



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ALASKA RURAL JUSTICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION MEETING

Juneau, Alaska—**The Alaska Rural Justice and Law Enforcement Commission will meet at the Treadwell Room of the Baranof Hotel on Thursday, January 6, 2005 from 1 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.** This is a regular meeting of the Commission and is subject to open meeting law. The Commission will be available to **hear public testimony on a first come – first served basis from people in the Juneau area, Thursday, January 6 from 9:00am to 12 noon at the same location.**

The United States Congress created the Commission to review federal, state, local and tribal jurisdiction over civil and criminal matters in rural Alaska. The Commission will submit recommendations to the Congress and the Alaska State Legislature regarding ways to improve the quality of justice in rural Alaska. Rural Alaska is defined in the legislation as those areas outside the Municipality of Anchorage, the Fairbanks North Star Borough, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the City and Borough of Juneau, the Sitka Borough and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.

The Commission is specifically responsible for providing recommendations concerning areas that include:

- Creating unified law enforcement system, court system, and system of local laws or ordinances for Alaska Native villages and communities of varying sizes, including the possibility of first, second, and third class villages with different powers;
- Meeting the law enforcement and judicial personnel needs in rural Alaska, including the possible use of cross deputization in a way that maximizes the existing resources of federal, state, local, and tribal governments;
- Addressing the need to regulate alcoholic beverages, including the prohibition of the sale, importation, use, or possession of alcoholic beverages, and to provide restorative justice for persons who violate such laws including treatment; and
- Addressing the problems of domestic violence and child abuse, including treatment options and restorative justice.