

passed legislation requiring this area—a national wildlife refuge—requiring it to be drilled for oil, despite a complete lack of interest by legitimate industry players.

Now, we could be discussing ways to lower electricity costs, which are spiraling out of control or doing something about the skyrocketing healthcare costs in this country right now. But instead, we are talking about industrial oil and gas development in the beating heart of our greatest wildlife refuge, literally developing the place where the porcupine caribou herd drops their calves every year.

Now, when Congress first debated whether to allow oil development in the Arctic, America's energy landscape looked very different. We were importing significant amounts of oil, much of it from our political adversaries. Oil prices were rising, and U.S. energy could not meet demand.

Yet, even in that context, in those challenging years, for decades and across both political parties, Congress recognized the irreplaceable, ecological, and cultural importance of the Arctic Refuge.

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle understood that some places are sacred, some places are simply too unique and important to sacrifice, and together they kept these lands closed to industrial development.

In fact, it was not until 2017 that a Republican majority reversed that longstanding commitment and opened this refuge to exploitation. They turned their backs on the American people who own this refuge and embraced the development-anywhere-and-at-any-cost approach, doing so despite the fact that the United States was already experiencing record oil production and was on its way to being a net energy exporter.

And now they have done it again in their "Big Bad Bill." But this time they want more and more. To what end? We know this hasn't worked before. We know previous efforts to offer leases here have actually been a failure.

Now, they told us that development of the Arctic Refuge would bring in a billion—billion with a "b"—a billion dollars to the Treasury to pay off the tax cuts that were in the 2017 bill for billionaires. But as we all remember, that came up a little short. In fact, it came up \$993 million short to be exact. And it is because development in the refuge is so complicated and so expensive.

It is costly in time. Seasons are short. Days can be even shorter. There is not a lot of time to break new ground. There are no roads, no infrastructure even remotely close to this part of the Coastal Plain.

That is why it is estimated that oil prices would have to be at least \$75 a barrel just to break even on oil from the refuge. Compare that to today's average cost for a barrel, which is hovering around \$60. Legitimate investors knew these pitfalls.

In 2023, the six largest banks in the United States, the five largest banks in Canada, and 29 other international banks all issued policies against financing drilling in the Arctic Refuge. The banks, insurers, too, followed suit, which is why the second justification that they are using to do this just doesn't make sense—that producing oil in the refuge will make gas cheaper for everyday Americans.

You can see from the map that this is not remotely true. If construction and drilling costs are so high that a barrel of oil has to be almost \$20 more expensive just to break even, what do you think that does to the prices at the gas station when you fill up your car? It doesn't mean cheaper gas. The last thing that they will tell you is that we have to drill everywhere in America because we are "in an energy emergency." But the truth is, the only energy crisis in America is the one that President Trump has created himself.

It is the skyrocketing utility bills that Americans are facing because of the Republicans' relentless attacks on affordable American-made clean energy.

Opening precious wilderness to industrial development is not going to fix that, especially when it is to drill for oil that costs so much to produce. Drilling in the Arctic Refuge is not going to make energy more affordable, and it seems to me, as I stand up here to speak about yet another attack on our public lands, that no place is sacred from this extract-at-all-costs playbook—not even wildlife refuges.

So what is next? Are we going to develop geothermal energy in Yellowstone? Maybe more uranium mining in the Grand Canyon. I think Teddy Roosevelt must be tired from rolling over in his grave.

The bottom line is that the Arctic Refuge is too unique, too globally important to develop. It is a wildlife refuge for a reason.

Now, proponents love to hide the fact that this is, in fact, a national wildlife refuge. They call it all kinds of things so that they don't have to use the phrase "wildlife refuge." They will call it the 1002 area. They will call it ANWR. It sounds like someplace in the Middle East that you would expect oil and gas production.

They don't want us to pay attention to how crazy a prospect developing one of our last remaining untouched landscapes is.

The Arctic Refuge provides subsistence fish and game for people who live in the region. It serves as a seasonal home to species you might see in your own State, species like Arctic terns and all sorts of waterfowl. And it is a remarkable, vast, and breathtaking wilderness that should inspire us to be better stewards of our wildlife heritage.

The Arctic Refuge is the crown jewel of our National Wildlife Refuge System, and it belongs to every single American and deserves our protection.

So I would urge colleagues to vote no on the CRA today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

S.J. RES. 91

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I am coming down on the Senate floor, once again, to talk about another Congressional Review Act resolution that I am encouraging all of my colleagues, Democrats, Republicans—by the way, our last one on the National Petroleum Reserve of Alaska, right here, was bipartisan. I want to thank Senator FETTERMAN for his support here.

This is a really big one, and some people are like: Geez, Senator SULLIVAN, Senator MURKOWSKI, you are down here a lot on these CRAs. We are down here a lot on these Congressional Review Act resolutions because of this. All right? I have trotted out this chart a lot, but it bears repeating. The Biden administration decided, because the far-left, radical environmental groups say: Hey, when Democrats get in power—that will mean the minority leader, if he ever became majority leader, that would include him—when they get into power, what do they do? They want to make sure they shut down the great State of Alaska. I won't go into all of the reasons, but they do it, and they are aggressive on it.

So, as I have said before, during the 4 years of the Biden administration, we had this last frontier lockup. Here is the actual list. It is shocking. I don't think, in the history of America, the Federal Government, the White House, ever used its powers so much to try to crush one State. They did it during the 4 years of the Biden administration with the support of my friends on the other side of the aisle—70 Executive orders and Executive actions, singularly and exclusively focused on the great State of Alaska—by the way, 10 on day one.

So when Joe Biden got inaugurated, man, he was raring to go to crush Alaska, kill thousands of jobs—by the way, great union jobs, by the way. Nobody ever talks about that. These are all great union jobs to develop resources for the great State of Alaska. So that was it. Seventy—can you imagine any other State in America having their own Federal Government crush them? We got sanctioned more than Joe Biden sanctioned Iran and Venezuela, and they are terrorist states. But that is what we dealt with.

So the reason I am down here so often on these CRA, Congressional Review Act, resolutions is, it is our chance—it is the Republican Senate, with a Republican President and a Republican House—to say: Now, wait a minute. We don't think the power of the Federal Government should be used to crush any State like this, especially one with all these great resources and great Native people.

I am going to get to all of this, but the Democrats do that.

So I am asking my colleagues on one of these—I can't remember which one;

there are several dealing with ANWR—to rescind the Biden rule, get it over to the President, and sign it into law.

Now, I am going to talk about the ranking member from New Mexico who just came down and spoke against this. He is the No. 1 guy in the Senate who loves to crush Alaska. But I am going to go into a little bit about his State and maybe something—the word called “hypocrisy” that we are going to get to here in a minute.

But this one is really big. The CRA that the Biden administration did to lock up ANWR—because out of all of the CRAs, a lot of these were illegal. They are illegal. They go against what Congress says the law is, and the executive branch just wouldn’t do. It wouldn’t follow suit. But the ANWR one was particularly illegal.

So, in 2017, in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the Congress of the United States, after debating this topic for almost 40 years, said the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is going to be open for resource development—responsible resource development. We have the highest standards on resource development in the world in Alaska.

So the Congress, in a law, didn’t “suggest” that we do it. The Congress mandated two lease sales—have to do it, Executive branch—offering no fewer than 400,000 acres in this area, what we call the 1002 area. That is named after section 1002 of ANILCA. We finally got it done.

This is a hugely bipartisan issue in Alaska. We know how to develop our resources. By the way, the Native people, great, heroic Native people, Inupiat Natives who live on the North Slope of Alaska in NPR-A, in ANWR—I just did a townhall, by the way, with the great people, our North Slope Borough, and the one community actually lives here, just last night. They all, the leadership almost unanimously, wanted this resource development.

I am going to get into that in a minute.

So the law of the United States—the President signed the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Section 1 was about tax cuts and jobs. Section 2 was about opening ANWR. That is what it said: Shall do it, must do it. OK? That was the law.

So imagine when the Biden administration came in, and they started saying: Eh, we are not going to follow the law. As a matter of fact, the Secretary of the Interior of the Biden administration, she announced at a press conference that through a regulation—that we are going to rescind today—they were going to lock up and shut down ANWR. No lease sales. They were going to cancel the lease sales of the Trump administration.

This is blatantly illegal. None of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle said: Wait a minute. You can’t do that. You are violating the law.

They talk about a lot of administrations violating the law, but when it came to Alaska, Joe Biden violated the law every day almost.

So this is a quote from Secretary Haaland. Despite the law—she was a former Congresswoman—saying you have got to develop this—shall, must, Congress is telling you—she said that “with today’s action” on an Executive order “no one will have the rights to drill” in this area.

Whoa. Well, that is pretty darn illegal when the Congress said: No, you have to do that.

So it is not just me saying that. In 2025, after litigation by the State of Alaska against the Biden administration, one of our Federal judges in Alaska, Judge Gleason, wrote that the “Federal Defendants”—that is the Biden administration—“cancellation of the [ANWR] leases,” which they did illegally, “was not in accordance with the law.” I am quoting the judge. The Department of the Interior error is serious. The Department of the Interior canceled these leases without following congressionally mandated procedure.

So there you go. It is not just me, one Senator, saying that what Joe Biden did was illegal. It was a Federal judge.

This vote today is actually to vindicate the rule of law. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle like to talk about the rule of law a lot. So I certainly hope that we can do that.

To Senator HEINRICH, the senior Senator from New Mexico, and his colleague Secretary Haaland, I think they need special recognition on what I would just refer to as hypocrisy, because as soon as that 2017 law was passed saying, “hey, you can now develop this area,” the senior Senator from New Mexico led a letter with dozens of Democrat Senators, writing to all the investment banks and all the insurance companies, saying: We are a bunch of Senators. We have a lot of power. Don’t invest in Alaska. Don’t invest in ANWR—don’t.

I mean, I could threaten businesses and stuff. We are a bunch of powerful Senators. Don’t do it.

Could you imagine if every Senator in the Senate decided, “hey, I am going to pick on New Mexico; I am going to make it my point in life to just go after New Mexico, shut down their economy, kill thousands of jobs”? This place wouldn’t work at all.

But the senior Senator from New Mexico has made it a career of shutting down my great State. In one of those letters, he said: We have to do this. Shut down Alaska. Don’t invest in Alaska.

He is down here on the floor arguing against voting for this CRA because he said we have to “meet America’s climate goals.” So that is one of his arguments: Let’s shut down the great State of Alaska so we can “meet America’s climate goals.”

So here is how I am talking a little bit about hypocrisy. During the time of the Biden administration and these 70 Executive orders—right there, to crush my State, kill thousands of jobs—what was going on with New Mexico, where

the senior Senator is from and where Secretary Haaland is from? Well, the press never writes this story. I have given a speech on this many times. It was “drill, baby, drill” in New Mexico—“drill, baby, drill.”

You want to talk about climate goals? You want to talk about a climate bomb?

My State barely has 500,000 barrels a day of production. New Mexico, under Joe Biden and Secretary Haaland and the senior Senator from New Mexico, they went from a million barrels a day to 2 million barrels a day, all on Federal lands. Was that hypocrisy or what?

There were 9,366 applications for permits to drill during the first 2 years of the Biden administration. My State got zero from these guys. Over half of all permits to drill on Federal lands in the first years of the Biden administration went to what State? Oh, shoot, New Mexico. “Drill, baby, drill.” Climate bomb.

But the senior Senator is going to come down here and continue what he has done throughout his career, which is try to shut down my State. It is outrageous. It is outrageous.

Like I said, New Mexico has increased oil production since 2019 from 1.2 million barrels a day to 2 million barrels a day, all on Federal lands. They are the second most oil-producing and climate-producing State in the country. Last year, the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee took the tax receipt from all its “drill, baby, drill” oil, and do you know what they are doing with the money? Free college, tax cuts, infrastructure, childcare, healthcare, you name it. Yet this guy wants to shut down my State—hypocrite, hypocrite.

Mr. President, let me end with one final point because I heard the senior Senator from New Mexico coming down to say: Well, the Native people really want to keep this area locked up.

That is so wrong. That is not correct at all. It is frustrating as can be when I hear another Senator try to speak on behalf of the Native people I have the privilege of representing. The vast, vast majority of the people who live on the North Slope of Alaska, the Inupiat Natives, they want to develop the resources. Why? For the same reason that New Mexico is giving healthcare and childcare and infrastructure from oil revenues to their people.

I find it very frustrating when I have Senate colleagues, particularly the senior Senator from New Mexico, come down on the floor and say: Well, we have to shut down Alaska. We have to keep them from developing. We will kill thousands of good union jobs. But, hey, don’t look. It is “drill, baby, drill” in my State—which it is. It has been.

I will submit to the RECORD the Native voices of my State who want to develop their resources. There are a lot of reasons for that. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle love to talk about how there are poor people of

color, indigenous people, minority communities. But there is a big asterisk—not if it is Native Alaskans, no way. They love to keep them down, keep their economic prospects limited, and take away opportunity.

That is why, Mr. President, I would like to submit this letter for the RECORD in support of this CRA, in support of this Senate resolution. This is from the trilateral group of the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope. This is the Tribe—all the Tribes on the North Slope of Alaska, right here. They are for it, the North Slope Borough.

I did a townhall and presentation in front of them. That is the borough here, the North Slope Borough. That is the elected officials. Almost all are Alaska Natives. Maybe all of them are Alaska Natives, including the mayor, including the president of the borough—good friends of mine. By the way, that borough, I think, is about the size of Montana. So it is pretty big. And there are the Alaska Native corporations too. This is the trilateral. They say this is a really important Senate resolution.

These are the Native people of my State who live where this action that we are taking here on the Senate floor is going to take place. They are saying this is absolutely critical to their sovereignty, to their economic development, to their cultural heritage. It is a very powerful letter.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have this letter printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NOVEMBER 19, 2025.

Re Support for S.J. Res. 91 and H.J. Res 131—Congressional Review Act Disapproval of the “2024 BLM Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision”

Hon. LISA MURKOWSKI,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. DAN SULLIVAN
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. NICHOLAS BEGICH III,
U.S. Senate, Washington DC.

DEAR SENATORS MURKOWSKI, SULLIVAN, AND REPRESENTATIVE BEGICH: On behalf of the North Slope Inupiat leadership—including Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS) the North Slope Borough (Borough), and Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), we write in strong support of Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolutions introduced being introduced by the Alaska Congressional Delegation, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Land Management relating to the “2024 Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision.”

BACKGROUND

The North Slope Inupiat have called the Arctic home for over 10,000 years. We are proud of our self-determination efforts to ensure future generations of Inupiat continue to reside in our communities and have access to essential services. Without a stable economy, our communities will suffer, along with our ability to fully engage in and sustain our Inupiat cultural traditions, including our vital subsistence way of life.

The North Slope of Alaska spans an area nearly the size of the state of Minnesota and,

within that expansive area, there are eight Inupiat communities—Anaktuvuk Pass, Atkasuk, Kaktovik, Nuiqsut, Point Hope, Point Lay, Utqiagvik, and Wainwright. None of our communities are connected by a permanent road system; all supplies must be flown or barged in, making the cost of living extremely high and economic opportunities generally low.

Over fifty years ago, the Federal Government directed Alaska Native people to organize into a new structure of indigenous representation. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) was a dramatically different and transformative approach by the Federal Government to federal Indian policy. The fact that our ancestral lands were claimed by the Federal Government before our people had a right to settle aboriginal land claims should inform every decision the Federal Government makes in managing those lands.

Unlike the Lower 48 model of indigenous representation where tribal governments typically administer the delivery of services such as healthcare, public safety, education, land management, and economic development, the passage of ANCSA created a shared system of Alaska Native representation and delivery of services. Our region has a multitude of Alaska Native entities that work together to effectively serve, provide for, and enrich the lives of the North Slope Inupiat we represent. Our three regional entities, the ICAS, the Borough, and ASRC are three of those entities. While our roles differ, our constituencies overlap, which is why we work closely together to protect the cultural and economic interests of the North Slope Inupiat.

While our leaders over fifty years ago were initially wary of any development on our lands, our Inupiat leaders have spent decades prioritizing open communication and transparency in planning with industry. We have exercised true self-determination through a unique framework of Alaska Native governance—a framework that relies on our tribal governments, municipal governments, and Alaska Native corporations established by Congress to serve our indigenous constituents. For millennia, Inupiat ingenuity has transformed our relationship with industry into a partnership that has both protected our environment and our way of life and has brought significant economic benefits to the region that would have otherwise been absent. Our North Slope residents are keenly aware that advances in our communities—running water, local schools, health care, public safety, electricity, and more—have come because of the coordination and cooperation of Alaska Native leaders and entities across the region.

ICAS

Established in 1971, the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope is the federally recognized regional tribal government for the North Slope and represents over 14,000 Inupiat tribal members. The mission of ICAS is to exercise its sovereign rights and powers for the benefit of tribal members, to conserve and retain tribal lands and resources including subsistence.

BOROUGH

The Borough is a home rule government located above the Arctic Circle that represents roughly 10,000 residents. The Borough's jurisdiction includes the entire National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A) and the eight villages within it. In 1972, the North Slope Inupiat formed the Borough, in part, to ensure our communities would benefit from oil and gas development on their ancestral homelands. It was the first time Alaska Natives took control of their destiny using a regional municipal government. The Borough

exercises its powers of taxation, property assessment, education, and planning and zoning services to serve our communities. Taxes levied on oil and gas infrastructure, not development, have enabled the Borough to invest in public infrastructure and utilities, support education, and provide police, fire, emergency, health, and other services. Elsewhere in rural Alaska, these services are typically provided primarily by the State or Federal Government, or both.

ASRC

ASRC is a for-profit, land-owning Alaska Native regional corporation formed pursuant to ANCSA. ASRC represents the same region as the Borough and ICAS, and the same eight villages whose residents are predominantly Inupiat, and who comprise many of our over 14,000 Alaska Native shareholders. ASRC holds the title to approximately five million acres of land on the North Slope, including both surface and subsurface lands. These lands—the ancestral lands of the North Slope Inupiat—were conveyed to ASRC by the United States pursuant to ANCSA to provide for the economic and cultural well-being of our Inupiat shareholders.

ASRC is committed to both providing sound financial returns to our shareholders, through jobs and dividends, and to preserving our Inupiat way of life, culture, and traditions, including the ability to maintain a subsistence lifestyle that supports our communities. In furtherance of this congressionally mandated mission to provide benefits to our shareholders, ASRC conducts and continues to invest in a variety of activities related to infrastructure and natural resource development and other economic initiatives. ASRC's perspective is based on the dual realities that our Inupiat culture and communities depend on a healthy ecosystem and subsistence resources, as well as infrastructure and resource development as the foundation of sustainable North Slope communities.

NORTH SLOPE TRILATERAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE 2024 COASTAL PLAIN ROD

It is important to emphasize that our trilateral organizations did not support the 2024 Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision. The primary reason for our opposition was the lack of meaningful consultation with the Inupiat people, our tribal government, and regional institutions. The previous administration failed to engage in meaningful government-to-government consultation with ICAS, the Borough, or ASRC, despite the fact that North Slope communities are the most directly impacted by decisions in the Coastal Plain.

This failure disregarded the sovereign rights of ICAS, the municipal authority of the Borough, and the land and shareholder interests of ASRC. Federal law requires that agencies conduct meaningful consultation with tribal governments and Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs) before issuing decisions that affect our communities. That did not occur in this case. Instead, the process sidelined the voices of our people, creating a decision that was neither legitimate nor consistent with the principles of self-determination.

For the Inupiat, consultation is not a procedural box to check, it is a Legal obligation that recognizes our relationship to the land and our right to be heard. By ignoring this responsibility, the Coastal Plain ROD failed to account for the subsistence needs, cultural values, and economic stability of North Slope communities. This is why our organizations could not support the ROD, and why we now stand behind its disapproval through the CRA process.

SUPPORT FOR S.J. RES. 91 AND H.J. RES. 131

For these reasons, our trilateral organizations strongly support passage of the CRA

which disapproves of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Land Management relating to “Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision (issued December 9, 2024). Overturning this rule is necessary to restore balance to federal policy, reaffirm Congress’s intent for responsible development in Alaska, and uphold the economic, cultural, and subsistence well-being of the North Slope Inupiat.

Our identity, resilience, and survival are deeply rooted in our traditional lands, which encompass both the Coastal Plain and the NPR-A. We take great pride in our ongoing efforts toward self-determination, focused on securing a future where future generations of Inupiat can continue to live in our communities with access to the essential services they need to thrive. We thank you for your leadership on this important resolution and look forward to continued collaboration to ensure that federal policies reflect both national priorities and the needs of the people who call the Arctic home.

Mr. SULLIVAN. There is also what we call the VOICE of the Inupiat, another group similarly situated—all Alaska Natives, all from this area. They were established to speak with a unified voice for the Native people on the North Slope, to preserve the advancement of the Inupiat culture and economic self-determination. All of the members of the board of directors of this organization unanimously support this resolution.

I ask unanimous consent to have this letter printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NOVEMBER 18, 2025.

Hon. LISA MURKOWSKI,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. DAN SULLIVAN,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. NICK BEGICH,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MURKOWSKI, SENATOR SULLIVAN, AND REPRESENTATIVE BEGICH: Voice of the Arctic Inupiat (VOICE) writes today in support of Senate Joint Resolution 91 and House Joint Resolution 131, the congressional disapprovals of the Bureau of Land Management’s 2024 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). In 2017, VOICE’s Board of Directors unanimously passed Resolution 2017-04 in support of the opening of the 1002 Area, also known as the Coastal Plain, of ANWR to oil and gas exploration and development.

VOICE is a nonprofit established in 2015 by the region’s collective Inupiaq leadership to speak with a unified voice on issues impacting the North Slope Inupiat, and to preserve and advance North Slope Inupiaq cultural and economic self-determination. Our 21 member organizations collaborate to ensure that our collective voice is heard and respected—locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. VOICE’s Board Members are elected leaders representing local governments, federally recognized tribes, tribal service providers, and Alaska Native Corporations from across the North Slope.

Our Board of Directors unanimously supports the Kaktovikmiut, the residents of Kaktovik, and their right to self-determination. Since the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980, which was crafted, passed, and signed without consulting the North Slope Inupiat, the Kaktovikmiut have been fighting for their right to explore and de-

velop their homelands located in the Coastal Plain of ANWR, which they have occupied and which have sustained them for thousands of years. VOICE is proud to support policies that reflect their voices, including this effort to nullify the 2024 ROD.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure that the people most affected are included and heard in the policymaking processes.

Quyanaqpak,

NAGRUK HARCHAREK,
President.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Finally, Mr. President, it is important to know that the Trump administration is also fully supportive of our Senate resolution in terms of this CRA. This is a statement of administrative policy, where it States:

The Administration strongly supports passage of H.J. Res. 131.

I ask unanimous consent to have that statement printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.J. RES. 131—JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RELATING TO “COASTAL PLAIN OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM RECORD OF DECISION”—(REP. BEGICH, R-AK)

The Administration strongly supports passage of H.J. Res. 131, which would disapprove a Record of Decision issued by the Bureau of Land Management during the previous Administration. The 2024 Biden-era Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision imposed burdensome and unnecessary restrictions on oil and gas leasing in the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, an area set aside by Congress for potential oil and gas production, by reducing the acreage available for responsible development and imposing broad restrictions that undermine the Nation’s energy security and economic interests.

The Record of Decision, against the wishes of those who actually live on the North Slope, effectively nullified statutory directives from Congress to establish and administer a competitive leasing program for the Coastal Plain by placing more than 1 million acres off limits and layering on operational constraints that make leasing commercially impracticable. This disastrous Record of Decision stifled the energy needs of our nation in unnecessary red tape, destroyed confidence in Federal leasing programs, and wreaked investment certainty across the energy sector.

President Trump is committed to unleashing American energy dominance and Alaska’s extraordinary resource potential. Unlike the short-sighted and completely failed America-Last energy policies of the Biden Administration, President Trump prioritizes energy independence, global energy dominance against our adversaries, and high-paying job creation that supports Alaska’s communities. The Trump Administration is committed to driving down energy costs, and putting hardworking Americans and their paychecks first.

If H.J. Res. 131 were presented to the President in its current form, his advisors would recommend that he sign it into law.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Why do our Alaska Native people so strongly support this CRA and the one that we did on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska a couple of weeks ago? Why? I talked about this many times, but I am going

to do it again because it is really important. Yes, it is jobs. Yes, it is economic self-determination. All of those are really important. It is having the Federal Government actually work with them and listen to them.

By the way, on the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, Biden shut down. The Native people from the Tribe, from the ANC, from the Bureau came to Washington, DC, eight times. They flew 4,000 miles, eight times, to meet with Secretary Haaland to say to her: Don’t do this. We are the people of the region. We are the Native people of the region. Don’t issue this regulation that is going to lock up opportunities for us, going to lock up healthcare, going to lock up healthier living.

And you know what? She never even met with them. She never met with them. They flew here eight times, and she never even met with them. Talk about canceling Native voices.

But why does it matter? Well, I think this chart explains a lot. I have brought it on the Senate floors many times, but it bears repeating. I want my colleagues—I want the senior Senator from New Mexico, as his State spends billions of dollars from their “drill, baby, drill” oil revenues, climate bomb revenues—that is fine for them, right? I have nothing against that. But I do when that State is doing it, and then they try to shut down my State. He leads the charge, by the way, almost every time, which really frustrates me.

Here is a really important study from the American Medical Association, from 1980 to 2014—so a 25-year period. It said: Let’s look at America, and where are people’s lives increasing, and where are people’s lives decreasing?

That is horrible. We don’t want that as Americans.

So when you look at this chart and you see a kind of yellow, orange, and red, those are actually places where the life expectancy of American citizens went down. That is very unusual for us. We don’t want that. Unfortunately, that has been in places like West Virginia, Southern Ohio. That is primarily opioid epidemic stuff, which is horrible.

Then, where has life expectancy increased? You see the green, blue, and then purple. The increases are dramatic. It is 13 years where the purple places are. Well, guess which State increased life expectancy the most over that period, from 1980 to 2014: Alaska. Guess which parts of Alaska: the parts with predominantly Native populations—the North Slope Borough, Northwest Arctic Borough, Aleutian Islands chain, some here in southeastern Alaska. Life expectancy went up by 13 years.

I have said this many times when I am debating my Democratic colleagues. Give me an indicator of policy success more important than that the people you are representing are living longer. There isn’t one. No one ever came to me and said: Here is better. We are putting out less emissions.

That is not a better indicator of policy success.

So the people of my State, particularly in the North Slope Borough region, Northwest Arctic Borough region, Aleutian Islands chain region—they are living longer. That is great. Everybody should applaud that.

Why do you think they are living longer? Here is why they are living longer. It is responsible resource development. On the North Slope, starting around 1980, we discovered and started developing the largest oil field in North America, Prudhoe Bay. In the Northwest Arctic Borough, they discovered and started developing the biggest lead-zinc mine on the planet.

By the way, this is all great for America. It makes us stronger. But it is really great for the people of the region.

In the Aleutian Islands chain, because of Federal law, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, we started developing our own fisheries—American fisheries—out to the 200-mile limit. In all of these areas, people started living longer. Why? They got good jobs. They got revenues for schools, for health clinics, for running water and flushed toilets. A lot of these places don't even have running water and flushed toilets. Yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are going to block this kind of development.

For the senior Senator from New Mexico, his State is "drill, baby, drill,"—2 million barrels a day. They are now using that oil money for everything under the Sun—infrastructure, childcare, healthcare—but for Alaska, no way. We are going to shut you down.

Do you know what? You are going to actually make the people I represent not live as long.

So that is why I come down to the Senate floor. I get a little bit hot under the collar because I just see this blatant hypocrisy on the other side. I just need one Democrat beyond Senator FETTERMAN to vote with the people of Alaska, the Native people—for their livelihoods, for an increase in how long they live. That would be a courageous vote. That would be the right thing to do.

I hope that all of my Republican colleagues will stand strong with us on voting yes on this important resolution, and I hope that maybe one or two of my Democratic colleagues will. By the way, they know it is the right thing to do. This resolution will help people live longer. It will help our country be stronger in terms of American energy. It will vindicate the rule of law after Joe Biden and Secretary Haaland blatantly violated it.

I hope all of my colleagues will join me in supporting "yes" on this important resolution for the Native people of Alaska, for my State, and for our great Nation.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BANKS). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. MORENO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the rollcall vote commence immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON ORSO NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Orso nomination?

Mr. MORENO. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 629 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Banks	Graham	Moreno
Barrasso	Grassley	Mullin
Blackburn	Hagerty	Murkowski
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Britt	Hoeven	Ricketts
Budd	Husted	Risch
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Kennedy	Shaheen
Crapo	Lankford	Sheehy
Cruz	Lee	Sullivan
Curtis	Lummis	Thune
Daines	Marshall	Tillis
Durbin	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	McCormick	Whitehouse
Fischer	Moody	Wicker
Gallego	Moran	Young

NAYS—41

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Rosen
Baldwin	Kelly	Sanders
Bennet	Kim	Schatz
Blumenthal	King	Schiff
Blunt Rochester	Klobuchar	Schumer
Booker	Lujan	Slotkin
Cantwell	Markey	Smith
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Fetterman	Murray	Warnock
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Warren
Hassan	Padilla	Welch
Heinrich	Peters	Wyden
Hickenlooper	Reed	

NOT VOTING—2

Coons	Cramer
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RELATING TO "COASTAL PLAIN OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM RECORD OF DECISION"—Motion to Proceed

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 280, S.J. Res. 91.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 280, S.J. Res. 91, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Bureau of Land Management relating to "Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision".

VOTE ON MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) would have voted "yea," the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) would have voted "yea," and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. SCHMITT) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 630 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Banks	Hagerty	Mullin
Barrasso	Hawley	Murkowski
Boozman	Hoeven	Paul
Britt	Husted	Ricketts
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Risch
Capito	Johnson	Rounds
Cassidy	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Sheehy
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	Lummis	Thune
Curtis	Marshall	Tillis
Daines	McConnell	Tuberville
Ernst	McCormick	Wicker
Fischer	Moody	Young
Graham	Moran	
Grassley	Moreno	

NAYS—47

Alsobrooks	Durbin	Kim
Baldwin	Fetterman	King
Bennet	Gallego	Klobuchar
Blumenthal	Gillibrand	Lujan
Blunt Rochester	Hassan	Markey
Booker	Heinrich	Merkley
Cantwell	Hickenlooper	Murphy
Collins	Hirono	Murray
Cortez Masto	Kaine	Ossoff
Duckworth	Kelly	Padilla