



September 15, 2023

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Westerman:

The Alaska business community is deeply disturbed by the recent decision of the Department of Interior to unilaterally throw out oil and gas leases in a small portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). This action sets a dangerous precedent by undoing legally obtained leases, and sending a clear message that investment in the United States can be undermined at any moment. Such extreme actions will have many businesses and industries asking, "who's next?"

The Alaska Chamber was founded in 1953, and our mission is to advocate for a healthy business environment in Alaska. The Chamber has more than 700 members and represents businesses of all sizes and industries from across the state.

The Alaska Chamber's top federal priority for years has been to support oil and gas exploration and development in Alaska's federal areas and to encourage and support responsible development of these valuable resources. Our reason for prioritizing this issue is simple: developing the 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and continued access in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR) would provide incredible opportunity for all Alaskans, especially economic opportunities.

The Biden administration's decision strikes at the heart of the business community's worst fears. When legally obtained contracts are abruptly terminated, for political reasons, it destroys the fundamental principles of fairness and predictability essential for a functioning, not to mention healthy and growing, economy.

Regaining energy independence for the United States remains an ambitious yet achievable goal but moves like this make it next to impossible. Cancelling oil and gas leases in ANWR erases our progress toward energy security and self-reliance. By locking away vast energy resources within our own borders, we unnecessarily handicap our nation's ability to meet its energy needs while simultaneously slowing an already drowsy national economy. This decision also kills investment in Alaska. When rules are subject to political pandering before a major election, uncertainty reigns. Stable and predictable regulatory environments are mandatory to attract the investment needed to develop our natural resources and drive economic growth. This is true whether one sells oil, microchips, or solar panels; the federal government must set policy that follows the law. To do otherwise creates a "wild west" environment where rules shift depending on who is elected to office. Actions like this are reminiscent of third-world dictatorships and should frighten every American.

ANWR has incredible potential for oil and gas, more than 10 billion barrels by some government estimates. For reference, The Trans Alaska Pipeline has moved just more than 18 billion barrels of oil since start up more than 45 years ago, so the resource potential in ANWR is truly incredible.

A project the size and scope of ANWR would create thousands of high-paying jobs for Alaskans. In addition, with the Point Thomson development fully operational just to the west of ANWR, the 1002



2550 Denali Street, Suite 530
Anchorage, AK 99503



Office (907) 278-2722



www.alaskachamber.com
info@alaskachamber.com

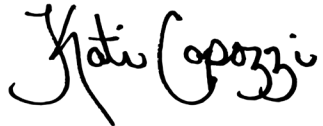
area is closer than ever to existing infrastructure and could feed into TAPS with a much smaller footprint than in years past.

It is possible to pursue economic growth, energy independence, and environmental stewardship in a manner that benefits Alaskans and the entire nation. We have done it in Alaska for more than forty years.

The Chamber urges the administration to recognize the importance of stability and consistency in business relationships, the critical role of domestic energy production in achieving energy independence, and the significance of fostering a business-friendly environment in Alaska and the U.S.

Thank you for considering the Alaska Chamber's comments on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kati Capozzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kati Capozzi
President and CEO