

HB

11



Alaska State Legislature

House of Representatives

Committee on Community & Regional Affairs

Pouch V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-4833

May 7, 1985

Mr. Gary C. Newman
1083 Esro Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Mr. Newman:

Thank you for your letter of April 30, regarding SSHB 11.

That bill will be scheduled for hearings in the second session of this legislature at the request of the sponsor.

A copy of your letter is in the bill file for members review next session.

Thank you for your letter.

Best Regards,

Peter Goll

Gary C. Newman
1083 Esro Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
907-488-2001

April 30, 1985

Rep. Peter Goll, Chairman
House Committee on Community
and Regional Affairs
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Representative Goll,

I am writing in support of Sponsor Substitute for House Bill 11
by Representative Davis.

As you and some of the other members of your committee may
recall, the intent of this bill is the same as one the committee
passed out with CSHB 625 during the Thirteenth Legislature.

The intent of this bill is to support a policy whereby we
encourage retention of agricultural land in agricultural use
rather than having it turned into residential or other uses.
Land which gets subdivided will probably never again be usable
for agricultural use. In addition, my hope is that we would
encourage Alaska to help feed itself through agriculture thus
relying less on imports to sustain ourselves. This would improve
our security and well being as a state, since we are so far
removed and vulnerable from most of our food sources Outside.

Since it often takes a number of years to turn raw land into farm
land, potential farmers don't see the fruits of their labors for
some time. At the same time, the municipality is assessing their
land as if it were prime subdivision land, despite the
agricultural use. SSHB 11 will recognize and fix that
predicament. Farming is rarely a lucrative profession. Those
who farm usually do so for the love of the lifestyle and the
enjoyment of hard work. Yet, without farmers, we wouldn't eat
very well. To penalize those trying to farm their land or those
who can make only a marginal profit from it is not logical if we
want to encourage farming in our state.

I would like to suggest that the committee consider removing the
stipulation of 'income generating' where it appears in this bill.
The penalty for taking land out of agricultural use under present
statute is heavy. That penalty is increased under this bill. My
opinion is that it should not matter if someone wants to grow

crops for their family and is willing to devote some of their land to growing crops. That land is being used to feed people and this should be more the criteria rather whether one makes a profit from one's crops.

If the committee is concerned that this might allow a small private garden to qualify, recognize that they will only be getting an agricultural tax benefit on the land used for the garden, which will be very small and hardly worth the bother for most individuals. They will still have the penalty to consider should they discontinue gardening.

If this explanation is still not acceptable, replace the 'income generating' sections with one limiting the application of this program to 10,000 square feet (100' x 100', roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ acre) or larger. This would cut out the small time hobby gardener while still allowing those who are seriously into food production to qualify.

I make this suggested amendment for the committee's consideration with the goal of encouraging Alaskans to grow their own.

Please share this letter with the members of the committee. I urge your support of this bill in committee and on its continued path through the Legislature next session.

Sincerely,



cc: Rep. Mike Davis

→ TO: Reps: Goll, WALLIS, Koponen,
GRUENBERG, Phillips, FURNACE,

TELECOPY COVER SHEET
FAIRBANKS INFORMATION OFFICE MARROW

TO: TNU FOR: House C & RA PHONE: _____
cc - to Rep. DAVIS

FROM: John Peoples - FBX PHONE: _____

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS: Testimony for meeting

DATE/TIME SENT: 5/2/85 SENT BY: Annie

PLEASE ACK. RECEIPT: HOLD FOR PICK-UP: _____

NUMBER OF PAGES: 1 (NOT COUNTING COVER SHEET)

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Please Deliver!

INTERIOR FARMING ASSOCIATION INC.
POST OFFICE BOX 83469
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99708

MAY 1, 1985

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
HOUSE COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS:

RE: SSHB 11

WE OF IFA WOULD LIKE TO ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF SSHB 11. THIS BILL ADDRESSES A PROBLEM THAT HAS PLAGUED THE FARMERS OF THE INTERIOR FOR SOME TIME NOW. I PERSONALLY SERVE ON THE FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REPRESENT THE FARMING COMMUNITY. EVERY YEAR WE HAVE AT LEAST ONE OR MORE CASES OF APPEAL BECAUSE OF THIS PROBLEM. I AND OTHERS HAVE BEEN TOLD BY THE BOROUGH ASSESSOR THAT HE UNDERSTAND OUR PROBLEM BUT CAN NOT DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT BECAUSE IT IS A STATE STATUTE. LAST YEAR IT WAS HB 625; THIS YEAR HB 11. WE CONTINUE TO TRY TO GET SUPPORT FOR THIS BILL BUT FAIL BECAUSE THE PROBLEM IS REGIONAL AND AFFECTS A SMALLER GROUP OF CITIZENS. IT HURTS THE FARMER THAT HAS HOMESTEADED HIS LAND; FEE SIMPLE FARM LAND; AND IS BEING PRESSED BY SUBDIVISIONS AND THE HIGH ASSESSED VALUE TO DISPOSE OF HIS LAND. EVERY YEAR IN THE CONTINENTAL USA WE LOSE A STRIP OF FARMLAND ONE MILE WIDE STRETCHING FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST COAST TO CONCRETE AND DEVELOPEMENT. WE AT IFA HOPE THAT WE IN ALASKA DO NOT FOLLOW SUIT. THIS BILL WOULD HELP PRESERVE WHAT FARMLAND WE HAVE.

WE HAVE ONE CHANGE TO THE BILL THAT WOULD MAKE IT MORE HELPFUL TO US; THAT IS TO HAVE TO DECLARE ONCE OUR INTENT TO FARM THE LAND AND TO HAVE TO SIGN AN AFFIDAVIT; AT THE TIME OF PAYING OUR TAXES; THAT IN FACT THE LAND IS STILL IN FARM USE. THIS WOULD ELIMINATE HAVING TO PREFILE AND MEET A DEADLINE EACH YEAR. WE SHOULD NOT BE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST JUST BECAUSE WE ARE FARMERS.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE COMMITTEE FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS AND CONSIDER OUR PROBLEM. IF I OR ANY MEMBER OF IFA CAN BE OF FURTHER ASSISTANCE OR ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE YOU MAY CALL ME AT 488-6292 EVENINGS.

THANK YOU,
JOHN W. PEOPLES
PRESIDENT IFA



COPY TO REPRESENTATIVE MIKE DAVIS

Gary C. Newman
1083 Esro Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701
907-488-2001

April 30, 1985

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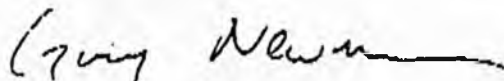
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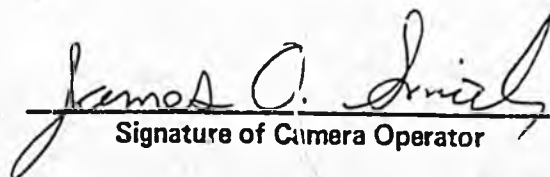


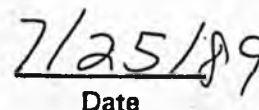
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Signature of Camera Operator


Date