

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

2019

Source
HCS SJR 7(RES)

**Legislative
Resolve No.**
1



Requesting that the United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management implement an oil and gas leasing program in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS, in 16 U.S.C. 3143 (sec. 1003 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act), the United States Congress reserved the right to permit oil and gas development and production in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS, in 16 U.S.C. 3142 (sec. 1002 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act), the United States Congress authorized nondrilling exploratory activity in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS sec. 20001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-97) requires the United States Secretary of the Interior to establish and administer a competitive oil and gas program for the leasing, development, and production of oil and gas in and the transportation of oil and gas from the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS sec. 20001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-97) requires that at least two lease sales be held by December 22, 2024, and that each sale offer for lease at least 400,000 acres of land with the highest hydrocarbon potential in the coastal plain of the

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, allowing for up to 2,000 acres of federal land, which is equivalent to .01 percent of the 19,300,000-acre refuge, to be covered by production and support facilities; and

WHEREAS the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge contains an estimated 7,687,000,000 barrels of recoverable oil and 7,000,000,000,000 cubic feet of natural gas; and

WHEREAS the exploration, development, and production of oil and gas in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is predicted to generate 1,430 direct jobs and 6,350 indirect jobs annually and 2,480 direct jobs and 10,100 indirect jobs at peak employment; and

WHEREAS the estimated potential government revenue from petroleum development in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge through 2050, including revenue to the North Slope Borough, the state, and the federal government from royalties, income taxes, production taxes, and property taxes, equals \$104,673,000,000; and

WHEREAS oil and gas development in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has the potential to extend the life of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System and increase throughput, which has declined from a peak of 2,033,000 average barrels of oil a day in 1988 to 509,000 average barrels of oil a day in 2018; and

WHEREAS oil and gas development in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has the potential to enhance the economic viability of the proposed Alaska liquefied natural gas project; and

WHEREAS oil and gas development on the coastal plain would strengthen national security and provide long-lasting benefits to the national economy by creating thousands of jobs nationwide, generating billions of dollars in government revenue, providing affordable energy to American consumers, and decreasing dependence on foreign energy; and

WHEREAS advances in extended-reach and directional drilling technology have greatly reduced the impact area of oil and gas activities, including shrinking the average drilling pad size by more than 80 percent, from 65 acres in 1970 to 12 acres today, and increasing the subsurface area accessible from modern drilling pads by nearly 2,000 percent, from three square miles in 1970 to 60 square miles today; and

WHEREAS safe and responsible oil and gas exploration, development, and

production has been demonstrated by over 50 years of activity on the North Slope of Alaska without adverse effects on the environment or wildlife populations; and

WHEREAS the state continues to strive to ensure the ongoing health and productivity of the Porcupine and Central Arctic caribou herds and the protection of land, water, and wildlife resources during the exploration and development of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS polling consistently shows Alaskans overwhelmingly support responsible oil and gas development in the non-wilderness portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS, while most Alaskans support development in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, many do so with the understanding that the state's workforce will be used to the maximum extent possible if the leasing program moves forward; and

WHEREAS the proposed leasing area of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is located in the North Slope Borough, and many residents of the borough, the population of which is predominantly Inupiat, are supportive of development in the non-wilderness area of the coastal plain;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature requests that the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, implement an oil and gas leasing program in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as outlined in the December 2018 Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Draft Environmental Impact Statement; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature requests that the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, in its consideration of action alternatives outlined in the December 2018 Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Draft Environmental Impact Statement, take into account the long history of safe and responsible oil and gas development on Alaska's North Slope, the enormous benefits development of oil and gas resources in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would bring to the state and the nation, the advances in oilfield technology that continue to shrink the impact area of oil and gas activities, and the support of residents from the North Slope Borough and across the North Slope of Alaska for oil and gas development in a portion of the coastal plain.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President

of the United States; the Honorable Michael R. Pence, Vice President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable David Bernhardt, Acting United States Secretary of the Interior; Brian Steed, Deputy Director for Policy and Programs, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior; and Nicole Hayes, Coastal Plain Project Manager, Bureau of Land Management Alaska State Office, U.S. Department of the Interior.