



September 9, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
Chairman, HCNR
1511 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rob Bishop
Ranking Member, HCNR
123 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Chairman Grijalva, Ranking Member Bishop, and all members of the House of Representatives,

As companies that make and sell products for recreating in the outdoors, we stand united in our opposition to oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and we urge you to vote yes on H.R. 1146 to restore protections for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. H.R. 1146 will restore 50 years of protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge by repealing a provision – passed as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 – that mandates oil and gas development in the Refuge's fragile Coastal Plain. As businesses, employers, and Americans, we understand that our public lands, especially our National Wildlife Refuges, are worth far more than the natural resources that may lie beneath them.

Since the mandate to drill for oil and gas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge became law, the Trump Administration has led an aggressive and expedited effort to sell oil leases in the Coastal Plain. The Bureau of Land Management is preparing to release its Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), a necessary step to meet its publicly stated goal of holding lease sales before the conclusion of 2019. Opening the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas development would not only irreversibly destroy the largest national wildlife refuge in the country, but it would also add significantly to the climate crisis at a time in which it is imperative to curb our emissions and adopt clean energy.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was protected 50 years ago for its “wildlife, wilderness, and recreational values.” Those recreational values serve as the backbone of the United States' growing outdoor recreation economy. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, growth in the outdoor recreation industry continues to outpace the growth of the economy as a whole, and accounts for more than two percent of the entire United States GNP. According to a study conducted by the Outdoor Industry Association, our industry generates \$887 billion in annual consumer spending and supports 7.6 million jobs. In Alaska, the outdoor recreation economy

generates \$7.3 billion annually in consumer spending and supports 72,000 direct jobs. This economic engine is four times greater than the economic activity supported by oil and gas development, mining, and logging combined. To diminish the Arctic Refuge through oil and gas drilling would have serious impacts on our thriving and sustainable outdoor recreation economy.

The Arctic Refuge is among the most extraordinary landscapes in the country and the Coastal Plain is its biological heart. The Coastal Plain is a vast wilderness bursting with biodiversity. More than 200 species of migratory birds stop in the region to eat, molt, and nest during their journeys to and from six continents and all 50 states. It is home to the musk oxen, wolves, imperiled polar bears, and the critically important Porcupine Caribou. The proposed drilling on the Arctic Refuge's Coastal Plain threatens the way of life for the Gwich'in people, who for thousands of years have lived along the migratory route of the Porcupine Caribou – also the boundary of the Arctic Refuge – and depend on the animal for food, clothing, tools, and spiritual guidance. The Porcupine Caribou calf their young in the same area where drilling is being proposed.

We look forward to working with you to restore protections for the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge and to defeat any threats to this iconic place. Thank you for voting YES on H.R. 1146 to restore protections for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and thank you for standing with our industry, and with all of the Americans that passionately believe in the intrinsic and incomparable value of our shared public lands.

Sincerely,



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