satellite television system.



Alaska State Legislature

Senate

JUNEAU, ALASKA

The Honorable Chaney Croft

It is the intent of the ^{House Judiciary} Senate Health, Education, and Social ^{House CS} Services committee in introducing and passing ^{for} Senate bill # 696 to provide a pilot satellite television project for the state of Alaska.

The \$1.5 million appropriation is designed to provide a full-time satellite transponder leased for one year. This will provide one channel of television for selected villages, and bring live satellite coverage to the urban areas. The transponder may also be used to implement Health and Education video services to Alaska.

The appropriation goes to the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT). The GOT is responsible for the completion of the project, however they have the authority to contract with any other state agency or private contractor for assistance with the project.

The village site selections shall be made by the Alaska Federation of Natives telecommunications committee, with the concurrence of the GOT. The AFN committee will work with the GOT and the AEBC in determining programming.

Commercial and Public broadcast stations with access to a large earth station will have the opportunity to receive network programs via the state-leased transponder. This will offer same-day viewing for many network programs, and allow live satellite broadcast for public affairs and special events state-wide.

This pilot program will offer the opportunity to determine the best technical and administrative procedure for a state-wide program. The GOT shall report to the next legislative session their recommendations for the implementation of a state-wide satellite television system.

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

conversations dovetailed directly into the development of what RCA calls the "mid-route" earth stations. These are satellite earth stations which are larger than the small ones now being installed in rural communities, and smaller than the very large stations at Talkeetna or Lena Point. They will be used for trunking telecommunications services throughout the state in the areas which do not require a Talkeetna-sized earth station but which must carry a substantial amount of traffic.

Professor Merritt has been examining the specifications for these mid-route stations, and is making suggestions to both RCA and the U. S. Air Force regarding them.

Professor Stanley has been present at many of the Kansas City meetings regarding the negotiations over the lease of the WACS.

Trips to Washington, D. C. have been necessary, as usual, because of a substantial amount of activity before the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). There are several cases which substantially affect Alaska. One of these cases involves the authority to serve Alaska on an interim basis with communications satellites, pending final decision by the FCC in various cases now before it. Recently the Legislature, at our urging, passed House Resolution 4 and Senate Resolution 2, directed to the FCC, addressing this particular case. We expect a decision by the FCC on the applications for reconsideration of the interim authority within a matter of a week or so.

The other cases pending before the FCC address the permanent authority to serve Alaska with communications satellites. These are highly complex and drawn out, and the FCC may not be deciding them for many months or even a year or so. Basically, the dispute is between RCA companies and American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T). Other applicants have satellites which do not, in our view, seriously address the needs of Alaska.

II. DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING TELEVISION

The Television Advisory Committee, established at the request of the Subcommittee of the Council in December, met twice in February in Anchorage. This committee is made up of representatives of the private sector in broadcasting, representatives of cable television operators, public broadcasters, and state agencies which include the Alaska Educational Broadcasting Commission (AEBC) and the Alaska Public Utilities Commission (APUC). Of course, the GOT is also represented, as well as the Legislative Select Committee.

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

The TV Advisory Committee was established to address the practical problems involved in eventually providing television programming on a much broader and timely scale throughout rural and urban Alaska. It seemed clear to me that the state would eventually become involved in activities of this sort. I was concerned that this be done in an orderly and reasonable way.

The December 15 meeting of the TV Advisory Committee was addressed in the report submitted by the Subcommittee of the Legislative Council at the beginning of the current session.

At the February 6 and February 27 meetings of the TV Advisory Committee, we became much more involved in the particulars of providing television programming to rural areas and to the urban areas in a more timely way.

At first we talked about a three-step procedure. Under this hypothetical situation, the state would begin by providing support (part or whole) for the purchase of television programming from the urban broadcasters which would then be played on video tape machines connected to mini-TV transmitters in rural areas. This is very much like the kinds of services that are provided to the Alyeska Pipeline camps by Northern Television and Midnight Sun Broadcasting. At first this seemed to be a very modest proposal. It was thought that "bicycling" video tapes by mail throughout rural Alaska would be much more inexpensive than the use of a satellite.

Continuing in this hypothetical, the next step would be the provision of this programming by satellite from a center in Alaska. The programming center would obtain programs from the stations in, say, Anchorage, and transmit this out to the rural areas through the use of the small earth stations with the added "black box" that makes television reception possible.

The third step has many variations. It is the much more grandiose operation which I suggested in October and which was then reported in the press. That would involve the state and the private broadcasters jointly operating a tape delay center somewhere in Alaska to provide services to the private broadcasters in the urban areas and to the rural communities through the use of the small earth stations. This would probably require several television channels on satellites, one or more up-links from the lower 48, and extensive investments in video tape equipment that is compatible with the highest signal quality expected in commercial

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

broadcasting. There are many ways this last step can be done, and we do not expect that the state or the private broadcasters would be involved in such a program or any of the suggested variations for several years.

After the discussion of these matters in the February 6 meeting, several of us investigated costs. The Legislative Consultants were looking carefully into the matter of the "black box" to be added to the small earth stations, as were representatives of the GOT and RCA Alascom. At the behest of all three, RCA Laboratories has been testing various units presently available on the market. Additionally, Mr. Donald Bond, who is a consultant to the various PCA companies in these matters, has been examining cost figures, and so has the staff of the GOT.

As a result of estimates from these various sources, and particularly as the result of projections made within the staff of the GOT, the TV Advisory committee came to the tentative conclusion that the first step may not be economical. That is, that the bicycling of video tapes by mail to various mini-TV stations may be more costly in the long run than beginning with the use of a satellite transponder. This occurs largely because of the cost of obtaining satellite time for only a few hours, rather than continuously.

We are told by RCA Alascom that a transponder can be obtained through lease for one year, including some terrestrial line charges, for \$500,000 if it is "unprotected", and that we can obtain one for \$720,000 if we wish one to be fully protected. One satellite transponder can carry one television signal to a small earth station. It may well be able to carry two television signals simultaneously to the larger earth stations in the urban centers in Alaska. The usual charges for satellite time for television range from \$200 to \$800 per hour. On the other hand, a transponder leased for one year, which will always have the capacity of one or more television signals, including some line charges, comes to \$57.26 per hour, based on the \$500,000 figures.

For this reason, we started talking about the leasing of a transponder and starting at what had been termed Step 2.

As we all know, things move incredibly fast in a legislative session, particularly toward the end. Since the discussions on these subjects, a bill has been introduced in the Senate to provide appropriation for \$1.5 million to the GOT for

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

lease of a transponder and the provision of mini-TV transmitters and the television "black boxes" for 24 rural communities. A bill already in House Finance has been amended to include these same amounts for the same purposes. Each bill has passed through the committee system and is sitting in the respective Rules Committees for calendaring. I understand the Senate Bill is calendared for floor action some time this week.

The advantages of the demonstration project anticipated by this legislation are many, in my view. Rather than have the state jump in with a huge program without any experience in the area, it provides for a modest program, many of the facets of which would be financially supported by others. In each prospective application of the transponder, someone is having to pick up another part of the tab. By providing services to the urban broadcasters for obtaining their time-value programming (newscasts, etc.), we can obtain the consideration of program rights to network programs not otherwise available for the rural areas. By providing the bare bones station to the rural communities (only the "black box" and the mini-TV transmitter), we are encouraging each village to obtain other equipment itself. A village could have a tremendous amount of flexibility by purchasing for itself two video tape machines (the smaller ones can be obtained for approximately \$1300 each) and appropriate switching capacity, in order to have much more control over the source of programming being transmitted in the rural area. That is, a village might not want or like one particular program being transmitted from the satellite. If it had a library of video tapes, it could then play another video tape, which might be an entertainment program or an educational or news program. The second video tape machine could be used to record the program being transmitted from the satellite, in the event that it was, after all, desired for viewing by the residents. The extent to which such additional activities or equipment were used would depend upon the village itself.

The same thing holds true for the private broadcasters, in that some, but not all, of their line charges and terrestrial charges would be included in the tariff. They would have to pick up some of the tab in this respect. State agencies, like the University of Alaska and the Department of Education, would have to develop all of their own programming or software, and probably should pay the GOT for any satellite time used. Their uses would be subject, of course, to the priorities of the rural project and the urban broadcasters.

Alaska Legislative Council Subcommittee on Telecommunications

In the demonstration project, only 24 rural communities would be included. This starts us on a very small scale to determine what the problems are and what may be wrong with this way of doing things. The legislation anticipates that the GOT would then report back to the 10th Alaska Legislature and explain what these problems have been and make proposals for future activities. It might be that a different kind of partnership between private and public sectors is required; it might be that certain unforeseen legal problems arose; it might be that certain unforeseen technical problems arose with respect to the use of the small earth stations and the television-receive "black boxes"; it might be that such a project might be useful in ways not at all anticipated at the present time.

The House Select Committee on Telecommunications very much supports the legislation which would provide for the demonstration project at a cost of \$1.5 million. We feel this is a much better idea than waiting one, two or three years and finding a great amount of pressure for an un-planned and possibly unwise project that would cost many millions more. This way we can find out what we are doing and what we are talking about doing, and what will work. Then, a future Legislature can decide whether it wishes to do this on a large scale or in a different way.

The Television Advisory Committee will meet again here in Juneau on Friday, March 26 at 2 p.m. We are told that most of the participants can be there. Considering the timing of the Senate calendar, this will probably come after the Senate has considered and (hopefully) passed the appropriation for the television demonstration project. Therefore, we will probably be talking about the nuts and bolts details of the television demonstration project, and it may be of substantial interest to both urban and rural members. That meeting will be held in the House Resources Committee Room.

III CURRENT LEGISLATION

Other matters which have been pending before the Legislature regarding telecommunications have had the attention of the House Select Committee and of the Consultants.

House Bill 633, adding to the standards by which the APUC decides rate cases, has passed the House and is now in Senate Committee. HB 631, which creates a communications carrier section within the APUC, has been approved by the House Judiciary Committee and the House Finance Committee. The House Finance Committee did amend the fiscal note attached to that bill to cause a substantial reduction.

file SB696

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ALASKA EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING COMMISSION

308 G STREET— ANCHORAGE 99501

JAY HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

March 16, 1976

Representative Terry Gardiner
Pouch V
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Representative Gardiner:

There has been legislative interest in finding funds that would bring television to the bush. This will take better advantage of the money that has already been appropriated for satellite communications. Among these efforts are House Bill 778, Senate Bill 696, and Senate Resolutions #63 and #74; there may be more. Some estimates of the cost of these services range around \$3,000,000.

A radio network would take full advantage of money appropriated and would serve more with an attractive cost-benefit ratio. For less than \$150,000 the first year and with a declining amount yearly, existing radio stations could be interconnected via satellite to make news and informational material available so that all Alaskans could be informed of what Alaska is doing. It could encompass the various 'Legislative Reports' and let Rural Alaska know what Urban Alaska already knows of the happenings in the distant capital as well as let the capital city know what is going on in the distant villages.

Attached is a rough draft.

I would be delighted to refine this concept articulated by knowledgeable Alaskan Communicators. I would gladly testify on the merits of this concept compatible to the efforts to bring television to the bush.


March 16, 1976
Page Two

Had there been more time, it would have been prepared for the Governor's budget. However, I was not on duty until September 2 and was not aware of the needs of existing radio stations so fully, nor was I aware of the many who had messages they wished to intimately and instantaneously communicate with the entire state.

A radio network is an economic way of bringing the state together. It would improve existing public radio services and save costs. Radio, the 'kid brother,' is less romantic than the gaudy and four way stacked (color, sight, sound, motion) glamorous 'big sister,' but radio could let a lot more people know a lot more of the time about what 'inside' Alaska is about for a lot less money. Television is mostly 'outside.' TV costs so much to produce, it has to be that way. Broadcasting is a good family and plays well together. Don't forget the 'kid'!

Perhaps either in the Free Conference Committee or by amendment to existing bills or resolutions, consideration might be given to a complimentary and related Alaskan Communication need: An Alaska Radio Network.

Respectfully yours,


James G. Croll
Executive Director

bkm

Attachment

FRAGENASE BOND
SOUTHWORTH CO. U.S.A.
25% COTTON FIBER

SIGNON!

... an irregular newsletter whose frequency is on the state of public broadcasting

EDUCATIONAL
ALASKA  BROADCASTING
COMMISSION

Feb. '76 Volume 1 Issue 5

AN ALASKAN RADIO NETWORK:

WHO? Produced and/or contracted for by the AEBC which was enabled by legislators to be and which is politically insulated. AEBC a part of Department of Education.

WHAT? A radio central studio capable of receiving, editing, and distributing the best of National Public Radio, Radio Canada International, and existing Alaska Public Funded Radio Stations costing not more than \$150,000 per year.

WHERE? The product is as near as the nearest radio set with Radio Central located in the existing office space leased by the AEBC in Anchorage.

WHEN? To start September 1, 1976, with service consisting of not less than 4, nor more than 12 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- WHY?
- 1) To interconnect Alaskans with other Alaskans with an instantaneous and intimate sound.
 - 2) To make the Capital City as close as the nearest radio set and to let rural Alaska hear a portion of the information made available now to urban Alaska.
 - 3) To bring sound reports of the happenings of the nation and world, relevant to Alaska, to all Alaskans.
 - 4) To bolster and assist all distant Alaska stations with a skeletal news, educational and informational format.
 - 5) To have an Alaskan voice available to transmit to other state and national networks and stations.

" Were it left for me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter" Thomas Jefferson

" Bethel receives no DAILY NEWS, no FAIRBANKS MINERS, no SOUTHEAST EMPIRES, and only 26 DAILY TIMES on an average day when any papers at all get there. The Bethel service area purchases 255 TUNDRA DRUMS (local paper) every two weeks. It takes up to 10 days for a TUNDRA DRUMS to get from Bethel to Kwethluk (17 miles away) through the mail. KYUK broadcasts three expanded and 5 capsule news shows per day and there are over 5,000 radio sets in the coverage area" Jim Croll, former KYUK Mgr.

Memo: Terry Gardiner
From: Eric Eckholm
Re: legislative intent, SB 696
4/16/76

As per your request, here is suggested addition to Senate letter of intent for SB 696.

Add, after paragraph 2;

The priority use for a state-leased transponder is to provide television coverage for public and commercial stations in *facilities in* urban and rural areas. To the extent that time is available beyond this basic intent, the GOT shall utilize the satellite time for any use in the public interest. The GOT shall include in the report to the legislature a plan for comprehensive satellite use, not limited to Television broadcasting.

or something like that....ee

file SB696

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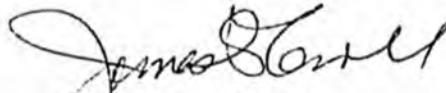
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James G. Croll
Executive Director

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Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

17 March 1976

To: Senator J. Kerttula
From: Robert P. Merritt, Legislative Consultant
Subject: Television Demonstration Project

The information contained in this memo was compiled from material presented to the House Select Committee on Telecommunications, the Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc., Telecommunication Committee, the Governor's Telecommunication Advisory Committee, and members of the Alaska State Senate.

A demonstration project to accelerate the delivery of "same day" television programming to urban areas of Alaska and provide access to television for 24 rural communities not now receiving television will cost \$1,500,000 for the first year.

This project will lease a satellite transponder from the common carrier for \$500,000 per year for distribution of about 5 hours per day of television programs to the 24 rural communities. The AFN Telecommunications Committee supports the television demonstration, and has agreed to accept the responsibility to assist the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT) to select the 24 communities and advise the GOT of the villagers' wishes on program content.

The 24 television receiver units (demodulators) will be installed at existing bush earth station locations. The receivers cost \$10,000 each, installed, and represent a technological break through stimulated by this procurement. At each village, the television program will be broadcast over a mini-transmitter to the homes and community center in the village. The transmitters cost \$10,000 each, installed, including the transmitting antenna, video switching panel and audio control.

Additional expense will be incurred in obtaining program material from the four national networks and tape and film libraries.

Alaska Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Telecommunications

17 March 1976

Some of these programs will be tape delayed and then transmitted up to the satellite from the lower 48 states or from an Alaska programming center.

The cost of programs, delay centers and management will be \$520,000.

Lease of one full time transponder	\$500,000
24 Earth Stations at \$10,000 each	240,000
24 Mini-transmitters at \$10,000 each	240,000
Programs, delay center, management	520,000
TOTAL	<u>\$1,500,000</u>

The state-leased transponder will be available 24 hours each day. When not being used for the bush transmission, the transponder will be made available to commercial and public broadcasters to bring same day network programs to Alaska. The delay and schedule arrangement would be arranged by the urban broadcasters.

Some programs may be broadcast in real time to both urban and rural locations on the single transponder. A developmental project will be initiated for transmission of two simultaneous television programs into large (10 meter) earth stations.

The television demonstration project will not delay the implementation of the vital bush telephone system, nor will it divert any funds from that system procurement.

The GOT is required to report to the next legislative session their recommendations for the implementation of a state-wide satellite television system.

Included with this memo is the statement of legislative intent prepared by the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee for Senate Bill #696.

MEMO

TO: TERRY GARDINER

FROM: RICK SVOBODNY

RE: Larry Golden's concerns with SB 696.

After reading SB 696 and the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee's letter of intent it appears clear to me that the legislation deals solely with satellite television. In order to use a satellite transponder for other than television I would suggest that SB 696 be amended to read as follows:

"The sum of 1.5 million dollars is appropriated from the general fund to the Office of the Governor, office of telecommunications for a satellite transponder lease project to demonstrate the feasibility of satellite communications in Alaska, priority being given to satellite television."

Along with this amendment would go a letter of intent explaining that the transponder lease project should not be limited solely to television.

The letter of intent should be something like the following:

The House Judiciary Committee by amending SB 696 has intended to expand the nature of the transponder lease project. The committee, recognizing such a project as an experiment intends that the Governor's office of telecommunications consider the use of satellite communication in a more flexible manner than originally proposed. The lease of a satellite transponder for television communication is highly desirable, however, there are many possible applications of satellite communications and it is the desire of the House Judiciary Committee that the Governor's office of telecommunications consider some of these possibilities in addition to satellite television broadcast.

In a pilot project of this nature, experimentation should be commenced regarding alternative methods of communication and should explore the applicability of satellite communications to diverse groups of Alaskans.

4-17-76

Added new section to bill to
add \$150,000 for a radio broadcast
system. Public radio net

New section to letter of intent

I had spoken with Fran ~~and~~ about my concerns with 696 and gave her a bit of background on Satellite communications. She expressed concern with the Bill as it had been initially presented to her by GOT & Brown. Was there justification for state funding of a satellite project whose goals were to extend ~~to~~ network T.V. ~~throughout Alaska~~ to rural Alaska and reduce delay time for programming into urban Alaska? As it turns out the Governor had some concerns revolving around creating an expectation for continued state funding to ~~aid network broadcasting~~ provide network broadcasting to the bush etc. Fran and several persons in the Governor's office expressed interest in the kinds of ~~public~~ ~~uses~~ additional public uses I had mentioned. In the meantime Robert Walpe (Director of GOT) indicated to me his philosophical commitment in favor of trying such utilizations. The Governor, Brown, Ferguson and GOT worked out some sort (Tuesday 4/13) of informal agreement that some of these utilizations should be looked into during the pilot project and that no commercial broadcast would ~~be~~ have to make some kinds of compromises for transponder time.

Commercial Broadcasters

G.O.T. - Walpe - Shaganaw

Fred Brown

Frank Ferguson

Fran Ulmer

Potential Govt. Users. D.O.E. Health & Social Services

Brad Watson (information officer)

} should be notified about hearings and invited

How when or when ~~this~~ This informal agreement would be implemented, I don't know

Lawry

My file
SB 696

TO; Fred Brown, Terry Gardiner, Frank Ferguson
FROM; Larry Goldin
RE; SB 696

Senate Bill 696, appropriating funds to the Governor's Office of Telecommunications (GOT) to lease a satellite transponder for a one year pilot project is a meritorious piece of legislation by virtue of its ability to help improve the quality and efficiency of television communication for entertainment and educational purposes. There are however many possible applications of satellite communications technology besides carrying network programming to Alaska. These include but are by no means limited to;

- Teleconferencing involving several persons far distant to each other
- Data and facsimile transmission to and from outlying areas
- Local government or citizen access via satellite to information stored in distant computers
- Ordering and transmission of audio-visual and possibly printed library materials
- Coordination of information and planning of local governments
- Two way communication between citizens and beureaucrats
- Legislative reporting to constituents
- Two way legislative communication such as making testimony before committees via satellite without leaving home communities
- Facilitation of a statewide educational radio or TV system

If the pilot project is to demonstrate the viability of satellite communications within Alaska, it should explore the applicability of some of these other uses at the same time it benefits Alaskans by bringing them improved national network TV. Access to transponder time and GOT expertise should not be limited solely to broadcasters and government. Non-profit or public interest groups should be allowed to explore the applicability of satellite technology to their day to day communications needs as they carry on business accross the state and with the lower 48. Expenditure of tax dollars clearly justifies granting access to consumers' groups, fishermen's cooperatives, villiage corporations, The League of Women Voters, The Capital Site Selection Committee, The Alaska Growth Policy Council and other like groups. More efficient and extensive statewide communication within and among such groups will increase citizens' abilities to carry out projects and make input to public policy, thus making our democracy more participatory.

While it would be unwise to encumber SB 696 (and subsequently GOT) with a long list of specifics and procedures, it might be advisable to draft a letter of legislative intent which in general terms expresses the legislatures thinking on the kinds of possible uses mentioned herein. Such a letter could also spell out legislative intent concerning public institution and citizen group access to the State leased transponder, recognizing the needs of the network broadcast segment of the pilot project. An earlier letter of intent from the Senate H&SS Committee refers to uses beyond network TV only by stating, "The transponder may also be used to impliment Health and Education Video services to Alaska." Perhaps a statement is needed which expresses a more active concern. There is presently no statement concerning public access to the transponder.