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Rural Justice Testimonial on this region's holding facility ~~for inmates~~

Carol Wesley, Native Village of Noatak member, resident and employee.

I attended two regional workshops in Kotzebue at the armory and that's also where people go too for court. While at those workshops, the participants there couldn't help but notice some people being escorted by the troopers to court/trial. We then noticed that those people were being held in a room in the same building and at the second conference we got word that those people awaiting trial are being held in what seems to be "dog" cages.

I understand that people who get into trouble have to face the consequences which often times are jail time. But, I also understand that the judicial system our county has and follows states that one is innocent until proven guilty. What I don't understand is why our people are being treated like they are before and while awaiting trial ^{in some cases} to prove their innocence - ~~in some cases~~, our people are not animals and should never be put in cages like that. Whatever the dollar amount is I believe should be spent to better ^{detain} hold our people, we should pay whatever it cost to take care of our people even if they are in trouble. ^{And} in custody.

Thank you for listening and I hope to see this issue resolved.

→ In the long run, ^{worit} the State ~~may~~ save money by holding people at the Kotzebue jail rather than paying for airfare to and from Nome for inmates to go to ^{their} Court ^{hearings} here in Kotzebue?

Another thing, there is a ^{critical} need for VPSO's in our region, Noatak have been w/o policing services since our VPO funding ran out last year.

There are times when I've had to call on our Council members for assistance when he hear ~~act~~ for help on ^{the} ~~our~~ local CB radio. We don't want

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Community away from
shy ~~to~~ people in ~~Nome~~ our
running for those important tribal Council roles.