

SCOMM

157:4

Gambell ⑥

VPSO TASK FORCE HEARING TESTIMONY
SEPTEMBER 26, 2007
GAMBELL, ALASKA

MY NAME IS BRANSON TUNGIYAN, GENERAL MANAGER FOR THE NATIVE VILLAGE OF GAMBELL. TODAY, I WOULD LIKE TO TESTIFY ON THE NEED OF PROPER LAW ENFORCEMENT IN GAMBELL. ALTHOUGH THE CITY OF GAMBELL ADMINISTERS THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT, THERE IS A LACK OF LEADERSHIP BECAUSE THERE IS NO POLICE CHIEF, NOR IS THERE A VILLAGE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER. THE LEADERSHIP, A VPSO, SHOULD HAVE PLANS LAID OUT, SCHEDULES TO FOLLOW, INSTRUCT THE VPOs ON DAILY SCHEDULES.

GAMBELL DOES NOT HAVE A VPSO. IT MADE A "BIG DIFFERENCE" WHEN THE VILLAGE HAD ONE. THE VPSO MADE A DIFFERENCE IN CONTACTING THE ALASKA STATE TROOPERS. A VPSO MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE POSITIVE IMPACT WHEN THE CITY GOVERNMENTS MAKE PUBLIC SAFETY REQUESTS TO THE STATE OF ALASKA. IN A VILLAGE WHEN THE LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT COMPRISE JUST THE VILLAGE POLICE OFFICERS, THERE IS NO DIRECT LEADERSHIP WHEN AN EMERGENCY OCCURS THAT INVOLVES THE SAFETY OF A LIFE, OR LIVES.

WITH THE LACK OF THIS MUCH-NEEDED LEADERSHIP, CRIMES ARE COMMITTED, VIOLENCE OCCURRING DUE TO THE INFLUENCE OF HOME BREW, VANDALISM.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE STATE'S LOCAL OPTION LAW? THIS LAW WOULD HAVE PROVIDED US WITH PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE "CURE" TO ALCOHOL

RELATED PROBLEMS. THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OR THE OFFICE OF JUSTICE, OR THE STATE OF ALASKA FOR THAT MATTER, SHOULD FOCUS THE EFFORTS IN CREATING AN EFFECTIVE VPSO PROGRAM THAT CAN HAVE A GREATER IMPACT TOWARDS THESE PROBLEMS. IN ORDER FOR THE LOCAL OPTION LAW TO BE EFFECTIVE, WE NEED TO HAVE BETTER LAW ENFORCEMENT, WITH A VPSO POSITION IN PLACE. THE STATE OF ALASKA NEEDS TO STEP UP THE EFFORTS IN PROVIDING FUNDS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY. WHY CAN'T THE STATE OF ALASKA PROVIDE A VPSO FOR EVERY VILLAGE IN ALASKA? WHY ISN'T THERE ANY PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDINGS WITH UP TO DATE EQUIPMENT? WHY DOES COMMUNITY MEMBERS CRY FOR HELP WHEN WE HAVE THE STATE GOVERNMENT THAT IS SUPPOSED TO PROVIDE IT THROUGH THE CITY GOVERNMENTS?

THESE ARE "CRUNCH TIMES". WHEN WE HAVE PROVIDED YOU WITH THE BEST OF CONCERNS, ISSUES, AND COMPLAINTS, I FEEL THAT NOW IS THE TIME TO SHOW IF YOU HAVE ANY GUTS TO FULLY SUPPORT THE VPSO PROGRAM AND TO FUND THE PROGRAM WHOLEHEARTEDLY. WE NEED THAT LEADERSHIP IN GAMBELL BECAUSE WE HAVE SEEN WITH OUR OWN EYES THE NEED FOR THE VPSO WHEN A SUICIDE HAPPENS, WHEN A LIFE IS LOST, WHEN BOATS/HUNTERS ARE LATE TO RETURN, OR WHEN PUBLIC DRUNKENESS BECOMES RAMPANT. THAT IS WHY I SAY THAT THESE ARE CRUNCH TIMES. WE NEED THAT LEADERSHIP NOW!

THANK YOU.

9/26/07 Gambell (4)

My name is Leonard Apangalook, Sr. I am a lifelong resident of Gambell.

I welcome you to our isolated village and the outer extremity of our state. I am glad you are here to see for yourselves what our village is like; we are treeless, there is not a single road in the village, and we have no law and order. Admittedly there are some government programs that come through with excellent services but judicial services is not one of those. Having said that, I can venture to say that our villagers don't enjoy the same rights as you do in the metropolis of our state. Despite our efforts locally to remedy our social ills we have not succeeded; thus we have over the past few years sought the help of the next higher authority and that is the state of Alaska, but this too has failed. It is hard to believe big brother is not coming through in time need and it makes you wonder if the judicial system is capable of dispensing proper authority.

As an elder in our community I care a lot about my village, especially our young people. Right in front of our eyes we are watching a lot of our young people getting infected with the disease of alcoholism. Supposedly we are a dry town under state law but it is not working. The state of Alaska passed a local option law with nothing to back it up with.

I would like to relate with you a personal experience last spring when our under age child was given alcohol by an adult. My wife and I was able to get a statement from our child who provided the alcohol. Armed with evidence, we called the state trooper at Nome with the intent of filing a complaint and we were told by the trooper that he would be here in two days. The trooper came three months later on a different case and we confronted him for not showing up as promised. We mentioned that two years ago the village was told we would get a state trooper stationed on the island. His response was: "I guarantee you Gambell will never get a state trooper stationed out here." This was very disheartening.

Here again we are demanding equal rights as those people living in urban areas of our state. Is this forum capable of implementing our need for basic human rights? Thank you, that's all I have.

SENATE VPSO TASK FORCE

Date: September 26, 2007

Location: Gambell

Public Testimony



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NAME
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ADDRESS
CITY & STATE

REPRESENTING
PLEASE SPELL OUT

TESTIFY?
Y/N

	Steve Pritz	Box 207 Gambell	Gambell School	
①	Deborah Apatiki	PO Box 22 Gambell	City of Gambell	
	Allen Swooso	Box 121 Gambell	CITY OF GAMBELL	✓
②	Corina Anzi	Box 16 Gambell		
	Kim Antagham	P.O. Box 152 Gambell, A.K.		
③	Lucy Apatiki	P.O. Box 138 Gambell, Ak. 99742	Self, + VBC + Church	✓
④	Clement Ungott	P.O. Box 75 Gambell, Ak.	Self	
⑤	Branson Tungiyar	P.O. Box 213 Gambell, AK	Native Village of Gambell	—
⑥	Leonard Apangalook			

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PLEASE SIGN IN

[illegible]

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