



### **Press Release: Renowned Inupiaq Leader Edward Saggan Itta Passes Away**

**November 7, 2016 - Anchorage, Alaska** - On Sunday, November 6, Inupiaq whaling captain Edward S. Itta passed away in Barrow, Alaska after an extended struggle with cancer. He was 71. Our condolences go out to his wife Elsie, daughter Muriel, son Price and the rest of his family and friends. He will be sorely missed by all.

Edward held many prominent roles in the Arctic. He was Captain of the Saggan Whaling Crew, President of the Barrow Whaling Captains and Vice Chairman of the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission. He served as North Slope Borough Mayor from 2005-2011. He was President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) Alaska from 2006-2010. President Obama appointed Edward to the U.S. Arctic Research Commission in 2012. He represented Alaska on the Outer Continental Shelf Policy Commission.

He was a passionate advocate for Inuit. "I try to remind people that we need to be heard, loud and clear. We are the people of the Arctic. We still live in America's Arctic and we're going to live in America's Arctic, after all the battles over the wilderness and the oil are done. We are the ones who have to live with the consequences," Edward said in a keynote address at the Arctic Encounter Symposium in 2015.

Edward was a strong supporter of ICC. When Edward was leaving ICC Alaska he wrote in the ICC newsletter (DRUM), "The time has come for me to step aside and welcome new leadership at ICC Alaska. After four years as President of this organization, I decided not to seek another term because of my heavy workload as North Slope Borough mayor. I'm reluctant to give up this role, because ICC Alaska is close to my heart and I want to see it continue to grow stronger."

"I am pleased and honored to have been involved in international Inuit representation, and I hope the organization will continue to pursue the priorities established in the 2006 Utqiagvik Declaration: subsistence hunting and fishing; tribal issues; and healthy communities. These are fundamental concerns for our people across regional and national boundaries."

Inuit loss a great leader and spokesman for the Inuit cause. May we all have the courage and strength to carry on his work and dedication for Inuit empowerment. Edward, rest in peace. We will greatly miss you.

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**ICC ALASKA**

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