

HB

222

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(7) Date Referred: March 15, 1991 FURTHER REFERRALS: Finance

Date of Committee Action: 4-17-91

The COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS Committee considered: HB 222

HOUSE BILL NO. 222 APPROP: ROAD/SEWER/WATER/RURAL DEV'T FUND

"An Act making appropriations from the Alaska science and technology endowment for water, sewer, and solid waste projects, for statewide road and highway maintenance projects, and to fund the rural development initiative fund; and providing for an effective date."

RECOMMENDATIONS: [X] the same title  
 be replaced with CS HB 222 (CRA) [ ] a new title

- [ ] have attached amendments(s)
- [X] do pass
- [ ] do not pass
- [ ] no recommendations
- [ ] individual recommendations
- [ ] additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s): (Dept) APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date)

- [ ] fiscal impact \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- [ ] zero fiscal note \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] zero fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING <u>DO</u> PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	DNP	NR	AM
<i>Richard Stokes 2</i>	X	Foster			
<i>Betty Davis</i>	✓				
<i>Gary M. Baker</i>	✓	BAKER			
<i>Philip Davis</i>	✓				
<i>Joe Gonzalez</i>	✓				
<i>Jimmy Mackie</i>	✓	Mackie			

*Jimmy Mackie*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHAIRMAN'S SIGNATURE

# NEWS RELEASE

REPRESENTATIVE GEORGE JACKO, JR.

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Juneau, AK 99811



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

91-12  
March 15, 1991

### JACKO LEGISLATION APPROPRIATES NEARLY \$73 MILLION

Rep. Jacko and nine co-sponsors introduced legislation this morning which would address critical and important needs of the State of Alaska; both rural and urban. House Bill No. 222 appropriates just shy of \$73 million from the Alaska Science and Technology Endowment (ASTE) for water, sewer, and solid waste projects; statewide road and highway maintenance projects; and to fund the Rural Development Initiative Fund. Another piece of legislation, which is needed to establish this currently non-existing fund, is in the works.

Specifically, HB 222 appropriates \$20 million to the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities for statewide road and highway maintenance projects. The bill appropriates another \$10 million to the Department of Community and Regional Affairs for capitalization of the Rural Development Initiative Fund. The vehicle establishing this fund is still in the draft stage. Lastly \$42.8 million, the largest appropriation of the bill, goes to the Department of Environmental Conservation for statewide water and sewer projects.

-more-

Rep. Jacko stated, "My disappointment with the Administration's haphazard attempt to address the very basic life and health safety needs of communities spurred me to introduce this section of House Bill 222. Governor Hickel proposed to fund merely \$6 million of the total \$48 million requested village safe water projects in his deferred maintenance bill (SB 133). Quite frankly, I see this as an 'eye dropper' approach to one of the most serious problems we have in rural areas of the state."

"I realize this legislation will be controversial and critically analyzed", commented Rep. Jacko. "I agree the ASTE has beautiful, high minded projects that academicians can pontificate about. However, I find these projects very difficult to justify in light of the deplorable water and sewer conditions that exist in rural Alaska today. It's unconscionable that the very basics of health and life safety of the people in this state are given such a low priority. Let me give you a couple of examples.

Kokhanox is a small village in the Lake Iliamna region of District 26. As we draw closer to the 21st century, this village of 152 people, I'm sorry to say, continues to go without safe water and sewer facilities. Each Spring, when the Winter ice begins to thaw, the dumped raw sewage from the community 'honey buckets' thaw too. The two run together; and the reoccurring result is contamination of both the well and the lake from which residents draw their drinking water. PEOPLE ARE DRINKING WATER

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CONTAMINATED WITH RAW SEWAGE. So is it any surprise that the residents continue to face bouts of hepatitis A and B outbreaks?

Another community in my district, Igiugig, has the same standard sewage facility as Kokhanok; consisting of 'honey buckets' and outhouses. A large percentage of the village residents have either had and developed immunities to Hepatitis B or become carriers of the disease. Just a few weeks ago, high winds and heavy rain contributed to one outhouse's contents flowing down the street. Concerned parents and adults ordered the children stay clear of this area. Shortly thereafter, the ground froze and it snowed. And kids being kids ~ were spotted playing in this area, eating the snow."

# # # #

1153 Donna Dr.  
Fairbanks, Ak 99712  
April 1, 1990

Members of the Community and Regional Affairs Committee  
House of Representatives  
Pouch V  
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear committee members,

I feel House Bill #222 sponsored by members of the "Bush caucus" does not warrant any consideration by your committee. This \$73 million dollar raid on money already appropriated to the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation show a blatant disregard of the wisdom of former legislative and executive actions which established the fund. To me it also demonstrates a shortsightedness and lack of understanding on the part of the sponsoring representatives on what the ASTF is designed to do.

As a successful recipient of a grant from the ASTF I may have good reason to be biased. However my project, "Beekeeping in Alaska", has already made an impact on the beekeeping industry in the State. The number of beekeepers in the Delta Junction area, for example, has increased from three or four to an estimated 15. The number of colonies expected to be operated this upcoming season in the same area is estimated at least 51, up from about 10 two years ago.

One of my project's goals is to establish economic models in two rural communities to demonstrate that community effort and cooperation in a small scale beekeeping project can have profitable results. The final analysis is a season or two away but I feel there will be success.

In addition to the economic models I am writing a hands-on Alaskan beekeeping manual, training beekeepers in rural areas, and researching the indoor overwintering of honey bee colonies. The purpose of the program is to benefit rural Alaskans in small communities looking for ecologically sound cottage industries. My efforts would not have come about without the moral support of members of the beekeeping community and the financial support of ASTF.

Money from ASTF has allowed me to leverage funds from other agencies to help expand the beekeeping industry in the State. I received a mini-innovation grant through DCRA to buy community honey extracting equipment for the Delta region. Members on the selection committee for the proposal evidently saw the merits of the small scale project as it was awarded a 97 out of 100 possible points on their rating scale. I have submitted a proposal to USDA Forest Service Rural Development program to assist the beekeepers in the Neirana region in much the same manner as the Delta project. I hope it is obvious to the members of the committee the rural impact of this project and that parallel development of agriculture and beekeeping is a requirement of Mother Nature.

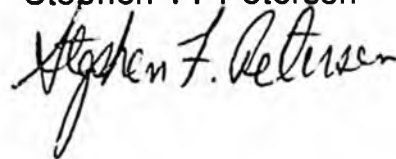
I can almost hear groushings about beekeeping in the arctic regions of the State from our northernmost members. Sure, beekeeping is not suited for every geographic area of the State- neither is oil development. However, the mission of the ASTF is neither to drill for oil in every village or turn us all into beekeepers. It is to transfer technology and utilize research for the benefit of all State residents. A significant contribution to the health and waste disposal problem faced in a good portion of the State is resulting from another ASTF grant- the AlasCan composting and greywater system.

In HB#222 one of the areas slated for funding is community laundry facilities. Are you going to dump thousands more gallons of phosphate laden wash water into the effectively dysfunctional utility systems? ASTF and the US DOE have recognized the potential impact of Clint Elstun's composting toilet and greywater treatment system and seen fit to fund it. I would hope the members of the legislature have the same vision and will resist the urge to raid the ASTF endowment for such a short term and short sighted project.

In closing I would like to point out one often overlooked aspect of ASTF to the committee members. When we hear "Science and Technology", we conjure up mental pictures which range from wild haired scientists sporting white lab coats and chuckling maniacally over bubbling test tubes to the sprawling techno cities of California's Silicon Valley. My personal experience plus meeting with other successful grantees demonstrates that ASTF money is not going to

ivory tower "egg-heads" as many would suspect. Instead it is going to a cross section of Alaskans with an idea and a dream regardless of their educational or professional background (please note- I am in no way inferring the money is going to incompetent people- just that lack of "professional" credential: no reason to deny funding). Fishermen who have a better idea, farmers who want to experiment with a different feed, inventors with a better toilet, prospectors with a gold recovery idea, laborers turned beekeeper and desiring to share the experience, are examples of the "guy next door" recipients of funding. ASTF is not funding dog powered washing machines nor will it fund "secret extension cords" which plug into the Northern Lights. Take a very good look at the proposals funded, every one of them has or will make a difference to Alaska. Someone from your village may have the next "Good Idea!" Thank you for your time and I again urge you to leave ASTF to benefit all Alaskan for a long time to come.

Sincerely yours,  
Stephen F. Petersen

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen F. Petersen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Community + Regional Affairs  
committee name  
committee on HB 222, dated April 10 1991.  
bill/subject

I would like to speak for the residents and property owners of the Nome River Valley. Our concern is that funding for winter road maintenance being done currently from mile 0 to mile 14 of the Beam Rd. in Nome may be cut. There are 21 people living at mile 4 of this road, 10 of these are children. There are another 14 people living farther out the road, 4 of these are children. All of these people are permanent residents. Our concern is that ~~we~~ if we don't have road maintenance we will be unable to bring our children in to school. I question whether it would be cheaper to maintain our road, or to build us a school. We appreciate the excellent services provided to us and would like to see it

Signed:

John A. Dixon John A. Dixon  
Testifier

continue

Nome River Valley Association  
Representing (Optional)

Box 1635 Nome, AK.

Address

443-3311

Phone No.