Transcript of Meeting

Friday, June 15, 2018

Public scoping meeting for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Coastal Plain Oil
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

COASTAL PLAIN OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

Friday, June 15, 2018

4:30 p.m.

National Association of Home Builders

1201 15th Street, NW

Washington, D.C.
PARTICIPANTS

David Batts, Moderator, EMPSi

Federal Government Representatives:

   Joe Balash, Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, U.S. Department of the Interior

   Nichole Hayes, Project Manager, BLM

   Karen Mouritsen, State Director (Acting), BLM

   Greg Siekaniec, Regional Director, Alaska Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

   Steve Wackowski, Alaska Advisor to the Secretary of the Interior, U.S. Department of the Interior

Interest Group Speakers (in order of speaking):

   Andy Mack, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Natural Resources

   Jamie Williams, President, The Wilderness Society

   John Hopson, Jr., Mayor of Wainwright, Chairman of NSB Assembly

   Tonya Garnett, Executive Director, Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government
PARTICIPANTS

(Continued)

Interest Group Speakers (in order of speaking)
(Continued):

Richard Ranger, American Petroleum Institute
Mark Magaña, President & CEO, GreenLatinos
Cathy Giessel, Alaska State Senate
Dana Tizya-Tramm, Vuntut Gwich'in Government,
Whitehorse
Shantha Ready Alonso, Executive Director, Creation Justice Ministries
Fenton Rexford, Native Village of Kaktovik, Voice of the Arctic
Jerrald John, Elected Official, Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government
Richard Glenn, ASRC, Native Village of Barrow
Bernadette Demientieff, Gwich'in Steering Committee
Kara Moriarty, President & CEO, Alaska Oil and Gas Association
PARTICIPANTS

(Continued)

Interest Group Speakers (in order of speaking)

(Continued):

Adam Kolton, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League

Forrest "Deano" Olemaun, North Slope Borough

Sarah James, Gwich'in Steering Committee

Public Comment Speakers (in order of speaking):

Jane Lyder

Sophia Marjanovic

Drew McConville

Karen Scherer

Paula Clements

Sandra Ashley

Rhonda Hungerford

Lydia Weiss

Mark Anthony Herrera

Mark Salvo

Lena Moffitt
PARTICIPANTS

(Continued)

Public Comment Speakers (in order of speaking)

(Continued):

Subhankar Banerjee

Finis Dunaway

Mary Ann Rudy

Dana McCoskey

Kelly Eigler

Milo Donovan

Michael Harris

Jenny Keatinge

Greg Singleton

Marjorie Gimmel

Erik DuMont

Laura Franklin

John Robinson

Keith Shue

Mariana Egea

John Noël

Craig Stevens
Public Comment Speakers (in order of speaking)

(Continued):

Chase Huntley
Marissa Knodel
Maryanne Adams
Charlene Stern
Garett Reppenhagen
Jim Pepper
Jennie Gosche
Myra Thumma
Rebecca Ashley
Deana Steege
Wendy Hall
Tara Miller
Pat Wadlington
Pat Parkhurst
Anna Davidson
Martin Hayden
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AGENDA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Opening Remarks and Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interest Group Representative Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Speaker Drawing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Public Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Adjournment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROCEEDINGS

Opening Remarks and Presentation

MR. DAVID BATTS:  Okay. Welcome, everybody.

We're going to get started here. So if there are folks that are in the outer room that want to come in, we'll go ahead and get started.

On behalf of the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Land Management, welcome to the final Public Scoping Meeting on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Environmental Impact Statement, also referred to as an EIS.

I want to thank you very much for being here today. I know everybody has other commitments. It's also Friday. So I'm sure there are many other things you all would much rather be doing, but we appreciate you spending some time with us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Just a few logistical announcements before we get started. If you need to use the restroom, we have restrooms directly out the door to your right. If we need to vacate the room, there are a couple number of exits, two behind me, and then two doors where you came
in. There are exit signs right above those.

A few other logistical items. You're welcome to come and go into the meeting room or even outside. If you do leave the building, you'll have to go back through security, which I think many of you just realized. Please silence your cell phones. Common courtesy. If you're going to have sidebar conversations, if you could just take it out into the lobby area, we would appreciate it.

We have a very full agenda for this evening. The primary purpose is, of course, to hear from you all. We're going to kick things off with some welcoming remarks. Then we'll have a brief presentation that will go over the project. Then we'll go into our public comment period.

Outside, hopefully you were able to enjoy some of the stations that we have out there. We also have a comment station where you can go in and directly be connected onto the Internet and onto the live comment website, where you can leave your comments there if you like. And we'll talk a little bit more about commenting here in just a little bit.
We will be wrapping up at 9:00. We do have this building secured until then, but we will need to vacate it at that point in time. So we'll talk a little bit more about how we'll all work together so we can try to get as many people to speak this evening as possible.

That's all that I have for the logistics.

I'm pleased to introduce Joe Balash. He is the Deputy -- excuse me -- the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals within the Department of Interior, and he will introduce our panel members and make some welcoming remarks.

Joe.

MR. JOE BALASH: Good afternoon. As David said, my name is Joe Balash, the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management at the Department of the Interior. I am 30-year resident of Alaska and take the responsibility I have here in conducting this particular EIS incredibly seriously. And I'm very honored to have that responsibility because this issue is so very important to people, and that's something that I just want to make note of as well.

This particular program and in this particular
place is something that has been a subject of debate for many, many years, and there are very strong feelings on all sides of this question. And passion is something that we welcome and we understand and appreciate, and so please don't feel like you need to hold that back. We just ask that you keep those comments and keep that passion constructive and useful to this process as we go through the analysis necessary to conduct a leasing program in a manner that is going to minimize any impact on the people or resources that people depend upon in the future.

So with me today, I'm watching a couple of folks continue to walk in here, but we have with us the Acting State Director for BLM in Alaska, Karen Mouritsen; the Regional Director for Alaska for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec; and the Secretary's Senior Advisor on Alaska Affairs, Steve Wackowski, is walking up to the dais here right now. And then finally probably the most important person in this room and on this project is Nicole Hayes. She is the Project Manager for this EIS program and is going to be very, very busy with all of this work so that we
can get the job done right and be able to move forward in the manner Congress has directed.

Again, I want to thank the people who have come from far and wide to attend this meeting. This is one that was requested by a large number of organizations, and we're pleased to be able to provide this opportunity here in Washington for people to get their comments in on the record.

I think David will probably say a little bit more about this, but I do want to emphasize that every comment counts, whether you're able to come to the microphone or whether you're able to complete your comments at the microphone. If you comment via email or writing, those comments come into the process just like the ones that are spoken into the microphone, so we do -- we do take all of this very seriously and want to make sure that we have a complete record here at the conclusion of this phase, and look forward to continuing this dialogue over the course of the next several months and beyond.

Thank you.

MS. NICOLE HAYES: Thank you, Joe.
As he mentioned, I'm Nicole Hayes. I'm the Project Manager for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing EIS. I am going to quickly go through what we're here for today, and the quicker I go through it, the more time you all will have to speak. So we'll go ahead and get started.

The agenda I'm going to cover today is why we're here; what scoping is about; what the requirements are of each agency, so BLM and the Fish and Wildlife Service; what the NEPA process is and what that means; subsistence and ANILCA Section 810, which is unique, especially up in Alaska; and then, most importantly, how to participate.

So on December 22, 2017, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 was enacted. Part of that act requires that the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Land Management, implement an oil and gas leasing program within the Coastal Plain. The Coastal Plain is identified here on this map. That's displayed as the 1002 area within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Coastal Plain encompasses about 1.6 million acres of the 19.3 million acres of the Arctic 
1 National Wildlife Refuge.

2 Some of the requirements in the Tax Act are that

3 BLM implements the Oil and Gas Leasing Program in a
4 manner similar to the leasing program within the Naval
5 Petroleum Reserves, or the National Petroleum Reserves
6 under the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of
7 1976. The Secretary is required to hold not fewer than
8 two lease sales within the next 10 years. The first
9 one must be held within 4 years, and the second one
10 must be held within 7 years. Each of the lease sales
11 must offer up for lease at least 400,000 acres of the
12 highest potential areas for hydrocarbons. So those are
13 some of the main requirements that BLM is focused on
14 right now with this EIS.
15
16 As I mentioned, there are two agencies that have
17 primary responsibilities within the Arctic National
18 Wildlife Refuge as it pertains to this EIS. BLM
19 administers all Federal mineral estate, including the
20 oil and gas, under Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
21 That's why we're the lead Federal agency for the EIS.
22 We're responsible for developing the leasing program,
approve the applications for permit to drill.

Fish and Wildlife Service, of course, is the surface manager for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, so they administer that. And they're also a cooperating agency in this EIS. We're working closely with them because they know the surface resources.

This slide here just shows the complete BLM oil and gas leasing and development process. As I mentioned we are developing a leasing EIS, which covers the sales and the lease issuance. Other phases that would require separate NEPA analysis include pre- and post-lease exploration, and then any surface development applications for permit to drill for development, operations, and production, and then the phases of inspection and enforcement and reclamation that come with it. So all of those -- anything beyond the leasing and lease issuance would require separate NEPA analysis.

So this busy slide shows the National Environmental Policy Act process. The purpose of NEPA, which it's often referred to as, is it's intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on
understanding of environmental consequences, and, most importantly, take actions that protect, restore, or enhance the environment. This is a critical part of the environmental consequences, is going through the public involvement process.

Some of the mandates to meet the purpose of NEPA include preparing an Environmental Impact Statement, which is what we're doing, for every Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. We're required to consider alternatives and analyze environmental consequences, consult with and obtain comments from any Federal agency which has jurisdiction by law or specialized expertise. And then we're required to put out a detail statement, which is the EIS, and comments and views of the appropriate Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities that are involved in the process.

The NEPA process started with enactment of the act. There are two major points where there is public comment opportunity. We're in one of them, the scoping period, which goes until June 19th, so you have until then to submit your written comments, and, of course,
provide comment tonight. The other major public
comment period will be when the draft EIS comes out,
which we anticipate to be around this fall. And then
the NEPA process concludes with the Record of Decision
and a lease sale.

An important factor in this EIS, as I mentioned at
the beginning, that's separate from NEPA, but we do it
concurrently, and it's unique to Alaska, is Section 810
of ANILCA, or the Alaska National Interest Lands
Conservation Act. The ANILCA process is conducted
concurrently, so you see the two parts on the slide
that show NEPA and Section 810. And it requires
Federal agencies to consider impacts of their actions,
including leasing and an evaluation of subsistence
uses.

So an initial finding is made of whether or not a
proposed action may have significant restriction on
subsistence uses. That initial finding is published
and appended to the draft EIS, so that occurs at that
same time.

If the finding is an action may have a significant
restriction on subsistence uses, then we would hold a
public hearing on that matter. So the public hearing
usually coincides with the public comment period for
the draft EIS, so that comment period would conclude,
and then we would have a hearing on the subsistence
impacts. And after we receive the input on the
subsistence uses and impacts, then a final
determination is made and is appended to the final EIS.

Decisions that we have to make and input that
we're really looking from the public as part of the
scoping period is the alternatives that need to be
developed, which lease sales should be -- lease tracts
should be offered for sale, what sort of stipulations
should be put on them, and what are the best management
practices that should be included. We're interested in
hearing the sensitive areas that should be avoided, if
there are timing restrictions we should consider, if
you have a recommended stipulation, you know, providing
that information to us so we can consider that in our
evaluation and as we develop the alternatives.

To date, we have actually eight cooperating
agencies: the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the
State of Alaska, the North Slope Borough, the Native
Village of Venetie, the Arctic Village Council, the Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government. I think I mentioned the North Slope Borough. And just yesterday or the day before, the Native Village of Kaktovik said they wanted to be a cooperator also. So we now have eight cooperating agencies.

Cooperating agencies help us with the development of the EIS with their specialized expertise or jurisdiction by law. So we develop the EIS with them and rely on them for the information to ensure that we're putting good solid information in the EIS document.

Up here is a tentative schedule. As I mentioned, the Notice of Intent kicked off the EIS process. That started the scoping period, and that is to conclude on June 19th. Throughout the summer, the alternatives will be developed, and an evaluation of the environmental consequences. In the fall, the draft EIS would be published. After the draft EIS is published, it goes out for public review. And after we receive the feedback on that, we develop the final EIS. After the final EIS goes out, a Record of Decision is signed,
and a lease sale is held.

As was mentioned earlier, we have had seven scoping meetings. This is the seventh and final one.

We've been in Arctic Village, Fairbanks, Anchorage, Utqiagvik, Venetie, Kaktovik, and, of course, here we are today.

There are several ways to provide comments. There's a web forum you can go directly to and submit comments online. There are a couple computers set out, actually outside, in the lobby that you can go do your online comments right now, you could email them, or you could mail them to the address on the screen. And there are also some handouts you could mail them. And, of course, we will be taking public comment today. And we have a court reporter, so everything that is said is being recorded by our court reporter.

Thank you.

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you, Nicole.

All right. And this is the important part of the meeting. My name is David Batts. I'm with the EMPSi. We're the consulting firm that is helping facilitate the scoping process. And I have two important roles
for this evening. First and foremost, my job is to
make sure that your voice is heard and that your
comments are incorporated into the EIS process. While
we look forward to getting your verbal comments this
evening, I do want to remind you that written comments
are also accepted. We have a variety of ways to do
that. All that information that was up on the slide is
also put on the comment card, which is available on the
handout table.

All comments are weighted equally. So if you
don't have an opportunity or you do not feel like
providing testimony this evening, just provide a
written comment. All comments will be looked at.

My second part of the job is to make sure that we
run this meeting in a very civil and respectful manner,
so please be respectful of one another and diverse
opinions. Personal attacks won't be allowed, but we do
want to hear from everybody this evening.

In the interest of time and respect, please no
clapping or jeering throughout the process.

And, again, if you have any special needs or need
any help, please feel to grab any staff that have a
name tag and we'll make sure that we can accommodate
you.

In terms of the public speaking this evening, the
important thing to note is that we have Christine
Allen, and Christine is going to become our best friend
this evening because she is our court reporter, and she
is going to be providing an accurate transcript of the
meeting tonight.

To help her out, please make sure that when you
come up to speak, that you speak at the microphone
stand and that you're facing the panel members. They
need to -- one of the things that Christine does is
reads lips, too, that helps her be able to capture your
input, so she needs to see your face. And then please
speak slowly and clearly into the microphone.

For the speaking process this evening, we want to
try to accommodate as many different viewpoints as
possible and hear from as many people as we can, so we
have a two-tiered approach. First this evening, we're
going to start with a prearranged speaker list. We
have about 15, 16 individuals that will be speaking
first. Then we will be opening it up to the public at
large. If you're interested in speaking tonight,
please make sure that you've grabbed one of the
speaking cards and fill that out. We will be doing a
lottery for the drawing orders off of that, and I'll
come back and talk a little bit more about that in a
few minutes.

We do ask that you please respect our time limit.
Again, we're going to try to accommodate as many people
as we can. On the screen here, you'll see that we will
have a timer. Our prearranged speakers will have 5
minutes for their comments, and then public speakers
will have 3 minutes.

You'll see the counter count down. That's to help
you manage your time in terms of your comments. If you
hear a little chime at the end, don't be alarmed,
that's just another little reminder that your time is
up, and we're going to be trying to move forward as
quickly as we can after your 3 minutes speaking time.

Interest Group Representative Comments

MR. DAVID BATTS: So, again, if you are interested
in speaking, please go grab your speaker cards.

Otherwise, we are going to go ahead and move into our
prearranged speakers. And please excuse me, I'm not
texting my mother right now, but I'm going to pull up
my list of our prearranged speakers. We're going to
start first with Andy Mack.

MR. ANDY MACK: Good afternoon. My name is Andy
Mack, and I serve the residents of the State of Alaska
as Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources.
I had the privilege to live in Utqiagvik with my family
for 3 years and have traveled extensively to the
villages in that region.

I am here to express the State of Alaska's support
for a leasing program in the 1002 area and request the
DOI properly fulfill its legal obligation by reflecting
the comprehensive benefits of this potential
development to the State and its people when conducting
its NEPA analysis.

I also appreciate the opportunity to share two
simple messages from Governor Bill Walker and
Lieutenant Governor Byron Mallott.

First, the State of Alaska believes the 40-year
history of successful development on the Arctic tundra
supports the view that modern standards applied in an
Arctic setting can protect the creatures and landscape of the Arctic over a long period of time.

The State asks the DOI to draw on the work of the Bureau of Land Management writing the NEPA documents for projects in the NPRA. The rules established there in more than four major EISs have evolved and serve as a reference point going forward.

Second, Governor Walker and Lieutenant Governor Mallott underscore the importance the State places on community involvement in decisions affecting Alaska's lands. Our expectation is that the DOI continue, as it has throughout this process, its level of commitment to communication with communities.

The Government of Alaska sought to build Alaska on a premise of sustainable long-term development that would be the basis of our independent existence. It continues to require the guidance and traditional knowledge of the communities and local people. Alaska sees the balance between conservation and development as the guiding principal of our State.

In 1971, Congress took up and passed ANCSA to address the rights of the land claims of the Alaska
Native people. A decade later, the Alaska National
Interest Lands Conservation Act was passed, further
defining protection and uses of lands in Alaska. Often
overlooked in this discussion is that ANILCA doubled
the size of the United States' National Park System, it
doubled the size of the National Refuge System, and it
tripled the amount of land designated as Federal
wilderness. There is an amazing abundance of true
untouched wilderness in Alaska across our State.

Alaskans will be the first to tell you such.

Regarding the Coastal Plain, Congress envisages a
small area that the Arctic -- in the Arctic National
Wildlife Refuge to be studied for oil and gas leasing.
Alaskans thought after passage of ANILCA, there would
be leasing in the mid-'80s. Ironically, the benefit of
our 35-year wait is that we have improved technology so
dramatically that impacts are now a small fraction when
compared to early efforts.

We have applied technology. Many still believe
that activity in the Arctic is built on the data and
technologies from the '70s. Old news. Alaska leads
the globe in application of Arctic technology. When
Prudhoe Bay started producing in 1977, industry built a 65-acre gravel pad to develop each 3 to 5 square miles of subsurface reservoir. Now because of extended-reach drilling and multilateral drilling techniques, it is possible to develop 113 square miles of subsurface reservoir from a 20-acre pad.

We are cognizant of the limitations in the law, and this concept, which is reflected in the law, we're comfortable with.

We have also followed the science and accept as true that traditional knowledge is equal in value to Western science. We've taken traditional knowledge and in many cases adopted standards based on locally generated information. In fact, our friends at the North Slope Borough were instrumental in standards that limited movement of vehicles to manage dust and dust shadow. They proposed causeways to ensure fish movement. They catalogued nesting areas for bird species that lead to more precise protections. And, yes, they insisted that migration routes and calving areas for caribou be protected from activity.

Our request is that the DOI goes about creating
the requirements for leasing, or when it does, it looks at traditional knowledge as having equivalent value as Western science.

Despite our description of successful North Slope operations and the objective data that shows protection of environment and wildlife stability and even growth coexist with development, during the scoping period, we have heard many people characterize the limited leasing program as entirely disruptive and presume it will eliminate any and all environmental value from the Coastal Plain.

We call on DOI to analyze the data in the record that shows this is without basis and not true, especially given the modern technology and mitigation measures. We also call on DOI to analyze the important socioeconomic and security benefits of this development on the appropriate local, national, and international levels when conducting its analysis. Studies and information about the positive public health and economic benefits of development, as observed on the North Slope and across Alaska, are an important part of this review.
Additionally, the role of the 1002 area plays in securing domestic energy supplies supporting concomitant economic activity through promoting of affordable energy prices, improving trade balance through energy exports, and bolstering national security.

We, finally, in the analysis of the value of the 1002 areas and undeveloped areas should take into account millions of acres of existing legally defined wilderness in close proximity to the area.

Thank you for your time.

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. Our next speaker will be Jamie Williams.

And if you did provide -- if you have written testimony that you're speaking off of and you would like to leave a copy to help us with the record, you can just drop it off at this table over here, and we'll collect that testimony also.

Mr. Williams?

MR. JAMIE WILLIAMS: Thank you. Good evening.

Hi, I'm Jamie Williams. And I'm President of the Wilderness Society. And our mission is to protect
wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild places.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is an amazing wild landscape. It is a sacred place for the Gwich'in people, who have lived there for thousands of years. It is also home for polar bears, wolves, migratory birds, and the Porcupine caribou herd, which now numbers more than 200,000 animals.

This pristine and fragile ecosystem is America's Serengeti, the crown jewel of our national wildlife refuges. It is the very last place we should destroy for oil and gas development. Drilling will result in massive infrastructure sprawling throughout the Coastal Plain. Oil and other toxic substances could spill onto the fragile tundra and into the Arctic waterways. Air, water, and noise pollution would harm indigenous people who rely on this ecosystem to survive.

In short, drilling would forever disrupt the lives of its people and its wildlife, and scar this pristine land forever.

Now I'd like to focus on three specific issues and concerns we have with the BLM process.
First, we urge the BLM to honor its obligations under the 1987 international agreement with Canada for the conservation of the Porcupine caribou herd as well as treaty obligations related to the conservation of polar bears and migratory birds.

Second, in the scoping process, BLM must fully consider the original purposes of the Arctic Refuge creation, which focused on protecting fish, wildlife, habitats, subsistence, wilderness, recreation, and water resources. The newly added purpose in the tax bill does not render the other conservation purposes irrelevant or waive any other laws designed to protect the refuge's irreplaceable resources.

Third, the leasing EIS must address all foreseeable impacts associated with leasing, exploration, production, and reclamation of the Coastal Plain. It must also reflect the best available science and traditional local knowledge and also remedy critical information gaps.

Now, let me be clear on one point. This is neither the time and certainly not the place for BLM to take shortcuts on the EIS, and it does not bode well
that the BLM has scheduled this hearing on a Friday evening in the middle of the summer in what appears to be an attempt to limit public participation and game the process. But it's not too late to do the right thing and listen to public opinion on this critical issue.

The Wilderness Society has worked over 80 years to protect this special place and support the human rights of the Gwich'in people, and today we stand with the Gwich'in people and the vast majority of Americans who believe in preserving the refuge intact for future generations. We strongly urge the Bureau of Land Management to recommend a no-action alternative on this misguided proposal.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: The next speaker will be Mayor John Hopson. And we can go at either speaker there.

MR. JOHN HOPSON, JR.: Good afternoon. My name is John Hopson, Jr., and I am the City Mayor for Wainwright, Alaska, a community on the North Slope of Alaska and a member of Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat.
Loosely, the aim of Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, which we call "Voice," is to unite people from across the North Slope to work together collectively to address the needs of our people and to work to amplify the voices of our local people over those who would speak on our behalf about how we should live and manage our homelands.

I am here today to elevate the voices of the Kaktovikmuit, many of whom could not travel 6,000 miles for what we are in the north to consider a local issue. Since January of 2017, when ANWR legislation was once again introduced into Congress, Voice has held many meetings in the community of Kaktovik and worked very closely with Kaktovik's leadership to determine their feelings about the piece of legislation that opens the Coastal Plain to oil and gas leasing.

Through our meetings, polls -- through our meetings, polls taken in the community and information we receive from fellow Voice members, Native Village of Kaktovik, and Kaktovik Iñupiat Corporation, I have heard strong local support on this issue. As the only North Slope community located within the National
Wildlife Refuge, Kaktovik has long felt the strain of solidified economy.

It is important to remember where we are in this process. The law authorizes lease sales and is in the first step down a long road that ends in development. There is much hearsay about how much interest there is in the Coastal Plain, how much oil, how much money, how much caribou. Kaktovik deserves to know for certain what kind of potential lies in their land. These are their homelands, and they've been home to the Kaktovikmuit since time before memory, over which they have been the rightful custodian and guardians. The Federal Government already took these lands from them without their consent through a different act of Congress and handed them over to the public and into management of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the 19-million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. If you weren't outraged then, I fail to see how you have the right to be outraged now.

People seem to cling on the idea in the Coastal Plain, and I am sure we will hear testimony today about its stellar beauty from people who have been to the
Brooks Range a time or two, people who have chartered airplanes from Fairbanks and Anchorage. They buy gear, freeze-dried food from outdoor corporations, guided by folks from Anchorage or the lower 48, who leave nothing for the people of Kaktovik. Don't forget that you got the refuge using oil, your Gore-Tex, polypropylene, and nylon, carbon fiber, and waterproofing rafts and kayaks, backpacks, boots, tents, camp fuel, all made from hydrocarbons. So maybe it's time to admit that virtually every member of our society still depends on oil.

That brings me to the land issue because the argument always that the oil should come from somewhere else, some of you have experienced the beauty of our lands, but few of you have experienced its severity. People live there, not just caribou, families, children, grandparents, elders, sisters and brothers. We are just like you, and we just want to have an economy and a future for our people and our families and our homeland. Unlike you, we have to fight tooth and nail for it.

I myself come from a village located in the NPRA,
so I know firsthand how development can be done. I know that caribou can survive. We also rely on caribou as a subsistence resource. I know that the environment can survive. And I know that the Iñupiat people will thrive. Our message has always been about balance. We know it can be done because we are already doing it, and we're doing it well. We know how to co-exist, partner with -- and partner with the industry. We've been doing it for decades.

I'd like to thank the Bureau of Land Management for this opportunity to provide testimony. I have additional -- I have included additional specific recommendations in my written testimony.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

I do apologize to all of our panel members, I may butcher some names here, so please go ahead and feel free to speak your name and your organization when you get up and begin your testimony.

The next speaker is Tonya Garrett (ph).

MS. TONYA GARNETT: Tonya Garnett. (Speaking in
Alaska Native language.) My name is Tonya Garnett. I am Neetsaii Gwich'in. I am from Arctic Village. I am the daughter of Lillian and Jerry Garnett. I am the granddaughter of the late Ezias and Martha James and the late Edgar and Lucy Garnett. I have a 9-year-old son named Ashton.

I'm an enrolled Tribal member as well as the Executive Director for the Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government. I am here representing three Federally Recognized Tribal Governments: Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government, Arctic Village Council, and Venetie Village Council.

I come as 1, but I stand as 10,000, a quote by Maya Angelou. I am here to represent our people, our people at home, those that came before us, and those that will come after.

Many of the people that will be impacted by this proposal have not been heard. We bring with us down here representatives of our Gwich'in people, elder, Tribal elected leaders, mothers, hunters, Tribal staff, and a doctor. Our hunters, who provide not only for their families but for the community, and elders that
have to live in the city due to medical are here
because this is important to all of us. All of us are
real. We are real people with real lives. There are
only a few of us here today, but we represent
thousands.

Our Gwich'in people are a simple, happy, and
humble people. Our way of life is at stake, our
livelihood is at stake. We speak for our ancestors,
and we speak for our children's children. I want to
see my son, my 9-year-old son, be able to get his first
caribou. I want to see his sons or his daughters get
theirs.

The Porcupine caribou and the Gwich'in people have
lived together since time immemorial. Our culture is
alive and strong. We do not support this proposal.
There will be dramatic impacts to the economic and
social well-being of our people. Our people still
practice their traditional way of life, one that
connects us to both the land, in both of our villages
and north to the Coastal Plain. We hope to continue
that. It's our whole identity at stake. Our tradition
and culture gets us through this ever-changing world.
It's a fact that the United States Government has a long and sad history of treatment of the indigenous people of this land. The potential opening of the Porcupine caribou herds' birthing grounds to oil development as part of the Tax Act is yet another attack on indigenous people, my Gwich'in people.

This is a direct threat to our Tribal rights as indigenous people of that land. Arctic Village sits on the southern border of the Arctic Refuge and is the second closest village to the birthing grounds. And no matter how many miles away people say we are from the calving grounds, that place is a part of us. It is where caribou go year after year. They head south. They rest and renew themselves. And year after year, they come back and held south towards our villages so that people may hunt and share and pass that on to our subsistence way of life so that we can pass that on to the next generation. Our fate and theirs is connected. What happens to the caribou will happen to the Gwich'in.

There are many injustices happening right now with this process. As we have seen in history, a process
that is foreign to us is being pushed on us fast and
hard. We are being pushed to learn fast and hard and
to act fast and hard. Why is there a rush to push an
EIS process that usually takes many years to 1 year,
especially since the Tax Act mandates the first lease
to be in the year 2022?

Also, this process is happening fast and leaving
many out of the process. We all have a voice and we
all matter here.

I want to leave you here asking yourself a few
questions. Is it right to take away everything from
one group of people to benefit a small percentage, a
culture and a people's way of life that has been here
since time immemorial? Is it right to take away a
culture just for money? No, it's not.

Why do we allow history to repeat itself? What
side of history do you want to be on? What legacy do
you want to leave behind for your children? Is it
right for my people to always have to plead our
government to protect us, but continue to be under
attack? No.

Isn't life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
with the life, liberty, and happiness of my people,
United States citizens are under attack and at stake
here? You have the power to change this.
(Speaking in Alaska Native language.) God be with
you. God be with all of us. Mahsi'.
(Applause.)
MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.
Our next speaker will be Richard Ranger.
MR. RICHARD RANGER: My name is Richard Ranger,
and I am a senior policy advisor for API. I have
worked in the oil and gas industry for almost 40 years,
including 13 years in Alaska. In Alaska, I worked on
or commissioned environmental work for site
characterization and oil spill contingency planning for
drilling projects in Cook Inlet and on the Alaska North
Slope. I've done field environmental recon work and
supported various projects in Alaska by helicopter, by
boat, and on foot on wilderness game trails. I helped
train and equip one of the first oil spill response
teams based in an Alaska Native village. I've sat in a
truck on the North Slope's Spine Road, engine idling,
watching perhaps 5- to 7,000 caribou from the Central
Arctic herd cross the road because one of the operating rules on the Slope is caribou have the right of way.

I've worked here in Washington, D.C., for API since 2005, moving to Southwest D.C. from Valdez, Alaska. I'm here to represent API and the men and women who work in my industry.

API supports the scoping process launched by the April 20 notice and supports the move toward authorization of a plan for opening the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas leasing. We've been consistent in our support for access to American natural gas and oil resources under Federal administration that allows environmentally responsible development of those resources and for appropriate management and protection of habitat, wildlife, subsistence, and other resource values for which the agencies of the Federal Government are responsible.

We believe that this balance is achievable in portions of the Coastal Plain on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, where crude oil and natural gas resources of national and strategic significance are
believed to occur. We believe that the long record of
our industry's exploration and production operations on
lands elsewhere on Alaska North Slope, lands that are
likewise of significance to wildlife populations and to
the people who rely upon them, support this assertion.

Our industry has operated in sensitive and
challenging environments around our country and around
the world.

Responsible development of Alaska's resources has
been an exercise in balance and adaptation based on
continuous evaluation of lessons learned, involving
production of vital natural -- national energy
resources, protection of the environment and wildlife,
coordination with residents of the North Slope Borough
and its communities, and respect for their subsistence
and way of life.

Over the period of development of the existing
North Slope fields, mitigation measures and design
modifications to roads and pipelines have minimized
impacts to the Central Arctic caribou herd, whose
population remains healthy and strong.

Access to remote sites is provided by construction
of winter ice roads to allow transportation of
equipment and drilling supplies to the site. These
roads minimize environmental impacts because the ice
roads melt in the spring, leaving no permanent trace on
the tundra.

Wildlife biologists representing industry,
government, and research institutions have collaborated
on science-based actions to avoid impacts to polar
bears.

Pollution and waste prevention measures across the
Slope assure that the region's network of tundra ponds
surrounding new oil fields remain a healthy ecosystem
to which populations of more than 200 different species
of waterfowl migrate each spring.

On the North Slope, the natural gas and oil
industry has participated as a partner in research with
the agencies of Federal, State, and borough
governments, including BLM and the Fish and Wildlife
Service, which administers the refuge, adding to the
literature about the Arctic that has benefited the
agencies as well as the broader research community that
continues to develop our knowledge of this important
One of my industry friends, Bill Streever, now retired, has written a book called "Cold" that I commend to anyone in this room who desires to know more about what it is like to work and live in an Arctic environment, although Bill would be the first to tip his hat to the first Alaskans, who have been doing so on the North Slope for 10,000 years and who he considers among his expert sources.

The USGS estimates that between 5.7 and 16 billion barrels of oil in ANWR are technically recoverable, an amount that represents more than twice the proven oil reserves in Texas and almost half of the U.S. proven oil reserves. The production could equal almost as much as 1.45 million barrels per day for approximately 12 years, with continued production for many years thereafter, lowering our Nation's import dependency, and increasing our energy security.

Alaskan oil and gas operations have been a proving ground for technologies that have steadily reduced both the footprint and the impacts of exploration and production activities that the industry undertakes.
Contemporary field development practices and the
industry's long successful experience in other
sensitive areas in the Alaska North Slope show that
Americans do not have to choose between development of
valuable energy resources or the protection of Arctic
species and the habitat in which these species live.
Both can be accomplished, and we support the work to
demonstrate how that can be done.

Thank you.

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Our next speaker will be Mark Magaña.

MR. MARK MAGAÑA: Good evening. My name is Mark
Magaña, and I am the President and CEO of GreenLatinos.
We're a national network of Latino conservation and
environmental advocates working together to ensure that
Latino communities, indigenous communities, and all
Americans live in environmentally safe, just, and
vibrant communities. It is for this reason that I am
here today to testify in opposition to the BLM's
proposed oil and gas leasing program in the Coastal
Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil
and gas drilling would cause irreparable harm to the
lives of the Gwich'in people, who have called the
Coastal Plain home since time immemorial. Such action
would be in direct offense of the health and well-being
of Americans across the Nation, who will be harmed by
the pollution and heightened climate change impacts
produced by fossil fuels.

I am fortunate to have experienced the beauty that
is the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge when I visited
Kaktovik in 2016. It was simply amazing and something
I never thought I'd be able to see or experience as
someone who grew up in Los Angeles. The Refuge Coastal
Plain is home to caribou, musk oxen, wolves, and snow
geese, and an important habitat for many migratory
birds. I remember seeing polar bears and their cubs
gnawing on whale bones, empty whale bones with no meat
on it.

It is important to protect this place for the
environmental and cultural value that it brings to
people and wildlife. Allowing oil and gas drilling
will cause irreparable harm that could never be
reversed or mitigated. We have a moral obligation to
our future generations to do what we can to ensure that they have a world where they have clean air, clean water, access to natural historic cultural landscapes that we're able to enjoy now.

The opening of the Coastal Plain to oil and gas drilling is an issue of environmental justice of epic proportions. First, doing so would cause disproportional health and community impacts for low-income and communities of color across the Nation from the pollution that such oil and gas would release, further exacerbating the impacts of climate change that would be felt in Alaska, the Arctic, and across the Nation. Impacts of this pollution and climate change range from higher rates of asthma for Latino children, higher rates of death from asthma, to the devastation and more than 4,000 deaths caused by Hurricane Maria in the island of Puerto Rico.

Secondly, oil and gas development in the Coastal Plain would be a direct threat to the well-being and future prosperity of the Gwich'in people, whose lives for generations have been spiritually, culturally, and physically connected to the Coastal Plain.
The Coastal Plain of the Refuge is a sacred place that they believe to be the place where life begins, and I've seen it. It is the birthplace for many of the animals, including the vital caribou, native to the region that they have depended on for food and a link to their traditional culture for generations. Drilling on this sacred land would be tantamount to ending their life as they know it.

Third, the decision-making process for the Coastal Plain leasing EIS has not adequately provided the inclusion of public input and has placed the interest of the oil and gas industry ahead of the American people. Environmental justice means that there is adequate time to hear all voices and access to all for the public process.

We oppose the Interior Department's extreme rushed process for scoping of the Environmental Impact Statement and echo the request of many in the environmental justice organizations of an extension of the public comment period for an additional 120 days. Climate change is real and environmental justice is real. We must protect the Arctic National Wildlife
1 Refuge.

2 We stand in support of the human rights of the

3 Gwich'in and speak for the importance of considering

4 the environmental justice consequences in the oil and

5 gas EIS as well as the cumulative impacts of climate

6 change that will affect Americans all across this

7 Nation.

8 Thank you for your time and your attention.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. DAVID BATT: Our next speaker will be Cathy

11 Giessel.

12 If you can keep the clapping down a little bit so

13 we can keep moving forward, please.

14 And just a quick reminder as Cathy is getting set

15 up, if you want the opportunity to speak, please go to

16 the speaker card table. We'll be closing that down in

17 about 45 minutes. Thank you.

18 MS. CATHY GIESSEL: Thank you. I am Alaska State

19 Senator Cathy Giessel. I represent a portion of

20 Anchorage, but I was born and raised in Fairbanks long

21 before statehood. I've been the chair of the Alaska

22 Senate Resources Committee for the last 6 years, and
I'm speaking in support of the opening of the 1002 area of ANWR to hydrocarbon exploration.

As the chair of the Alaska Senate Resources Committee, I could speak about the oil and gas in the 1002, the profits for governments, the long history of safe resource extraction, and the positive data about our healthy fish and game, but I ask you to consider the most important factor, that being the effect on the people of Alaska.

While I'm a state senator, professionally, I'm a nurse practitioner. I call your attention to a compelling research study examining the life expectancy across the U.S. The title of the research report is "Inequities in Life Expectancy Among U.S. Counties 1980 to 2014: Temporal Trends and Key Drivers." This was published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, Internal Medicine, in May of 2017.

This research examined life expectancy over the time, over time, and assessed factors affecting it, such as socioeconomic, behavioral, and health care access factors. The question posed: Are inequities in life expectancy growing or diminishing? And what
factors can explain those differences? A few of the
factors considered: poverty, high school graduation,
unemployment, and access to health care.

The results -- I'm actually holding up a map which
demonstrates the results -- compared to the national
average, Alaska's North Slope and the Northwest Arctic
Borough experienced the greatest increases in life
expectancy between 1980 and 2014, those increases of 8
to 14 years of life.

While Alaska is in the wrong spot and is the wrong
size on this illustration, this comes from the research
report, the dark blue color is the highest increase in
life expectancy, going down to the green areas, which
are also increases. You can see the entire State of
Alaska, but most prominently the North Slope and the
Northwest Arctic Borough, was affected. This increase
in life expectancy rippled out to the other areas of
the State. The research identified socioeconomic,
behavioral, and health care access as responsible for
74 percent of the increase in life expectancy.

So what does this have to do with resource
development in ANWR? Data is useless until it's turned
into information. Remember the dates of this research review, 1980 to 2014. Oil production on the North Slope began in 1979. The Red Dog Mine, which is in Northwest Arctic Borough, began operations in 1989. Both of these resource development projects were preceded by the exact same outcry, predicting devastation and destruction if the projects were allowed to go forward. But in reality, both projects, and many others, have brought health and prosperity to the Alaskans living in the area as well as the rest of the State. In fact, health impact assessments have become institutionalized in Alaska for the last 10 years. Details of this process has been published in the International Journal of Circumpolar Health.

As a child, I often went to work with my dad, a captain for Wien Airlines. I flew with him to the North Slope and western Alaska villages. I saw the struggle that true subsistence lifestyle entails. As an intern for U.S. Senator Ted Stevens in 1970, I accompanied him to our many rural villages that had no health care clinics, clean water, or wastewater facilities. It's different now. I don't call these
villages anymore. They are prospering communities with Internet connectivity, schools, clinics, and healthy people with jobs, aspirations, and hope for the future. Yes, there is more work to do with safe water, sanitation, and social issues, but jobs change lives for the better. That's what resource development means for Alaskans.

Public opinion polling over the last 28 years finds 66 to 75 percent of the Alaskan public support opening ANWR to resource development. Over the last 21 years, the Alaska legislature has passed resolutions to open ANWR with 80 to 98 percent yes votes.

As you consider the impact to the environment, fish and game, water, and the rest, you must also factor in the socioeconomic and health impacts of jobs, prosperity, for the long-term benefit of all Alaska's people. Thank you for your work.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Our next speaker will be Dana Tizya-Tramm.

MR. DANA TIZYA-TRAMM: (Speaking in Alaska Native language.) That means good day to all of my relations.
My name is Dana Tizya-Tramm, and I am here today, as I have been tasked to carry the voices of my ancestors and my people, who know the ways of the land and the animals, a people that know that the land and the animals speak for themselves. But as the elders have told me, for those who cannot hear it, we have now been forced to speak on behalf of them.

It's interesting to hear people speak, and this is not a debate. We're not able to untangle comments and how they fit holistically into a much larger and complex system, one in which we all belong, and one in which we all have a stake and feel a responsibility.

Meaningful and scientific studies that consider a multiyear cross-species effect on flora and fauna in this area is just the beginning. People talk about how this can be done safely. Prove it. People talk about ice roads. Where are the millions of liters of water going to go when they melt, and how is that going to affect permafrost? This is just simply some of the easy ones to tear apart, but I fail to see how opening the last 5 percent of the Arctic coast and the cumulative effects of all of the
industry is going to fit into a healthy future.

Resource development and extraction is not the only way to make money. How will you take into account the spiritual and archeological and historical value of this area, as it has been valued sacred by indigenous peoples, and it also holds significant evidence of the first peoples in North America going back down to the Beringia period? How will you remediate these lands and convince the animals that are teaching their young no longer to return?

In all of the technicalities that I can go into, of all the things that I can say, here is one that's immediately of issue, and that's this process. That's the Department of Interior, that's the BLM, and that is also the leadership in Alaska, who have fast-tracked a democratic process, thrown this into a tax bill, tasked yourselves with doing an impossible task. Let us not forget the long history put to preserve this area and how you are going to balance production as well as protecting animals is impossible.

In Section 1005 of ANILCA, and I quote, In addition, the Secretary shall consult with the
appropriate agencies of the Government of Canada in
evaluation such impacts particularly with respect to
the Porcupine caribou herd. No opportunity has been
afforded to the government of my people, the Vuntut
Gwich'in, nor has there been an opportunity afforded to
any Canadians within the territory or Federal
Governments, as we have created a working relationship
together to deal with this.

There is small amounts of development in the
wintering grounds that have been so only because there
is trust, because there is meaningful consultation,
because we can guarantee no effects, and that's doing
studies together, and that is not what is happening
here.

You, the BLM, may believe that there may not be
much point to this, especially now that it has been
mandated by law. A refuge that is now tasked with
producing oil and gas, which now brings us to what you
call a public hearing on the scoping process that is to
inform the environmental impact study. Some even feel
that I may be wasting everyone's time with my efforts,
and the truth is, is that this process is wasting
everybody's time.

When the truth is manipulated, the democratic processes are manipulated, they are turned into a farce and for show. The truth is, is that this process and the integrity becomes meaningless when you fundamentally contradict yourselves by managing Federal refuge lands that are now to be drilled. So why should I follow this process when nobody, and yourselves, don't seem to know what it is? When all of your lands are exhausted, and when these lands are irreparably damaged, the people in all of these areas and us together, when your grandchildren can no longer be supported, when all of the oil is gone, let them know that the indigenous people up north and the Gwich'in people will gladly take them in and teach them how to live sustainably with each other and with the environment as we are here to stand with everyone.

Mahsi'.

(Appplause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: All right. Our next speaker will be Shantha Ready Alonso.

MS. SHANTHA READY ALONSO: I'm Shantha Ready
Alonso, with Creation Justice Ministries. And I'm testifying today on behalf of a Christian membership organization of orthodox mainline Protestant, Historically Black Church, Peace Church, and Baptist traditions. Through our members, we serve approximately 100,000 churches and 40 million people.

In my capacity as co-chair of the Interreligious Energy and Ecology Working Group, which twice monthly convenes dozens of religious organizations engaged in public policy, I also bring concerns of Jewish, Catholic, and Evangelical partner organizations.

For decades, religious communities have advocated to protect the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from any extractive activity that could disrupt precious ecosystems therein. This religious community advocacy priority originated through the Episcopal Church, which has a deep and special relationship with the Gwich'in Nation of northeast Alaska and northwest Canada. For more than 150 years -- 150 years ago, Anglican, and subsequently Episcopal, missionaries traveled to Fort Yukon, Alaska, to establish a mission there, and today more than 90
percent of the Gwich'in are Episcopalian. Since 1991, the Episcopal Church has honored its General Convention resolution to oppose oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Since the 1990s, the cause to protect the refuge from drilling has received long-term institutional support from the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the National Council of Churches USA, the Evangelical Environmental Network, to name a few. Through our relationship with the Episcopal Church, many religious communities have come to understand the ecological integrity of the Coastal Plain, as not only one of the last best intact examples of the works of the Lord, but also as an essential — as essential to the religious liberty and land-based subsistence lifestyle of the Gwich'in people. For daily sustenance, the Gwich'in depend on the Porcupine caribou herd, whose birthing pattern would be disrupted by oil exploration in the refuge, ultimately threatening the survival both of the caribou and of the Gwich'in. We understand the Porcupine caribou's birthing ground, the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge, plays an important role in Gwich'in creation
stories. They call the Coastal Plain "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins," and the Gwich'in believe that a bit of every human heart is in every caribou, and that a bit of caribou is in every person. Any threat to the animal is a threat to the Gwich'in.

It is important to note that this land is developed and is in use. It is providing grazing and birthing grounds for the caribou on which the Gwich'in survival depends. While this land may not create economic benefit for corporations or the State, it is the source of life for the Gwich'in and has been for over 10,000 years, and we must take that seriously.

There is so much more to say about the relationship between the Gwich'in and the Porcupine caribou, so I will submit for the record a 2005 joint report by the Gwich'in Steering Committee and the Episcopal Church, "A Moral Choice for the United States: Human Rights Implications for the Gwich'in of Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge."

Over the past 15 years, the United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church, Mennonite Church USA, and many other denominations have been undergoing processes
of study and repentance for Christianity's historic
role in devastating indigenous cultures,
spiritualities, and the ecosystems on which they rely.
And as part of our repentance, we're seeking to rectify
injustices towards indigenous communities, and we
refuse to allow the perpetuation of this historical
trauma. For these reasons, church communities have
become more aware and more forceful about our moral
responsibility to protect the Gwich'in people's ability
to culturally, spiritually, and physically rely on the
bounty of the Arctic Refuge, as they have for more than
10,000 years.

Most recently, in 2017, over 120 Episcopal bishops
met in Alaska to learn more and reaffirm their
commitment to the church's opposition to drilling. The
National Religious Partnership has circulated
petitions, getting support from tens of thousands of
faith communities about the strongest possible
conservation protection for the refuge as well as
please refraining from allowing oil and gas leasing.
I appeal to all who are faced with leasing
decisions to consider carefully the full scope of harm
that can be done to the ecological integrity of the Coastal Plain, not only by drilling activities, but also seismic testing and broader imposition of oil and gas infrastructure, such as roads and pipelines. Such harm to this special part of God's creation has no moral justification.

Today, we face a question of whether or not in 2018 the U.S. Government will make the same grave errors of centuries past towards indigenous peoples. The Episcopal Church Creation Justice Ministries, the Inter-Religious Energy and Ecology Working Group, and the millions of people of faith we represent urge you not to inflict these horrors once again.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: The next speaker will be Fenton Rexford. Fenton Rexford.

MR. FENTON REXFORD: Thank you. Hello. Thank you for this opportunity to present my comments to you at this scoping hearing.

My name is Fenton Rexford. I come from the community and Native Village of Kaktovik, where I was
born and raised, to speak to you on behalf of my people
and myself.

I'd like to give a brief history of our lands. My
forefathers and many, many generations migrated from
the Wotocott (ph) area all the way through Greenland,
and my uncle said this, "Nephew, you know that we
survived by the names of our people." We didn't
starve. We were not killed. We didn't freeze to
death. And, yes, from the Wotocott area all the way to
Greenland, we have similar names and languages, and
that's a fact, and that's been on for many, many
thousands of years, ever since the migration of the
peoples of the Arctic.

Again, the military came in, PLO 82 was set aside.
They assumed control over Barter Island, took over the
Native Village of Kaktovik, the cemeteries, and the
people there were forced to relocate three times.
We're at our third location there. Our traditional sod
houses and cemeteries were bulldozed for this military
protection of our lands. There were toxic materials
and waste were haphazardly dumped on our lands. Folks,
we have received no restitution, no acknowledgement for
what has been done to our community. There was no
outcry from outside groups who consider themselves to
somehow be the protectors of this land.

Then the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge,
President Eisenhower set aside 8 million acres. We did
not hear anyone, no one came to the Village of Kaktovik
to say we're going to start this range, Arctic National
Wildlife Range, no government officials. And we become
aware, a manager from Fairbanks area says, "You cannot
hunt here." And my grandfather spoke to him. Hunger
knows no law, and that were his exact words.

So we've been fighting this refuge or this range
since my grandfather before I was born. Then in 1980,
ANILCA passed, 19.3 million acres was established.

Our homelands are within the Continental Divide
from the Brooks Range to the Arctic Ocean, from
Sagavanirktok by Prudhoe Bay east -- west of us, to the
eastern Canadian border, and it goes beyond that. We
have relatives in Canada. And we've been hunting there
for 11,000 years, hunting, gathering, and raising our
families in this area around Kaktovik.

Then in 1970s, ANCSA passed. We used to -- we
were able to hunt around the 23 million acre area. And
then our traditional, our legal rights to take a
western title of 92,000 acres. Now we have finally
reached from Congress -- we have heard from Congress to
develop our own lands for our own economic means, and
we mean to seize this opportunity and actively
participate in this process.

We have been able to adapt and embrace the
opportunities we were given, whatever they were. We
consider the resources there that the lands that
provide to be our greatest gifts, whether it's the
resources, the animals, the waterfowl, and they've been
there, and they will continue to be there.

We are not victims. We have a right to economic
self-determination. We are committed, as the only
Native Tribal organization, Federally Recognized Tribe,
within the 1002. To do this, we will need help with
technical assistance from your agency.

I appreciate this opportunity to let you know a
brief history of our people in our lands. So thank you
for this opportunity. Again, in the early -- when the
refuge or range was established, no one from the
government gave us this opportunity. And I am honored
to come to Washington, D.C., the capital of our Nation,
and let you know that we exist there, and we support
the opening. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Our next speaker will be Jerrald John.

MR. JERRALD JOHN: Hello. I am Jerrald John, and
I am 31 years of age. I am a Neetsaii Gwich'in, and I
am from Arctic Village, which is a small community
located in the northeastern interior of Alaska along
the southern border of the north -- of the Arctic
Wildlife Refuge. I am also elected leader of the
Arctic Village Council, which is a Federal Recognized
Tribe. I'm a hunter and I'm a construction worker.
Alongside, I'm a wildland firefighter. Last year, my
crew was even called down as far away as California to
help with fires down there.

I have traveled over 5,000 miles to be here, and
I'm happy and I'm honored to be in our Nation's
capital. I come to talk about my way of life, which
has been around for nearly 25,000 years. Now the
caribou and the Gwich'in that depend upon them are
under threat by those who want to explore for gas and
oil in their calving grounds.

My life is about living off the land. I harvest
my first caribou when I was 9 years old. You can walk
into my house and look into my freezer, you will find
waterfowl, fish, big game, and small game. In my
village, a 20-ounce steak would cost you $34. And I
could spend $34 on a steak and feed myself for a day,
or I could buy a box of ammunition for $34, and feed
the entire town. The Gwich'in use caribou for
everything, from clothes, tools, arts and craft, and
even games for all ages.

My people used to be nomadic, following the
caribou herd. Back when they -- back then, they
harvest caribou by constructing large fencelike
structures which help contain the migrating caribou, so
they could be more easily harvest. Recently, in Arctic
Village, the youth reconstructed a caribou fence for
the first time in many decades. Even in the hardest of
times, my people, even when there was famine, my people
would not go to the Coastal Plains because it is a
place where life begins. As we speak, there are not
1,000, but not 10,000, calves being born on the Coastal
Plain, but at least 80,000 calves are being born this
month free of disturbance.

Not only caribou migrate there, but thousands of
birds, including the canvasback from here in
Washington, D.C. The white-front goose from Texas.
And then there's the snow geese from South Dakota, and
the snow geese numbers are in the millions, not -- and
everyone hunts them. There's the Arctic tern that
comes as far away from Antarctica, and they're flying a
half a year just to get to the Coastal Plain and have
their babies, and then they fly south with them. Many
animals go there to give birth.

Nowadays, within my family and surrounding
communities, the Gwich'in have doctors, lawyers, and
other professionals. We have also Gwich'in that have
enrolled in all branches of the military, as some are
currently in active duty. We are also really religious
people. I am a Native American, and my Native ways
come first. And I'm an American as much as any other
American around here. And we're watching news, and
when we see shootings going on in schools, and we see young people hurting and young families hurting, we feel mad and we feel sad, and we pray for them.

I hope everyone here in D.C. makes the right choice, not just for Alaskans, but all -- but for future generations of Americans so they can see and appreciate these beautiful lands as my ancestors have.

Thank you.

(Applause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: The next speaker will be Richard Glenn. Richard Glenn.

MR. RICHARD GLENN: Thank you. Good afternoon.

My name is Richard Glenn, and I'm a resident of Alaska. I'm a geologist by training, and I serve as Vice President of Lands and Natural Resources for Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, or ASRC. It's headquartered on Alaska's North Slope.

ASRC is one of the 12 land-owning regional corporations created by Congress in 1971, and it owns approximately 5 million acres of land on the North Slope, including the rights to 92,000 acres on the Coastal Plain of ANWR. ASRC and the Kaktovik Iñupiat
Corporation, KIC, jointly own the 92,000 acres. Our region includes eight villages: Point Hope, Point Lay, Wainwright, Atqasuk, Utqiagvik, Nuiqsut, Kaktovik, and Anaktuvuk Pass. North Slope residents there depend on subsistence resources from the land, rivers, and ocean, as they always have. The regional also depends upon continued resource development for the survival of its communities. Only by taxing the presence of the industry in our region have we been able to build a local economy and develop a means for improving the quality of life in our remote villages, and it has not come at the expense of any wildlife.

Running water, reliable power, local education, and improved health care, things that most people take for granted, can be furnished in our region only if there is a tax base for our local government, the North Slope Borough. The development of resources on the North Slope has evolved over the years and today occupies a much reduced footprint to access the same resources that would have been developed years ago, and it has done so without harming wildlife populations.
development because, one, there's room, contrary to
what you can -- what you might interpret from maps,
and, two, development itself is designed to be of no
threat to wildlife.

I have accompanied many congressional delegation
visits and agency visits to the North Slope. We
frequently run into caribou, waterfowl, and other
wildlife species. The animals there truly have the
right of way.

As stated by my fellow Alaskan, the quality of
life has improved in our region, thanks in part to
resource development. And I reference the same Journal
of the American Medical Association article that shows
the greatest increase in life expectancy exists in the
North Slope, where oil and gas development has improved
our communities. No other area experienced a higher
increase in life expectancy, and the factors explaining
this increase are the things that have been improved by
the presence of industry in our region.

On the North Slope, we observe that development
and wildlife populations coexist. We see the
development in our people also coexist. The survival
of our region, in fact, and the development of our communities today depends on continued development. In addition, wildlife surveys funded by the State of Alaska show that the Central Arctic caribou herd, which calves in the vicinity of ongoing development today, migrates southward over the Brooks Range and into the Arctic Village area, where Gwich'in people live. So the Gwich'in people themselves are harvesting from a herd that coexists with development.

Regarding the Village of Kaktovik that exists in our region, I have several specific recommendations to the BLM that I invite them to review in my written comments.

ASRC strongly encourages the BLM to work with the Village of Kaktovik and the North Slope Borough. ANWR, especially the 1002 area, is the ancestral homeland of the Iñupiat people. In trying to listen to the will of the American people regarding ANWR, extra attention should be given to Kaktovik and the North Slope Borough. ASRC understands that there is a public lands public comment aspect to all of the wildlife refuge, and that the American people have a role to play in its
management, but extra attention should be paid to those
who reside within the region. My analogy is if you're
about to occupy someone's house, you should not give
more attention to the neighbors down the street than
you do to the occupants of the house.

ASRC intends to remain engaged with the BLM to
advocate for the exploration and development of its
lands as well as the public lands within the 1002 area.

Thank you.

(Appause.)

MR. DAVID BATTs: Thank you.

Our next speaker will be Bernadette Demientieff.

MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: (Speaking in Alaska
Native language.) My name is Bernadette Demientieff,
and I am here on behalf of the Gwich'in Nation of
Canada and Alaska.

For thousands of years, the Gwich'in migrated with
the caribou. Our communities and the migratory route
are identical. We have always had a culture on
spiritual connection to the caribou. Our voice are
important also, so why are you choosing oil and gas
companies over the human -- over the human rights of
the Gwich'in, especially when over 70 percent of the
U.S. do not want development? We have Senators and
Representatives that stand with us. This is our
homelands, our way of life, and our food security, our
identity, and our future that you are destroying.

Shame on you for taking the seriousness of
democracy and turning it into a joke. Shame on you for
stomping all over our human rights and continuing the
oppression and genocide of the indigenous peoples of
this country. You are to consult with the Tribes,
which you have failed to do. You deny our extensions
with no reasonable explanation, dismiss our requests
for government-to-government consultation. You are not
above the law. You cannot just come into our homelands
and destroy what we have been living off of for
thousands of years.

These steps to open up the Arctic Refuge is a
direct attack on the Gwich'in and the Porcupine
caribou. This government has disrespected our people
for long enough. Your lack of communication is
unacceptable. You don't respond to our concerns or
even just our comments. You sit there and you just
look so bored. We're talking about our ways of life.

We're talking from our heart. And some of you are on your phone, and you just look so disengaged. And we are here trying to plead with you to understand where we are coming from. Quit listening to the corporations or people that are going to benefit from this.

Sorry.

You need to listen to the people whose lives are going to forever change. I know you don't care about me or my people. I know you don't care about what's going to happen to us, but I do. I've lost my identity, and I feel like I'm finding it again, and I know that more of my people that can happen to. The Porcupine caribou herd are our identity. They are our way of life.

It frustrates me when I listen to people say that the caribou and people can -- or the caribou and oil can coexist when Murkowski's own expert at the Energy hearing came out and said that it couldn't. So we need to be doing our own research and listen to our elders. My elders are my scientists, and they say this is not the right thing to do. Your rush to process is
disrespectful and insulting, and you need to take it more serious. Our lives depend on it. We need to take care of the land and not destroy it.

Thank you.

(Appplause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Kara Moriarty.

MS. KARA MORGARTY: Good evening. My name is Kara Moriarty, and I'm the President and CEO of the Alaska Oil and Gas Association. And I appreciate the invitation to come back to D.C. to represent our trade association.

I just want to share that my first job in Alaska, however, was as an elementary school teacher in the Village of Atqasuk. It was -- I taught first and second grade, and it was in 1996, and I worked for the richest school district in the Nation. And the reason I worked for the richest school district in the Nation is because 99 percent of the North Slope Borough's revenues come from property tax of oil and gas properties in the region. I could not see the oil and gas properties from Atqasuk, but my kids had three computers. We did videoconferencing. They all had
their own email addresses. It was a village of 250
people, and we had a swimming pool for exercise. So
that was my first experience in Alaska seeing firsthand
what development can do for local communities.

But I'm here tonight to talk about the opportunity
of our -- to talk about our well-established history as
an industry of prudent and environmental responsible
exploration and development. We do make modifications
for the wildlife. We do, do infrared technology to
identify polar bear dens and build ice roads around
them. We do build causeways for caribou.

As an organization representing companies who may
participate in this lease sale, and undoubtedly there
will be those oppose it, it is virtually and vitally
important that the BLM have a very thorough NEPA
process. Folks have talked about ANILCA and 1980, and
there is a section in ANILCA, it's Section 1002, which
expressly directed the Interior Secretary to carry out
oil and gas exploration program and conduct a baseline
study. The 1002 section of ANILCA did that.

And so the Department of Interior, in the 19-mid-'80s, conducted over 1,300 miles of seismic and issued
a report in 1987 that recommended an Environmental Impact Statement, and it says, and I quote, that the 1002 area is, quote, the Nation's best single opportunity to increase significantly domestic oil production and most outstanding petroleum exploration target in the onshore U.S., unquote. That is still true today.

The 1002 area is the largest onshore Federal opportunity in the Nation. It is also the largest conventional opportunity on all lands in the U.S. And why is that important? Demand is not going away. It is important to recognize that the demand for traditional sources of energy are not going down, they are going up over the next several decades.

It's also important for Alaska's economy. One-third of all of our jobs and all of our revenue in the State of Alaska can be attributed back to the industry that I proudly represent.

I just want to take a moment to reflect on some of the things that were being said 40-some years ago when the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline was being considered. Some -- one critic said if TAPS was built,
caribou would go the way of the buffalo and the
passenger pigeon. That has not happened. Another
critic said, after the "haul road" was finished, that
the road would be -- the wilderness would be broken
forever. It is not the psychology of the North, and it
would be gone. Another critic said that TAPS would be,
quote, the greatest environmental disaster of our time,
unquote. TAPS today has a 99.98 percent reliability.
We have safely produced and transported over 17 billion
barrels of oil in the last 40-plus years.

Commissioner Mack talked about our track record of
how we continue to make modifications. An average pad
back then in the '70s would be about 65 acres, and you
could only go about 3.5 miles underneath the ground.
Today, the average acre size for a pad is about 20, and
as Commissioner Mack said, it extends to about 113
miles.

There are no guarantees that the oil and gas
industry will participate in a potential lease sale;
however, a lease sale is the first step in the process,
and we think it is very important for BLM to offer the
lease sale to see what the interest is to see if we can
continue to partner with the local community to provide stability, jobs, and a strong future.

Thank you.

(Appause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Our next speaker will be Adam Kolton.

MR. ADAM KOLTON: I'm Adam Kolton. I'm the Executive Director of the Alaska Wilderness League. Thanks for having this hearing. You know, I've had the privilege of hiking, camping, traveling extensively across the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the adjacent Native villages and experiencing this place firsthand, but so many of the members, the 100,000 members in support of the Alaska Wilderness League won't have that opportunity, and deeply care about this place.

It's good that you're having this hearing. It's good to ensure that all stakeholders in a process have a chance to participate, but I'm worried that this isn't -- this isn't a legitimate enough process. I mean, as has been referenced, the tax bill required a lease sale within 4 hours. You've announced in signage
right outside you're going to have it in 1 year.

You've denied requests for additional hearings in
Native villages. You've denied requests for hearings
all across the United States when all Americans have a
rightful ownership stake in the Arctic National
Wildlife Refuge and ought to have a say in it.

And there's a limit to who can speak tonight. And
I would ask you, request, that you consider extending
this hearing. And surely if the food security of the
Gwich'in is at stake, and we called away our dinner, so
that every single person that wants to have their voice
heard at this hearing has that opportunity, I'd ask you
to consider that. There is no need for us to leave.

Let's make sure everybody has their voice heard
tonight.

(Appause and cheering.)

MR. ADAM KOLTON: I don't think -- if I'm wrong,
and this isn't a box-checking exercise, is there are
certainly other steps that you can take. One concrete
step would be that the BLM should request an exemption
from this arbitrary and, frankly, unfounded and illegal
mandate to have an EIS done in a single year. Now,
that's not something that is a good, fair, or just, or, frankly, legal process to undertake.

There shouldn't be any arbitrary limit to the page numbers or what ought to be looked at. The BLM ought to also listen to the scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey and others from your own assessment in January, which said that a lot more study and information needs to be done to look at climate impacts, impacts on caribou, other impacts. You don't have enough information. The time needs to be taken to get this right.

Finally, you need to take a hard look at the industrialization of Alaska's North Slope. This notion that there is some lesson to be learned from the newest technology, that's not what we're seeing. New oil fields or having permanent roads, gravel mining, use of fresh water resources. There are over 1,000 square miles of oil development, and that's not what was anticipated when the Trans-Alaska Pipeline was built. The pipeline is well beyond its life expectancy now. We're getting well past that.

And when are we going to stop? You know, there's
got to be a point at which we set our sights in a transition, and the EIA just this week is talking about maybe getting a drop of oil more than a decade from now, maybe -- maybe we'll reach peak production if we find oil 30 years from now, 40 years from now. What about our dependence?

At what point are we going to take climate change seriously? Climate impacts need to be looked at, and they need to be looked at not just in the context of impacts on wildlife and subsistence and other resources, but how the industry can operate in those conditions. Conditions are changing. Ice road season is changing. There are other serious impacts from that.

In terms of the process, you also need to look at the wilderness character of the Coastal Plain. As was stated, the original Arctic Wildlife Range had wilderness as one of the -- as one of the fundamental commitments to this area. It is the only place that was legally protected by Congress from oil and gas development. So are we now saying that 100 percent of the American Arctic coastal landscape should be
available for oil and gas development? I don't even
think a majority of Alaskans want to see 100 percent of
the American Arctic turned over to the oil and gas
industry. Has that question been asked in a poll? I'd
like to see that poll result.

You need to fully assess the economics, including
minimum bid requirements. The tax bill had this notion
of $1 billion being generated from oil and gas leasing
on the Coastal Plain. What are the minimum bid
requirements going to be to hit that number? And if
they aren't met, then leases shouldn't be held.

You need to look closely not only at potential
wildlife impacts, but the international treaty
obligations, as was mentioned. You know, the great
Justice William O. Douglas once called the Arctic
Wildlife Refuge the most wondrous place on God's Earth.
It certainly is a spectacular place. I certainly hope
that you will take this process as seriously as you can
and make sure that all Americans have a chance to have
their voices heard to protect the Arctic Refuge.

Thank you.

(Applause and cheering.)
MR. DAVID BATTS: All right. We are at our last speaker. So if you have not received a speaker card and still would like that opportunity, please go back to the speaker table and be sure that you grab that card. We want to make sure that we give everybody that opportunity to speak.

Is Deano Olemaun present?

MR. FORREST "DEANO" OLEMAUN: Good evening. My name is Forrest Olemaun. I serve as the Chief Administrative Officer of the North Slope Borough, the municipal government for the North Slope region. But before I get started on my comments, I just wanted to give a little bit of who I am. I am the son of Nathaniel Olemaun, Sr., who is an Inupiat Eskimo man from Barrow who fought in World War II, who fought in the Korean conflict, and who fought in the Vietnam War. And he never went without answering the call to duty for my ability to stand here freely to agree or disagree, and I thank you for that opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about the Interior Department's proposal to develop a leasing program for the Coastal Plain of ANWR. Our
region, the North Slope, is about the size of the State
of Wyoming. ANWR, on the eastern side of our region,
is about the size of South Carolina. The Coastal Plain
of ANWR is about the size of Delaware. ANWR is
considered a special place for many reasons. Some in
this room are opposed to oil and gas development in
ANWR because they want to protect ANWR as a special
place, but I hope those of you who come from this part
of the country will also appreciate that you are
speaking about our homeland and how it should be
managed in your opinion. I hope you will listen
respectfully to the opinions of the people who are from
the North Slope and from ANWR itself.

Some of our residents testifying before the Senate
Energy Committee in support of developing the oil
resource in ANWR have been accused of hypocrisy for
supporting oil and gas, even as our villages are
threatened by impacts of climate change. We see
hypocrisy, too. We see people who want to protect
special places somewhere else where the residents have
little power in our government while all the land
around their own communities is paved over.
ANWR is a special place. It is certainly a place worth protecting, but we should not be prevented from using it. It is our backyard. Protecting it doesn't mean locking up the entire region from development. The Native Village of Kaktovik located within the Coastal Plain of ANWR, and the only Federally Recognized Tribe in ANWR, supports a leasing program and believes that the resource can be developed while protecting the land.

I'm a proud dad. This year my kids, who are school-aged, all received perfect attendance 2 years running in an elementary school minutes from our home, and they will attend high school at home if they choose. They can attend college for free at home, too. Educating our youth here at home is what those who walked before us envisioned when the North Slope Borough was created just 45 years ago. Prior to that time, our young people were sent away from their homes after grade school. There they were thrust into boarding schools and sometimes out of state, where they were sometimes forbidden from practicing their culture.

I was lucky, because of my elders who fought for my
right for self-determination.

Oil and gas development, when done safe and responsible, will not kill our culture, and our culture will not kill development of our natural resources. When we find the right balance, they have thrived together, and my kids will be able to have the best of both worlds.

I can only imagine what my predecessors have said before my time, and I am aware that it has been said many times over the past 40 years, that we must be a part of the decision-making processes. The people of the North Slope stand by ready to craft a way forward to ensure prosperity done in a responsible manner. Technology has evolved this last 40 years, and so has the current generations. We must, and I'll repeat that, we must, as a Nation, a State, and local community work together for the sake of self-determination and self-preservation.

(Speaking in Alaska Native language.) Let us move forward together. Thank you for this time.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. Thank you very much. I
would like to thank all of our speakers. You did a
wonderful job. And I think everybody minded the time
limit very well.

So one last speaker that we have will be Sarah
James, and then we will move into the public scoping
period. Before we get to that speaker, are there any
representatives from the Sierra Club here?

(No audible response.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. I will come by and visit
with you in one moment.

Sarah James? Sarah.

MS. SARAH JAMES: (Speaking in Alaska Native
language.)

My name is Sarah James, and I'm from Arctic
Village. I got a name after my grandma on both sides,
so my name is Sarah James, Sarah Agnes James, and I'm
just proud of it. And you're going to have to bear
with me because English is my second language. And I
don't have any kind of degree, but I did learn, and I
learned how to live in the two world, and it's not very
easy.

It's not easy today or easy for my grandma or
grandpa way before us. There was change got put upon
them. They were strong and wise and very organized,
and nobody die of anything but maybe old age. They own
very little, and they live with the land, and the land
was plenty. And now today, we could even hear the pin
drop. It used to be alive. It's supposed to be noisy
and alive.

And we -- since 1988, when the elders came and got
us back together after the border separated us for 150
years, it was like a rebirth of a nation. And there
they made a decision, we'll do this in a good way
because nobody knows Gwich'in, nobody knows Porcupine
caribou, nobody even know there was Arctic National
Wildlife Refuge, and they were going to -- it was a
threat to us to have oil and gas come in to drill, and
they didn't even ask us. And we're nobody.

And today, as a chairperson to Gwich'in Steering
Committee since 1988, first it was Jonathan, my elder,
Jonathan Solomon, and then his brother, Peter Solomon.
They're both passed, and they're our strength with us
today, and they're here today with us. And I've been a
chairperson. And we did everything right. We followed
the Congress, the right channel. We talked to the
right people. We did everything right. We did our job
for 30 years.

And now they have to know we've got Tribal
government, and they have to deal with government-to-
government. We have expertise and our own Tribal
government. We govern ourself from the kind of
beginning. And now we just had government-to-
government scoping, and it's going to continue. And I
was chosen, honored, to be a spokesperson for Arctic
Village, Venetie, and Native Village of Venetie Tribal
Government. And I'm so proud to be a member of Tribal
Government.

So we're talking about birthplace, a calving
ground. Right now they're all up there. The cows and
the bulls, they're all up there. So protect the cow to
prepare to have the calf and nurse the calf, and then
train the calf to run so they can run away from
predators. And then mosquito come and they have to
move on up to the mountains. That's what they go
through for thousand of years.

Me, as a mother, any living being, when I was
going to have my child, I went through the same thing.
I want a place where it's healthy and quiet and clean
and a place that's healthy, and that's the same thing
they need as a living thing, and that's the place we're
talking about, "Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit," "The
Sacred Place Where the Life Begin."

And we follow everything, Arctic National Wildlife
or any refuge, we are the core manager, and that's been
ignored, too, and that's the way it is or any refuge is
established. If they go into this refuge, they'll go
in your backyard. No matter who you are, they're going
to go in backyard and they're going to finish that
pipeline all the way to Virginia and there going to be
no stop of protecting your own backyard.
Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you very much.

So this concludes our predesignated list of
speakers. We're going to go ahead and move over to the
public speaking portion this evening. We will take a
break here in a few moments, but first I'd like to go
ahead and get our ballot box brought down.
MS. SARAH JAMES: I forgot to hand in these material I have here, a real map and real people laying their life down, and the fish and wildlife. I did very good on birds where they came from. And our own map, that will tell everything, and this -- that beautiful picture and --

MR. DAVID BATTS: Great. Thank you very much.

(Appause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: All right. So just a quick show of hands. How many people have an opinion about this project?

(Show of hands.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. And we would love to hear from as many of you as we can tonight. But this is going to be kind of a two-way street here. My job is going to try to get you guys up here as quickly as possible to get you in and to get the comments going, but I also ask that you please do your part. I know there's a lot of emotion and you want to clap and you want to cheer and support people, that's wonderful to have positive energy, but if we could just limit our clapping to just polite soft clapping, or even better
waving the hands, that just allows me to verbalize and get people up to the microphones and get their comments in a little bit quicker.

So the way this is going to work tonight is we're going to do a random drawing. Everybody should receive their cards, put half of their card in the ballot box right here. We're going to conduct a drawing, we're going to pull out 40 names right now based off of our calculations, we think -- we know we can probably get through 40 speakers if everybody adheres to the 3-minute rule. And then if we land up with extra time this evening, we'll do another drawing and pull additional names out of the box.

Just a reminder, all comments, written, spoken, however you get them to us, all are weighted equally, so no necessary pressure on just feeling like if you don't want to speak but you want your voice heard, please be sure you send us that written comment.

So with that, we're going to go ahead and draw 40 names. What we're going to do is we will announce the number, so please pull out your card and look at the number. This is just like Bingo night because it's
Friday night. So we'll draw a number. We will write down the order of those numbers. We'll take a break. And then we will on the screen have a scrolling screen of numbers up here. And then we will seek people and get them ready to go. So we're going to call out numbers. Please don't leave for the break yet because after we have our 40 names, I have just two more announcements, and then I promise you a break.

So let's go ahead and do the numbers. And, Amy, can you speak into the microphone a little closer so you can say the numbers as you draw them?

AMY: I can. Hello.

MR. DAVID BATTS: Maybe I can draw them and hand them to you.

Speaker Drawing

AMY: Okay, the first one is 119, 118, 116, 10, 83, 110, 61, 26, 109, 96, 89, 1, 75, 100, 4, 12, 24, 67, 99, 84, 13, 41, 103, 56, 82, 29, 73, 102, 35, 78, 60, 74, 122, 21, 81, 91, 49, 90, 64, and 51.

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. So that's our first draw of 40 people. As you will notice, we've captured those on the screen. We will be scrolling through the
1 evening with these numbers, so it will help you
2 recognize when your turn is coming up if you have one
3 of those numbers. You will also notice that we have a
4 blue column, which with odd speaking numbers in order,
5 and green with even numbers. We have a blue number on
6 microphone number 1, and a green even number 2 on
7 microphone number two.
8 So for the first 10 people, if you see your number
9 up there in the first 10 group, please come down and
10 sit in the front chairs after the break, and we'll get
11 you queued up and ready to go. If you have the blue,
12 if you're an odd number, please sit on the blue side,
13 if an even number, sit on the green side. After a
14 person speaks, they can return to the audience, and the
15 next person in line on the queue can come down and sit
16 up front and get prepped to make their remarks.
17 So with that, we're going to go ahead and take a
18 quick break. It's 6:28. If we can come back no later
19 than 6:40, and we'll get started promptly then.
20 (Break.)
21 Public Comments
22 MR. DAVID BATTS: So, again, 118, 10, 110, 26, 96,
in the green area. 119, 116, 83, 61, 109 in the blue area. So I'm missing some blue people.

Okay, so we're going to go ahead and get started.

So just a couple of quick reminders. While your card has your name on it, and we'll be collecting your cards, that will be part of the record of who you are, but if you could please state your name clearly, slowly, and your organization, that way our court reporter will also be able to get that.

We have the timer up, and we'll start with number 119.

MS. JANE LYDER: My name is Jane Lyder. I worked at the Department of the Interior for about 35 years.
I worked on the issue of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for 40 years, starting in 1978, when ANILCA was passed. I know this issue very well, and I know it from both sides. I worked on it from both sides. And I realize there's a new factor now in the Tax Act.
The Tax Act made one of purposes of the refuge an oil and gas leasing program administered by the Bureau of Land Management, but it did not take away any of Fish and Wildlife Service's responsibilities. And
there are other purposes of the refuge. It did not make the oil and gas program a predominant purpose, it just made it one of the purposes.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has the legal responsibility, I believe, to ensure that the purposes are carried out and that the other purposes are looked at and considered and protected in the course of carrying out any one specific purpose. So I'm very hopeful that the Fish and Wildlife Service will play a very vibrant role in developing this oil and gas leasing program.

I'm also concerned about water. The North Slope, the 1002 area, is a desert, it's a tundra desert, and in order to do exploration, you do it in the winter and you build ice roads. Winter is shortening in Alaska, and water is scarce, and I'm curious as to where the water is coming from for those ice roads and what the impact will be of the exploration on the ice roads.

And lastly I'm concerned about polar bears. I went to a polar bear briefing a number of years ago at Interior where the USGS basically told us that our polar bears will go extinct because of melting sea ice.
And now we know that the sea ice is melting faster than we thought. Bears are denning much more unsure, and they're denning in the 1002 area, and they're denning where the oil is. Bears end up getting killed in human interaction with others on the North Slope. You're allowed to shoot a bear if a bear threatens your life. If there is development, if there is people on the North Slope where there weren't before, there will be more human-bear interactions. The polar bear is a threatened species now, but it's not doing well, they're losing weight, they're having trouble finding food.

So I personally wish Congress had not passed this provision. It's my personal views that the area should be wilderness and managed as wilderness, but I really, really hope that the two agencies work well together and try and put off political pressure to do this quickly, and to protect the refuge to the extent possible.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.
We'll get number 118 queued up. You can go back
to your seat, and we will have number 89. If you're
number 89, you can come down to the blue side.

DR. SOPHIA MARJANOVIC: Yes. My name is Dr.
Sophia Marjanovic. I'm representing myself, but I am
of the Fort Peck Oglala Lakota, which is of the Oceti
Sakowin. I am here before you because I am concerned
as a survivor of a community that has been drilled for
oil and gas since the 1940s.

We have been the dumping grounds of this Nation.
We have not had accountability. The only
accountability we've had was back in 2012 after 30
years of fighting for accountability after our women
have been dying from cancer. The top killer of our
women in our community is cancer. Nothing has been
done. All that we got for accountability was $2
million to the whole community after decades of people
dying from cancer.

When I went home during the summertimes on my
reservation, water literally came out of the faucets,
red, yellow, orange, smelling of petroleum, having oil
droplets floating atop it, and it smelling like
1 petroleum.

2 I stand with my indigenous brothers and sisters of
3 the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and in Alaska
4 because I know the impacts of what oil drilling does,
5 and I know how this Nation has treated us, and treating
6 us as the dumping grounds of this Nation. We're poor.
7 We often don't have access to the education. I heard
8 one person talking up here earlier that they were
9 hoping for all the development and the great things
10 that come from it. Literally back in 2012, I went back
11 to my reservation during the Williston oil boom because
12 we sit atop the Bakken Formation. We still have not
13 received any benefits of the development. The oil came
14 and went, and we're still dying. We're still poor. We
15 have the most suicides of any community in this
16 country. Where's the accountability? Where's all
17 these great things that are coming from the
18 development? It hasn't happened.
19
20 So I sit here and I ask that you protect the
21 Arctic National Wildlife because those are our brothers
22 and sisters, and what has happened to us should not be
23 happening to anyone else in this country.
Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. We'll go to number 116.

Will 1 come down?

MR. DREW MCCONVILLE: So I want to thank you for listening. I want to thank everybody for being here, especially at a really difficult time slot.

Particularly, I want to thank our Gwich'in friends, who have come all this way, others who have come from Alaska and other places to be here. I'll be really brief because I think you need to hear from everybody in this room. I appreciate, you know, the schedule that's been set for you, but I would urge you to listen to everybody, as you've heard before.

And -- but let me just tell you, I'm the Senior Managing Director for Government Relations at the Wilderness Society. I speak for myself, though. I speak for my family. I speak for my 1-year-old at home, who is growing and inheriting this world. And I speak for my family in Connecticut, in New York, in South Carolina, and many other places.

The Wilderness Society and myself, we don't oppose
oil and gas drilling everywhere, we just believe, like
most, the vast majority of, Americans, that some places
are too special to sacrifice to the impacts of
industrial oil and gas development. And if there was
ever a place, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and
the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge is such a place.
And you don't really need me to speak to that, you have
people who live there who have been there and can speak
to that better than me, and -- but I don't think
there's any denying it.

You know, but I just want to say even if you do
believe that industrial oil development across the
biological heart of this refuge can happen without
impacting the world-class wildlife, without the 200,000
strong Porcupine caribou herd, on which the Gwich'in
people depend, the onshore polar bear denning areas
that you -- that we talked about are so critically
important, and so much else in this refuge, and I know
people do believe this, I would just ask, how can you
support a rushed process that we're seeing right now?

You know, setting arbitrary deadlines like a lease
sale within 1 year is not just illegal, it's reckless.
It devalues science, it devalues indigenous knowledge, and it devalues all of the Americans who have a stake in what's happening up on the North Slope of Alaska and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

As you heard, and as the clock counts down on me, I'm thinking about the fact that, you know, as we heard, the Gwich'in people have depended on the Porcupine caribou and this way of life for over 25,000 years. Other Alaska Natives have been in this area for similarly long amounts of time, and no oil company is banging down the door to drill in this place or saying that they need this oil.

So I would ask -- you know, I would say that the least that the BLM can do is take the time that this process, the people here, the Gwich'in people, and all the people of America deserve because of this special place.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. We'll go to number 10, please. Number 75 come down to the blue, 75.

MS. KAREN SCHERER: I am Karen Scherer, from Fort
Myers, Florida. Florida's rising sea levels are directly related to the melting of Arctic ice sheets and glaciers. This melting process would be accelerated by oil and gas drilling because of the resulting byproducts, methane and black carbon, two potent greenhouse gases. Black carbon settles on ice sheets or glaciers, darkening the ground. This causes the surface to absorb solar energy that would otherwise be reflected back into space. As a result, glaciers melt at a much higher rate, increasing both sea levels and temperature of the ocean.

Professor Harold Wanless, Department Chair of the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Miami, states that there are two main reasons for rising sea levels: warming of ocean waters and ice melts. Drilling off the Coastal Plain would result in accelerated rise in sea levels. Communities in South Florida area already budgeting millions of additional dollars into road infrastructure, which includes raising the height of the roads in South Florida. It also includes drainage improvement and actions to protect and maintain the aquifers that provide fresh
water to the South Florida area.

The environmental concerns of Florida are reflected in a 2016 Nielsen survey. The Sunshine State, the biggest environmental problems that are facing Florida were water-related problems, 34 percent of the respondents; loss of natural lands for wildlife, 20 percent; and climate global warming, 18 percent. Together, these problems account for 72 percent of all responses. Citation rates of climate change and global warming were up 13 percent, and loss of natural lands were up 9 percent since the last survey.

5,200 Floridians signed a petition urging their Members of Congress to do what they can to protect the Arctic Refuge. It is also important to Florida that the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge be free of drilling.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 83?

MS. MCCARTER: Speaker 61?

MR. DAVID BATTS: So actually first we're on 83.
MS. MCCARTER: Oh.

MR. DAVID BATTS: Is 83, please? And then we will get to 61 after her.

So go ahead, please. Sorry about the confusion there.

MS. PAULA CLEMENTS: Hello. I'm Paula Clements. I am a trained climate reality leader. It's a volunteer position, and I've taken upon myself to learn about the climate and the effects that human behavior is having on our planet.

We are actually on the verge of a renewable energy revolution. Multiple studies and current facts show that renewables are outpacing both oil and gas. The current reserves of fossil fuels are abundant, and economic studies say that even those reserves are going to be considered stranded assets.

We are not -- we cannot afford to drill for more fossil fuels, and especially not in the fragile Arctic region, but not anywhere.

Comments have been made today about providing jobs and economic growth for the Alaskan people. Jobs in the renewable energy field -- solar and wind -- are the
fastest growing market in the United States. In fact, the number of people who are employed by renewables today drastically outnumbers those employed by oil and gas combined. Alaskan people can be trained to work in these renewable energy fields without destroying the pristine sacred Arctic Refuge. In fact, saddling the Alaskan people with dirty fossil fuels is guaranteed to doom them to a dying future.

The drilling in the Arctic regions cannot be done safely. Drilling and transportation have repeatedly caused spills worldwide. Add to that the severe conditions, and it's a recipe for disaster.

Now, industry is going to try to say that this modern technology is going to prevent that. And I submit to you the two pipelines that just exploded this week in West Virginia and in Kansas. The West Virginia pipeline had only been in use for less than 6 months, and it had been touted as state of the art.

Humanity cannot afford the extraction and burning of any more fossil fuels. Our planet is warming at an unprecedented rate. Unless we drastically cut our carbon emissions, we are locking our future generations
into a life of hardship and misery. We all deserve a
stable climate, so please stop this insanity.

(Applause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay, again, I just request,
it's going to make me be able to process people quicker
if we can just keep the clapping down so I can talk and
not have to talk over everybody.

Again, if you have a number that is up here on the
screen, please come down to the front row so that we
can make sure that we can get you queued up in an
effective manner. If it's on this side, you'll be with
Chad, if it's on this side, you'll be with Molly on
this side.

All right, ma'am, thank you.

MS. SANDRA ASHLEY: Hi. Hello. My name is Sandra
Ashley. I'm from Wilmington, New York. I'm a middle
school teaching assistant. And I'm here with the
Wilderness Defense -- anyway. I strongly oppose lease
sales in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As a
middle school teaching assistant and independent
conservative, I understand the importance of fossil
fuels, yet I'd really like to see that emphasis
decrease as we make more jobs available in the area of renewable energy.

I understand not wanting to rely upon other nations for our energy needs; however, I do not understand jeopardizing the land and homes of the many species of birds, plants, and animals in one of the few safe havens left in the world. I do not understand taking away the livelihood and the way of life of the indigenous people of this area by harming the Porcupine caribou, which provides a substantial portion of their dietary needs and is directly linked to their culture and their heritage. I do not understand breaking the agreement Ronald Reagan made with Canada in 1987 that ensured protection of the refuge, and, in particular, the wildlife of that area. I do not understand having to go back to my 8th grade students and telling them, "I'm sorry that your voices did not make a difference," when they care so much about this issue.

As a class, we decided that it would not -- we would not be okay with this happening to our home in the Adirondacks of northern New York, so we must speak out for this refuge as well. We need to support the
indigenous people who have been battling this issue for nearly 30 years. We've exterminated the buffalo of the past. Will we now exterminate the caribou? We say what we did was wrong, yet will we simply repeat this behavior: greed, grab, ruin, and then go?

I do have here with me an essay from one of my students. They all wrote different essays this past year about why they were so strongly opposed to the drilling in the Arctic. If kids can be smart enough to know the right answers, why can't we be?

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTs: Number 61?

MS. RHONDA HUNGERFORD: Hi. My name is Rhonda Hungerford. I live near Syracuse in Upstate New York and have been a long-time member of the Sierra Club and Defenders of Wildlife.

I adamantly oppose any lease sales in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As someone who places high value on time spent hiking in the woods and by lakes and streams in central New York and our Adirondack Park, I have also visited beautiful Alaska. I was
there in May 4 years ago, and it was so warm, people
were wearing beachwear at the beach. This is in May in
Alaska.

The Arctic is ground zero for climate change.

Temperatures there are rising at twice the rate of the
rest -- of the rest of the U.S. Many iconic species of
wildlife live there. And the Arctic Refuge is home to
the two largest and most northerly Alpine lakes in
North America, five distinct landscapes, including
cost, tundra, mountains, taiga, and boreal forests,
and 18 major rivers, three of which are officially
recognized as wild and scenic.

So why would we, or why would you, allow this
pristine place to be turned over to industry, this
important symbol of the wild and cornerstone of the
hope and peace of mind that can only be found in
connecting with nature? There is no good reason to
allow oil exploration and drilling in the Arctic
National Wildlife Refuge. There is currently no solid
evidence of fossil fuel there that would be worth the
disruption to wildlife and the ecosystem caused even by
exploration. All this precious area is to be put in
danger to benefit already wealthy oil companies.

American families and small businesses will not benefit from the drilling. Extensive drilling and fracking that is already being done throughout the U.S. has made us quite energy independent. This fuel would be sold overseas, only benefiting energy companies. If industry can open this coastal plan, then no place on or offshore is off limits.

This is so unpopular with the American people that it had to be slipped into the recent tax bill because winning support for such a controversial measure in an above-board process would have been impossible.

According to research conducted by the Center on American Progress, two-thirds of Americans oppose this. We Americans do not want, did not ask for, and will not accept that the wildest place in our country will be sacrificed to offset the tiniest fraction of tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires.

It is time for our representatives in government, namely, you members of this panel, to actually represent us. This not just an administrative or political decision, but a moral one. Climate change is
a moral issue, and we ask you to keep that in your hearts and minds.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 26. Again, if you are number 96, 89, 1, 75, 100, 4, or 12, please make your way down front.

MS. LYDIA WEISS: Hi. I'm Lydia Weiss. I am a mom from Northwest D.C. I am an American taxpayer and co-owner of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which I imagine many of you are.

(Applause.)

MS. LYDIA WEISS: Maybe if you're from a company, don't your raise hand, though, because I'm talking to the humans and my fellow Americans who are co-owners. So we -- and I would just say if the key to making this whole process work is to have people not clap, maybe we should just have more public hearings. Maybe that's the -- I mean, if tinkering around the edges --

(Applause and cheering.)

MS. LYDIA WEISS: -- like if this is the problem, there are so many other solutions. Like that poor
woman from Florida, there's got to be something else
you'd rather be doing than doing this in Florida, but
thanks for coming because this is it, this is all we've
got, folks, right now.

So I'm a mom. And I also say I'm a mom of a D.C.
Public School kid, this was their last day. They're
all at the pool. We were supposed to go on vacation,
you probably know the last day of school, Friday,
6:00 p.m. So it's just tough, you know? I'm supposed
to be with my family right now. But I'm happy to be
here, and they're waiting, and I'll get to them at some
point.

So I, even though I sound cranky about this
process, and I am, and even though I know I'm
addressing my government officials, I am an incredibly
proud patriotic American, and I talk to my kids every
day about how lucky and blessed they were to be born in
this country. Any story we listen to on NPR, I say to
them, "But you are among the lucky ones who were born
in America." Those horrible stories every day that my
kids have to listen to, it doesn't happen, you were
born in the greatest country on Earth, and we believe
in equality and access for all people. To my little
girl, "You get to go to school. You were born in
America."

And to everybody, you get to delight in our shared
public lands. That is an American ethic. That is
conservative and it's a Republican ethic, and we should
all be so proud of that. Aren't we proud? We are the
country people -- we go to Europe to see their
cathedrals. They come here to see Yellowstone and the
Grand Canyon, and if they can, the Arctic National
Wildlife Refuge. But if they can't get there -- and
I've never gotten there, I don't imagine that I ever
will, but I swell with pride as an American to know
that we had the foresight to set aside one of the
wildest places in the world for all to enjoy. And I
think it will keep America great again if we continue
to protect it, as we always have.

It makes me proud, as an American, to have
protected the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, to think
that my kids can go. And I don't know, I hope that
will be the outcome of this public hearing. And I hope
you'll do more.
So thanks.

(Applause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you. I hope you get to spend some time with your kids.

Okay, number 109.

MR. MARK ANTHONY HERRERA: Hello, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Mark Anthony Herrera. I'm from Miami, Florida. I am a senior political science major at Howard University. I am a proud Opongi (ph), but you might know us as Seminole in the colonized tongue. I'm here today to tell you that I know firsthand about the effects of climate change in my community, you know. I live where you vacation, let's put it that way. And it's starting to become worse every year. We have more frequent hurricanes, our coastlines are receding, which makes it harder for sea turtles to nest. And also when it becomes high tide most of the time in South Beach, it basically floods, so it makes it difficult to walk. That's just one small aspect of climate change in my community. So I can only imagine what it's like up there.

I know nothing about hunting caribou or being in
the snow that much, and to be quite frank, I hate the
snow, but the thing is, as Native people, our land is
our identity, you know. Truth be told, if I reached
into your pocket and stole your Social Security card
and stole your license and used your identity to get
what I wanted, I'd be going to jail or prison. This is
the same principle. These people, they're connected to
their land, and that's all they have and that's all
they know. The caribou are their identity. The
caribou are their Social Security card.

For us, it's the Everglades. The swamp has
protected us for thousands and hundreds of years.
Alligators are our identity. The critters down back
home are our identity.

So I ask you that you find it in your heart to let
them keep their identity. You know, for 500 years
we've been giving you guys so much. You live on stolen
land, let's just face it, you know. That's the thing,
you know. What else do we have to give? You know,
we're losing our language, we're losing our culture.
We don't have anything else but our small pockets of
refuge. So I ask you that you really think deeply
about this decision you are making, you know. You
might never go up there and talk to these people, but
if you make the right decision, they'll always be up
there.

Thank you so much.

(Appplause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTs: Thank you.

Number 96.

MR. MARK SALVO: Good evening. My name is Mark
Salvo. I am the Vice President of Landscape
Conservation for Defenders of Wildlife. Thank you for
this opportunity this evening to comment on a potential
oil and gas program in the Arctic National Wildlife
Refuge. My colleagues and I -- and you will hear from
a number of us -- are proud to represent Defenders of
Wildlife. We are a national conservation organization
with more than 1.8 million members and supporters
focused on wildlife conservation and the habitat on
which they depend. Defenders of Wildlife and our
members and supporters have worked for decades to
conserve the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the
polar bears, caribou, wolverines, musk oxen, birds,
native fish, and a myriad of other wildlife species that depend on the Coastal Plain.

Drilling anywhere in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would be devastating for the wildlife and other natural resources, but especially so on the Coastal Plain. Defenders strongly opposes shortsighted, destructive, needless fossil fuel development on this vital wildlife preserve.

Now, while the Tax Act has directed the Bureau of Land Management to offer oil and gas leasing on the Coastal Plain, that legislation did not waive Federal protections for wildlife and other habitat and other ecological and cultural values on the refuge. The Department of Interior must follow the law in planning for an oil and gas program, even if that means that current statutory protections preclude a commercially viable development.

This is a point worth underscoring. The legislation did not require a profitable or profit-driven leasing program, nor is it the Federal Government's responsibility to provide one, including the current occupant at 1600 Pennsylvania. Your job is
only to plan for potential lease sale on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, not further subsidize one of the most heavily subsidized industries in the United States.

The Arctic Refuge is still a national wildlife refuge. It must be managed in accordance with the National Wildlife System Administration Improvement Acts and by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the surface manager and the only agency under law that is required or, excuse me, is reserved for that management responsibility. Management alternatives must be -- must protect imperiled species, like the threatened polar bear under the Endangered Species Act and avoid damaging designated critical habitat.

The Department has both legal obligations and a moral responsibility to future generations to conserve bears, seals, migratory birds, eagles, and caribou under a host of Federal statutes and international treaties.

The Arctic Refuge is a global treasure. Defenders of Wildlife stand with the Gwich'in and the majority of Americans in urging you to protect refuge wildlife and
their habitat from rushed and reckless oil and gas development on the refuge.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 89.

MS. LENA MOFFITT: Hi. Thank you so much. My name is Lena Moffitt, and I am the Senior Director of the Sierra Club's "Our Wild America" campaign, which works to protect communities from the impacts of climate change and protect our public lands around the country.

And I'm here on behalf of our 3.4 million members and supporters across the country to ask you not to open the Arctic to oil and gas drilling. As an activist who has spent my life working on climate change and working to support the solutions that really are out there and are ready, this is an unnecessary proposal. And I want to talk about the climate impacts that would come with opening this pristine place to oil and gas drilling.

It's evident to all of us in this room that
climate change is taking an increasingly devastating
toll on our entire country. This prospect poses an
existential threat to the human species and to all
species on the planet. Last year was the hottest year
on record for the third year running. We are working
with villages in Alaska that are literally falling into
the sea because of sea level rise, and, frankly, we
should know better.

Now is the time when we should be weaning
ourselves off of all fossil fuels, not opening up
increasingly extreme sources of oil like those from the
1002 area in Alaska or the tar sands. We have to start
saying no somewhere, and this is the perfect place to
start saying no.

And I would take issue with some of the prospects
that the friends from the American Petroleum Institute
and the oil and gas industry said that we have to do
this and this is the way we advance our society going
forward. In fact, we don't have to. The solutions are
out there. Electric vehicles are making huge gains
across the planet. China has committed to ending the
sale of internal combustion engines by 2040. Do we
1 want to be competitive in the economy of the future or
2 do we want to be stuck to these technologies of the
3 past that are wreaking havoc on our planet?
4 And that alone should be enough for a logical
5 society to say no to this proposal, which would, if the
6 estimates are right, pull out billions of barrels of
7 oil from under this pristine area and dump enough
8 carbon into our atmosphere to equal 889 coal plants
9 operating for a year by our analyst's estimate. That
10 alone should be enough for us to say no to this.
11 But what we've heard today and what we continue to
12 hear from our partners of the Gwich'in Nation is that
13 this prospect, this proposal, poses a very real and
14 direct threat to their way of life, meaning that this
15 is not just an environmental issue, this is a human
16 rights issue.
17 And, honestly, it is just so disappointing that in
18 2018 we have to be here in America in this wonderful
19 country that we all love begging for basic human rights
20 to be respected. Frankly, that is shameful. And I say
21 shame on Zinke, shame on Trump, shame on this
22 administration for moving this proposal forward when
really we should know better.

So I ask you all to make the right choice, listen to the Gwich'in, listen to the American people. You still have a chance to do the right thing. People are watching. We are going to take notice. We're going to be in the streets, in the boardroom, in the courtroom, and in the voting booth.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 1.

MR. SUBHANKAR BANERJEE: Oil and gas development in the Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain would lead to colossal colonial violence on the Gwich'in Nation on both sides of the U.S.-Canada border and ecocide on an incredible diversity of wildlife. And so far, the process by which this egregious act has been advanced by the government has been dishonest and undemocratic.

My name is Subhankar Banerjee. I am the Lannan Foundation Endowed Chair and Professor of Art and Ecology at the University of New Mexico. I have spent significant amount of time in the Coastal Plain and in
the indigenous Gwich'in and Iñupiat communities.

Through my photographs, writing, lectures, and interviews, I've shared the ecological and cultural richness of the Coastal Plain with the public across the United States and around the world over the past 2 decades.

With Iñupiat conservationist Robert Thompson, I traversed from Kaktovik, I traversed up and down every river in the narrow Coastal Plain and witnessed it as a place that harbors a diversity of life year-round and where new life is born, not only during spring-summer, but also during the harsh winter months. The Coastal Plain is likely the most significant protected biological nursery in the Circumpolar North and one of the most significant in the -- on our plant that also connects to far-away places through migrations of birds and mammals.

Protecting places where animals replenish their populations, in the midst of the sixth mass extinction that we find ourselves in, ought to be among our highest ethical obligations. But, instead, the government is considering to turn this nursery into an
oil field, which will inevitably displace and disrupt
wildlife and will lead to ill health and population
declines.

The indigenous people of northeast Alaska and
northwest Canada speak of the Coastal Plain as a
nursery, "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins." In so
doing, they connect science with spirituality and
cultural traditions. They rely on the Porcupine
caribou herd for nutritional, cultural, and spiritual
sustenance, have done so for millennia. To turn the
caribou nursery into an oil field would violate human
rights and jeopardize their food security. And based
on the experience in Nuiqsut, particular the important
work of Iñupiat scholar and activist Rosemary
Ahtuangaruak, oil development on the Coastal Plain
would have detrimental effects on the health and social
life of the Iñupiat people who live nearby.

To bring attention to these biological, cultural,
and climate impacts of oil and gas development in the
Coastal Plain, I recently organized with historian
Finis Dunaway a letter campaign called "Scholars for
Defending the Arctic Refuge," which has been endorsed
by more than 500 scholars from nearly all 50 U.S.
States and 20 countries spanning more than 40 academic
disciplines.

I urge the Department of Interior to listen to the
concerns of the indigenous people -- peoples, the
American public, and scholars from around the world,
and drop plans to allow oil and gas exploration and
drilling in the Coastal Plain by adopting a no-action
alternative on the EIS, which I did not see on your
slide earlier this afternoon.

(Applause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Just a reminder. If you have
written testimony, if we could grab that, that would
help us make sure we get that accurate in the record.

So just another reminder, if your number is up
here on the screen, if you can come down here up front,
that will allow us to queue up our speakers a little
quicker.

Moving on to number 1.

DR. FINIS DUNAWAY: My name is Finis Dunaway, and
I'm a professor of history at Trent University in
Peterborough, Ontario, Canada. And I'm here today
along with my 10-year-old daughter, Zoe, because we're deeply concerned about the plans, the prospect, of fossil fuel development in the Arctic Refuge. Along with Subhankar Banerjee, who you just heard from, I recently organized a letter campaign called "Scholars for Defending the Arctic Refuge." This letter has been endorsed by more than 500 scholars representing almost all 50 U.S. States and 20 different countries. And I want to emphasize the international aspect of this debate because that often does not get much attention. The expertise of those signers ranges across more than 40 different academic disciplines, from climate science and history to conservation biology and indigenous studies. We wrote this letter to demonstrate that the Arctic Refuge debate is not about what just happens in this one slice of land in the northeast corner of Alaska. It also connects to some of the most urgent issues of our time. These include climate change, indigenous human rights, and species extinction. This debate has significant biological, cultural, and climate implications that
extend well beyond the Coastal Plain, and we ask for
the BLM to consider these larger issues.

One distinctive feature of this letter campaign is
that it has been widely supported by scientists who
have for years been warning of the detrimental effects
of fossil fuel development on the Coastal Plain, but we
also got a wide array of other voices into this
conversation, and that's because this debate
encompasses science, but also questions of ethics and
justice.

Scholars from across the U.S., Canada, and other
parts of the world value the transnational and global
significance of the refuge. They do not want to see
the Coastal Plain turned into an oil field. This
letter signals a robust record of international
opposition to Arctic drilling.

I would like to read just a couple brief excerpts
from the letter.

The Arctic Refuge may seem far away to many, but
its Coastal Plain is one of the most significant
biological nurseries in the Circumpolar North. Opening
the Coastal Plain to fossil fuel exploration and
development would endanger this nursery. It would violate the human rights and jeopardize the food security of the Gwich'in people of the U.S. and Canada. It would have detrimental effects on the health and social life of the indigenous Inupiat people, who live nearby. And it would contribute to further warming of the already rapidly warming Arctic, an action that affects the whole Earth, as the Arctic is a critical integrator of our planet's climate systems.

We believe that the Arctic Refuge should not be auctioned off to the oil industry. Its natural and cultural values far exceed any oil that may lie beneath the Coastal Plain. We ask the Department of Interior to support scientific and traditional ecological knowledge, to value environmental ethics, and indigenous human rights, and to work to sustain biological nurseries and subsistence practices.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 100.

And then we'll have number 4 on this other
1 microphone if number 4 wants to check in.

2 Ma'am?

3 MS. MARY ANN RUDY: My name is Mary Ann Rudy. I represent myself, the Sierra Club, and millions of others who cannot be here today for this hearing. We, I, care deeply about protecting this beautiful precious plant Earth, our only home. Fossil fuels are killing it.

4 I was raised by a science teacher naturalist father. I am raising my children with camping trips in the national parks. I act to save our fragile environment since the first Earth Day in the '70s. I care deeply. In the '70s, already we knew our -- we knew of our human impact on Earth's climate. One of the first evidences was the hole in the ozone layer. That danger is now being reduced by international effort. So there is hope if we act now.

5 When I first heard the Arctic ice was melting, I grieved for our planet. Then I heard the oil companies could not wait to drill there. That was insane.

6 Further, development of fossil fuels is insane. We must use only clean energy. I come as one, but I stand
for millions in the U.S. and Canada who want the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge protected, not exploited, not drilled for more unnecessary life-killing fossil fuels.

Will you protect our planet?

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

We'll move over to number 4. And then number 12 will be next on this side.

MS. DANA MCCOSKEY: Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. My name is Dana Nicole McCoskey, and I care about the future of this country, the Gwich'in way of life, and America's wild living resources. I'm a contractor to the U.S. Department of Energy and a board member of the D.C. Audubon Society, but I'm here to represent myself and my own views.

I strongly oppose the Department of Interior's efforts to pursue oil and gas leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I also find the notion of disturbing one of America's last remaining wildernesses deeply troubling. The Arctic Refuge is home to millions of migratory birds, including some that travel
there on their annual migrations. In April, on an
evening walk in Northwest D.C., I was delighted to hear
tundra swans migrating high overhead on their way to
the Arctic. And just a few weeks ago, I caught a rare
glimpse of a grey-cheeked thrush during a brief
migration foraging stop in Rock Creek Park. These and
many, many other experiences in D.C. with birds that
migrate to and from the refuge have left me enchanted.

I am greatly concerned oil and gas development in
the refuge will have permanent harmful impacts to the
Coastal Plain ecosystem and harm the birds that spend
part of their annual cycle in the refuge. Further, as
a biologist who has spent over 10 years in the field
conducting research to inform land management
practices, it is my professional opinion that a
proposed rushed timeline is insufficient to collect
information and data needed to conduct the proper
analyses that are required by law.

I am also confused by this proposed action because
the best available economic information clearly
demonstrates that oil and gas development in the refuge
is an unsound investment.
Overall, I firmly believe the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge should remain undeveloped and preserved as a legacy wilderness, to nurture the spirit of our Nation and feed the minds of current and future generations.

When colleagues that work in the Arctic describe the rapid change they witness daily, when I look at photos of undeniable glacial retreat, or when this last summer I stood on a melting glacier and put my cup into a flow of water that had been previously trapped as ice for thousands of years, it provides even more conviction of the great responsibility we have to keep the refuge intact for wildlife seeking relief from the pressures of widespread and rapid global change.

For these reasons and more, I believe we should leave the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge permanently protected. And I look forward to providing technical written comments. And I wish that I had more time to invest my personal time to give you my thoughts.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.
Okay, number 12.

MS. KELLY EIGLER: I seem to be the only person here that doesn't have prepared remarks, but I'll wing it.

My name is Kelly Eigler. I've been unemployed for 6 months, and I've been sending all of these organizations money because I believe so passionately about what they do.

I'm going for analogy, I'm going for personal analogy, and then I'll go for biblical analogy because I think it speaks to a commonality that we all share.

So pretend I'm at a sorority -- pretend I'm in a sorority and I have a younger sorority sister, and I take her to a frat party. She's a drinker. She's a young girl. I'm supposed to protect her. I get ready to go home. She's drunk. She doesn't want to leave.

I say, "All right, you stay here." The next morning, what do I find out? She's been raped. Who's fault is that? Legally, it's the man that raped her. Morally, it's my fault. I did not protect her. I knew that there was a danger. I knew that there were bigger, stronger people there to prey upon her. I did not
protect her.

Exxon, Shell, BP, we know they're bad, we know
they're irresponsible. We cannot trust them no matter
what they say, no matter who they promise what money
to, we cannot protect -- we cannot protect the ANWR
from these companies and companies like them. We have
a moral obligation to stand between those companies and
that wilderness.

And lastly I'd like to -- I need my glasses
because I'd like to read my favorite biblical passage
because I think that this speaks to all of us.

"For what happens to the children of man and what
happens to the beast is the same. As one dies, so dies
the other. They all have the same breath, and man has
no advantage over the beast. For all is vanity. All
go to one place. All are from dust and to dust all
return. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes
upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the
Earth?"

I hope that you will take this seriously and do
all that you can to protect this for future
generations. I stand with the Gwich'in people, I stand
with those poor birds that migrate pole to pole, and
those poor starving polar bears. Please, I beg you, do
the right thing.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. Thank you.

Number 24.

MR. MILO DONOVAN: Hello. My name is Milo
Donovan. Thank you for the opportunity to offer
comment today. I am here to strongly oppose any
drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The
Department of the Interior recently released a Notice
of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.
They made it clear that they will attempt to rush
through the environmental review process and begin
selling leases in just over a year. Doing so would be
an unlawful attack on a treasured section of public
land as well as the valuable resources and species it
contains.

Drilling on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge
will mean the destruction of vital habitat, disruption
of Native people, and acceleration of climate change,
where its effects are already felt the hardest.

The Coastal Plain is an essential and biologic diverse area, home to polar bears, caribou, musk oxen, and numerous migratory birds. Oil and gas drilling would damage what is important denning habitat for the already endangered polar bear and the calving ground of the Porcupine caribou herd. In fact, the protection of the Porcupine caribou is one of the original reasons the refuge was set aside. Amidst this process, the Department of the Interior should reflect upon the longstanding treaty between the U.S. and Canada that has protected the cherished herd.

The Porcupine caribou is of particular importance to the Gwich'in people. For years, it has been one of their primary food sources and more. The Department of the Interior has an obligation to the Gwich'in people and protecting the animals so crucial to their existence. If they choose to move forward with their destructive efforts, it should at least be done with adequate scientific evidence and a just environmental review process that would truly protect the herd and other organisms.
Lastly, drilling on the Coastal Plain would contribute to climate change and its detrimental effects. Climate change is the greatest threat to the Arctic region and its many sea ice-dependent animals, as temperatures have risen twice as fast there than here in the rest of the United States. Oil and gas activities are completely averse to the protection of the Arctic and the principles upon which the refuge was founded.

For these reasons, I urge you to join me in opposing the abuse of a priceless piece of public land. The Department of the Interior must not forget its responsibility to protect and preserve our public lands and should refrain from allowing drilling in them.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 67.

MR. MICHAEL HARRIS: Hi, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Michael Harris, and I work with Defenders of Wildlife Government Relations. And I also formerly handled natural resources and public lands issues in
the Senate. So I deeply care about these issues. I'm going to start by saying there is no need for this. The United States, according to the IEA, will surpass Saudi Arabia and Russia to become the world's largest producer of oil this year. We've experienced an American energy renaissance, a shale revolution, thanks to new technologies, fracking, horizontal drilling, shale drilling, all of which have their own problems and implications, but we're pumping oil out of American soil at a rate unprecedented in history. Last year, Secretary Zinke offered 11 million acres of public taxpayer land for oil and gas leasing. Only 800,000 acres were leased. That's 7 percent, almost 250,000 acres leased for $2.00 an acre. So these are economic implications we have to think about when we weigh the costs and benefits of what we're proposing to do in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. There's a leasing bonanza out there. So I'm wondering with all these lands open and all of these newfound barrels being pumped, why do we need this? It seems like the costs far outweigh the benefits here. Despite the tax legislation, the Coastal Plain is still
part of the Arctic Refuge.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is mandated by Federal law to manage the land, water, and wildlife pursuant to the Federal laws that govern this wildlife refuge. And, consequently, you are bound by the legal obligations put upon you by the National Environmental Policy Act, the Wilderness Act, the Tax and Jobs Act, the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, among others.

So these are all implications you need to be thinking of; yet, the agency has insisted on completing environmental review within 1 year. A comparable project would require a NEPA process of 3 to 5 years. So you're not only pursuing this terrible wrong-headed policy, but you're doing so in the worst way possible, and I think we can do a lot better.

So I want to conclude by saying if the Arctic Refuge can be attacked and opened to industrialization in this manner, is any parcel of public land safe? And
do the protections that Congress afforded to these public lands, do they matter anymore? And the answer has to be yes. You have to do better. This process has to be better. And don't mess this up because human lives and animal lives are counting on you.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 99.

MS. JENNY KEATINGE: Thank you for the opportunity to comment today. I'm Jenny Keatinge, and I'm also here representing Defenders of Wildlife. We come in waves.

The Interior Department is on the wrong track in its reckless rush to industrialize the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Oil and gas activities on the fragile Coastal Plain will jeopardize sensitive species, irreparably damage these public lands, and compound the impacts of climate change. A comprehensive, scientifically robust planning process for oil and gas leasing will reveal this unmitigable destruction and must provide full protection to wildlife and their
habitat under our environmental laws, which were not waived by the Tax Act.

The Coastal Plain is home to many Federally protected species, and more than 75 percent of the area is designated critical habitat for the threatened polar bear. It is the most important onshore denning habitat for polar bears in the United States. Oil and gas development could have drastic consequences for this iconic species, potentially leading to extirpation in our country.

An oil and gas program must accommodate species conservation and recovery under the Endangered Species Act, not the other way around. The Arctic Refuge is one of our Nation's last great wild places. Drilling is fundamentally incompatible with preserving and protecting these treasured wildlands. I urge the Bureau of Land Management and the Department of Interior to follow the law in this planning process, even if that means it will preclude commercially viable development. Some places are just too special to drill.

(Appause.)
MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

I don't know about the panel members, but I think that might win the cutest hat award. Sorry, sir, in the cowboy hat.

All right. Number 84.

MR. GREG SINGLETON: Thank you, sir. My name is Greg Singleton. I am from Virginia today. I grew up in South Carolina on the coast, and was born and raised there, and have always been a hunter and a fisherman.

So that's kind of where I got my love of the outdoors.

So I've grown up, served in the military for 26 years in the Army, so I've lived around the world. And I got a chance to see what overdevelopment looks like, I got certainly a chance with the military to see what pristine beautiful environment this Nation has as compared to all the other countries in which I've served. And Teddy Roosevelt had it right when he said one of the greatest assets of this Nation is its wonderful, spectacular, unique natural resources. And that's what we have in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge.

So much has been said here tonight, and other
people much smarter than I have given the facts that I remember reading, but can't quote, and I wasn't prepared to talk about this tonight, but when I learned that there was a chance to comment, I jumped on it. But I would just like to echo the comments of some of those people with much better credentials than I, people like Jamie Williams, the Wilderness Society, all the Gwich'in people that spoke and talked about how their way of life is going to definitely be impacted in a negative way from any drilling of the Coastal Plains. You know, since I'm not from Alaska, and I don't know it like I do Virginia or South Carolina, I can't speak to that, so I can speak from the national perspective. So what we've done is we've made Alaska National Wildlife Refuge a national resource, like we have all of our parks.

And so from a national perspective, many people have stated tonight there is no reason to have to drill in that small, you know, less than 1 percent of our Nation area that we've set aside for the things that everyone has described tonight. It's such a wonderful and unique and special place. And we've got drilling
in so many places already.

And Mr. Michael Harris, who just spoke here at this microphone, said how much oil we've already -- we are already producing, and I know, ladies and gentlemen, you know the facts are that we have -- using technology, have moved towards sustainable energy policies and sustainable energy production. The jobs that the Alaskan people seek, jobs are in the solar energy, that's where they are. They dwarf all the other energy sources around. So we don't need to drill there, and there are lots of reasons not to do it.

So I strongly would like to recommend to you to do everything that you can that if the law goes forward and you do wind up selling leases, that you take every single precaution you possibly can to ensure that animals are not negatively impacted.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 13.

MS. MARJORIE GIMMEL: Hello. My name is Marjorie Gimmel. I am the councilmember of Native Village of
Venetie Tribal Government. And, let's see, I'm here to speak on behalf of my people, my tribe, not only them, I'm here for the caribou, who cannot speak for themselves. I'm here for my ancestors and the future generations. I'm a mother of five, and as a mother, my natural reaction of threat to my children is to protect them from harm. To open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a direct threat to our way of life. All children should matter. We should not sacrifice this sacred land for greed.

I'm not coached to speak here. I'm not getting paid for it either. And if you look at this room, although you guys all did random numbers, everyone that spoke so far is opposing the opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The land is pristine and it's sacred to our people. And I believe in the protection of our cultural way of life, and that there is no reason to go in there and drill.

They say there will be jobs. I know for a fact that only 15 percent of the workforce in the Prudhoe Bay area is Alaska Native, and that's the lower portion of the pay scale. And it's just not true, it's not
true that there will be a lot more work or that the oil in there is going to help America. That's not true. I just wish they would remove this and pull for a no-action alternative.

Thank you.

(Applause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

MR. ERIK DUMONT: Hi. My name is Erik DuMont, and I'm the Stop Drilling Campaign Director for Environment America. I want to say first and foremost that I and my organization are entirely opposed to oil exploration or drilling in America's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

We're constantly told that oil exploration and drilling can be done with minimal harm to the environment, yet we are daily reminded that this is simply not true. We're told that we need the oil, that it will solve some part of our energy needs, yet we are in a time of abundance of renewables, and we have no idea actually how much or even if there is any oil actually in -- under the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge. We're told that Alaskans want it and that it
will be good for the State, yet it is not Alaskan-owned, and it will certainly not be good for the wildlife for which it currently provides refuge.

Industrial oil development is not compatible with the values and the purposes of a wildlife refuge. A wildlife refuge is just that, a refuge for wildlife, a place where some of our fellow animals can live out their lives in peace, free from the manmade impacts of an increasingly paved, drilled, and developed world.

Industrial oil development creates spills. That's just a fact. Spills are tracked in the North Slope, as you guys all know, and right now it averages over 1 per day up there during the year.

We're here during the scoping process. Scoping needs to make sure they consider, What are the impacts going to be of all those kinds of spills happening in a wildlife refuge? Scoping will need to consider that in other parts of Alaska, where industrial oil development has taken place, caribou, in particular, avoid it while calving. We know that migrating caribou may well feel free to walk down gravel roads or pass pipelines, but studies have shown us that not only do the caribou
mothers avoid these areas for calving, but doing so,
places them in less desirable locations and has led to
decreases in their productivity.

In the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, we can
watch one of the most spectacular wildlife migrations
anywhere in the world happening every year. The
Porcupine caribou herd of almost 200,000 animals makes
their yearly trek to the Coastal Plain to calve.

Ironically, while we're here discussing their fate,
they're there right now enjoying the very wildlife
values which we are debating.

The Coastal Plain has exactly what they need. It
has the protein-rich cotton grass, which a nursing
mother needs for a growing calf. It has the ocean
breeze, vital to keep the hoards of mosquitoes away.

And this is not a minor point. We know we lose calves
every year just to mosquitoes.

Finally, the Coastal Plain is a relatively
 predator-free environment. When the calves are at
their most vulnerable, one of their primary predators,
wolves, are up in the foothills of the Brooks Range
having their pups. Scoping needs to consider, What's
going to happen to the Porcupine caribou herd if they
are displaced from this very area, the one that
provides them the most things that they need during the
most critical time in their lives? It's why our
friends, the Gwich'in people, are here to defend this
area. And we've heard that it's sacred, "Iizhik
Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit," "The Sacred Place Where
Life Begins."

We stand proudly with the Gwich'in, say oil
development should not happen here. Scoping needs to
consider the impact to them if their livelihood is
damaged by industrial oil development. Scoping should
also consider if industrial oil development in such a
special place is even needed. At this time of
increasing renewable energy abundance, the future need
for more oil diminishes almost daily.

In closing, I understand that scoping is supposed
to consider the factors to consider in moving this
proposal forward. I would humbly submit that based on
the testimony you've heard today, that when all is
considered, the inescapable conclusion will be that
industrial oil development has no future in the Arctic
1 National Wildlife Refuge.

2 Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. DAVID BATT: Thank you.

5 Number 103.

6 MS. LAURA FRANKLIN: Hello. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Laura Franklin. I'm a high school environmental science teacher. Several of my students decided to write letters to Secretary Zinke, and I wanted to read a couple of them to you before I mail them.

7 "Dear Secretary Zinke, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is ecologically important, and it would be a mistake to allow oil companies to use this land for exploratory drilling. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is considered one of the most fragile and ecologically sensitive ecosystems in the world. Its environment is vulnerable to long-lasting disturbance because the harsh climate and short growing seasons provide little time for species to recover.

8 "Various types of animals inhabit this region, such as polar bears and caribou. Building pipelines
for drilling oil would force these animals to adapt to
a new environment, which would be impossible for them
to do. If drilling for oil occurs in the Arctic
National Wildlife Refuge, these species would have
issues surviving, and over time go extinct.

"Lastly, extracting oil can be very dangerous,
which has been proved in the last decade -- proven.
Large explosions can occur while drilling for oil,
which was shown during Deepwater Horizon, the oil rig
in the Gulf of Mexico. It would be a tragic event if
the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is used for
drilling oil, and it would impact the United States
negatively. Sincerely, Bradley."

One more.

"To the Honorable Ryan Zinke," I thought that was
cute.

(Laughter.)

MS. LAURA FRANKLIN: "It would be in the best
interest of the United States and of our delicate
ecosystem that both you and President Donald Trump do
not," italics, "open up the Arctic National Wildlife
Refuge to exploratory drilling."
"The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is precious, a safe haven for animals that are so sensitive to climate change. Wilderness is dwindling in the United States. Almost 98 percent of our forests and wildlife are vulnerable to human disturbance, and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge makes up part of the 2 percent that is protected, and, most importantly, free from the web of industrial development. Mammals, such as the gray wolf and brown bear; birds, such as the snow geese and tundra swans; and fish, such as the Arctic grayling and Dolly Varden; are all dependent on this small sliver of land.

"If you both you and Donald Trump do not --," "do decide to open up this animal sanctuary terrain, it will have lasting consequences and fatal results. The commencement of Arctic drilling will require a permanent network of pipelines that will cut through the forests and a labyrinth of other support structures, such as helipads and exploratory wells, that will ravage the landscape.

"As controversial as this topic is, it needs to be addressed and taken care of so that our future
generations can look back on us with pride and commend us for our preservative efforts. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Spiro."

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

56.

MR. JOHN ROBINSON: Yes. My name is John Robinson. I think Teddy Roosevelt would be turning over in his grave if he saw what was happening to one of the wildlife refuges that he helped create the system of. And I'd like to point out that the idea of sustainable development based on using up a nonrenewable resource is an oxymoron, and all you have to do is look at what's happened in nearby West Virginia to the coal towns once those resources were exhausted. The towns have essentially fallen apart. And the only thing that you can say about what would happen in Alaska is the towns are much smaller and further apart, but the same fate would -- could be expected to happen there.

Waste from drilling, complex hydrocarbons, can
accumulate in the food chain. As has been pointed out by other speakers, they regularly have leaks in the area where they have drilling, one a day. And we've had the situation in the lower 48 when resource companies have exhausted a resource is they have created subsidiaries and so forth that they then allow to go bankrupt and then the taxpayers end up paying to clean up the mess, which is why we have Superfund sites all over this country.

The issue of global warming has been brought up. Back when I was employed, I worked at Goddard Space Flight Center, and one of the things I was involved in was tracking changes in the ice on the Antarctic continent. And one of the most recent reports just came out, the rate of melting of ice on Antarctica is three times faster than it was in the '80s and '90s when they started monitoring the rate, and it's accelerating. This will lead to the type of flooding that we've seen in coastal regions, the loss of coastal villages in places like Alaska from the thawing of the permafrost, as has been mentioned. Those people who think that they will escape from
the consequences of global warming by dying before things get really intolerable obviously don't live in Puerto Rico or the coastal villages of Alaska or in Houston or New Orleans.

Thank you.

(Appause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 82.

MR. KEITH SHUE: My name is Keith Shue. I live in Cherry Valley, New York. I'm an engineer. And I strongly oppose oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Area 1002.

Let's talk about what those words mean, "Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." "Arctic." This is the only designated refuge located wholly within the Arctic Circle. It is a documented fact that the Arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet due to human-caused climate change. Polar bears are most vulnerable to this, having become increasingly dependent on the Coastal Plain for denning as sea ice recedes.

I realize that tackling climate change requires
global action. Some of that's in our control and some of it's not. However, preserving the Coastal Plain as a refuge for this iconic species that is endangered because of us is entirely within our power. It is something that we can do; it's something that we must do.

The word "National." The refuge is an essential part of our national heritage. Two-thirds of Americans, Republicans and Democrats, want to see it protected. Conservation must be a conservative value. Let's not forget that this part of Alaska was first protected by Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower. In fact, my own Congressman, Republican John Faso, of New York, signed a letter last November with several other Republicans urging House and Senate leaders to not allow drilling in the refuge. I'm submitting a letter -- I'm submitting that letter today for the record.

Equally important, the refuge embodies the spirit of another nation, that of the Gwich'in, the people who rely on the Porcupine caribou to sustain their culture and their way of life. We're obliged to honor that.
Finally, let's talk about the words "Wildlife Refuge." This place was not named the Arctic National Oil and Gas Industrial Zone. It was not designated Prudhoe Bay Phase 2. It was designated a wildlife refuge because that is its purpose, to serve as a safe haven for the diversity of species that live there. In addition to polar bear and caribou and musk oxen, wolves and over 200 species of migratory birds rely on this pristine, undisturbed habitat.

Each year, millions of birds make an epic journey from this unique place to six continents and all 50 States, including Florida, over 5,000 miles away. I've lived in Florida. I've also lived in New York, Virginia, and California. So while I may have never set foot in the Arctic Refuge, the refuge has quite literally lived with me my entire life. This makes it a national refuge like no other. It is the summer home of America's wildlife, a home that will be irreparably harmed if drilling operations and the myriad of infrastructure associated with those operations were to commence.

I implore each of you not to let that happen on
your watch.

The Arctic Refuge is not critical to our energy future; however, protecting its unspoiled natural integrity is absolutely essential to fulfill our moral responsibility to future generations. Do not issue leases in the -- do not issue leases to drill in the Arctic Refuge. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 29. Ma'am?

MS. MARIANA EGEA: Hello. My name is Mariana. I am a rising senior at American University here in D.C. I study international relations, and I am concentrating in environmental sustainability and economic development. Yes, those two can go together.

I am 21 years old. As a young person, I am concerned about the climate implications of expanding oil and gas development on our public lands, including this proposal to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Of course, climate change is a concern in the Arctic, where temperatures are rising at twice the rate of the rest of the country.
When you consider this drilling proposal, I ask that you consider the cost, the negative externalities of climate change, and the human health effects of toxins released during production and consumption of oil.

With climate change being one of the greatest threats our natural world faces today, it is concerning that the U.S. Government isn't tracking greenhouse gas emissions from Federal fossil fuel production that occurs on our public lands. The lack of effort to record and understand climate change emissions is outstanding given that the Federal Government is one of the largest energy asset managers in the world.

Limited data leaves Americans, the owners of public lands, and shareholders of Federal energy resources, in the dark on the extent to which fossil fuel emissions from public lands are contributing to the rising global temperatures.

Rushing to sell off one of the most treasured public lands is irresponsible and reckless. We shouldn't continue to blindly lease public lands without considering the impacts to our climate and what
the impact will have on the Arctic, on coastal communities, and on others across the country that are at risk.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

I just want to quickly thank all the speakers.

You guys are doing an awesome job. Thank you.

Number 73.

MR. JOHN NOËL: Happy Friday. I'm John Noël, with Clean Water Action. I work on oil and gas issues here. I've lived and worked in D.C. for long enough to know that this public participation process is not right. I know it's not you guys. It's the political leadership that is trying to create a false equivalency between the American Petroleum Institute and other groups that profit off of extraction versus the millions of people who are opposed to this project. So that's just an upfront comment.

Energy dominance is not an energy policy. I think we all know that. It's a slogan, and it sounds like it was made up by someone who is not a geologist.
I'm just going to touch on a collection of stories to add context to this hearing because it doesn't happen in a vacuum.

So just yesterday, NPR reported on the impact of climate change on oil companies in Alaska. So now oil companies are paying other companies to stick huge tubes full of refrigerant, coolant, in the tundra to keep it frozen. And the article said that this was designed so that, quote, oil companies can squeeze the longest possible oil exploration season into steadily shrinking winters, end quote.

Somebody already touched on the Antarctica science. If you're not alarmed by that study, you are not paying attention, as the bumper sticker goes.

Recently, a number of financial institutions announced that they are no longer lending to Arctic oil projects. The Pope called a meeting with the oil industry top brass to talk about restraint and empathy for vulnerable populations.

But what do all these things have to do with a Notice of Intent to drill in the Arctic? This is all part of a civilizational defense of the natural world,
and it will never let up. A handful of temporary
politicians who have lost touch with our shared home
will not change this.

But still, the worst part of this whole charade
is, Who will be left to deal with the fallout? If you
look at the executives of the oil companies that want
to drill in the Arctic, they will be retired in 5 to 10
years. Secretary Zinke will be long gone, retired on a
ranch, trying to figure out how to rig his fly fishing
rod. Who has to deal with the consequences? It is the
generation coming up right now, it is the children
being born right now, effectively stealing from the
future, all under the macho posturing of energy
dominance.

My only hope today, one of my only hopes today, is
that this is being recorded and archived so a
government affairs high school class can come and look
at it in 20 years and say, "Wow," some kid in the back,
"Wow, were they really going to hand over the Arctic to
the oil industry in 2018, even with a global agreement
and moral imperative to do whatever it takes to pique
climate emissions? That was an actual idea? Thank God
they couldn't pull it off."

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 102.

MR. CRAIG STEVENS: Hi. My name is Craig Stevens. I'm a sixth generation landowner in Silver Lake Township, Pennsylvania. I'm not here to tell you what oil and gas does for communities. I'm here to tell you -- for communities, what it did to mine. That's our well water in northeastern Pennsylvania from oil and gas drilling. (Shows bottle of dirty water.) You see the swirly stuff? That's diesel and antifreeze. That's what they used to call slickwater, but they don't have the balls to call it slickwater anymore because somebody will ask what slickwater is.

Gandhi said it is health that is real wealth, not pieces of gold and silver, and I believe him. Managing the resources is not possible if you destroy them in the process. "Mni Waconi," "Water is life." You can't drill your way out of a problem that you drilled your way into. The U.S. oil and gas industry, at $3- to $500 billion, that's half a trillion dollars in debt,
are we going to trust these idiots who can't figure out how to make a profit on this to drill holes in one of the most pristine areas on this planet? Not this child.

Martin Luther King said injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly, and that means all of you on the dais.

The U.S. used to have 32 import terminals, and now we have applications for 40 export terminals that include 8 new ones. What? America's fuel -- America's fools is what it is.

Injection wells in Pennsylvania didn't exist when I moved there in 2010 to my ancestral property. Now we have 70 permitted injection wells because nobody else wants the waste from the drilling in Pennsylvania.

Diesel fuel was outlawed in 2005 by law to be used to drill underground, but it's still being used today in unconventional drilling.

Martin Luther King said the true neighbor will
risk his position, his prestige, and even his life for
the welfare of others. Count me in on that one.

Tell President Trump and his Cabinet to clean up
the damage that oil and gas has done to my community.
And if you don't believe me, tell him to come and drink
it.

(Appplause.)

MR. CRAIG STEVENS: "Bad laws are the worst sort
of tyranny," said Sir Edmund Burke. Drilling ANWR is
an insane idea. Stop this generational suicide, and as
I have said to my children, my four children, and my
two beautiful grandchildren many times, "No" has saved
their life more than me saying, "Yes." "No, don't
cross the street to get a ball on an eight-lane
highway." Listen, folks that's reality. The industry
is telling you theory. Tell them to clean up the mess
in the United States before they go start drilling
holes in other areas.

And I want to take my children and grandchildren
to these parks. And they weren't set aside 100-plus
years ago for us to destroy. They're to preserve, and
that's a conservative principle, by the way.
1 Thank you.

2 (Applause and cheering.)

3 MR. DAVID BATTS: Number 35.

4 MR. CHASE HUNTLEY: Hi. Thank you. My name is

5 Chase Huntley, and I live in Arlington, Virginia. I

6 work at a conservation organization down the street,

7 but today I'm here in my own personal capacity as a

8 former government auditor, as a father, and as a proud

9 public landowner.

10 As a former auditor, the proposal to lease for oil

11 in the Arctic Refuge and the Coastal Plain in

12 particular is just an awful deal for taxpayers. Even

13 under the best market conditions, the exorbitant

14 opportunity costs of exploration and production in this

15 place make no sense. But under today's poor market

16 conditions, taxpayer interest is not going to be served

17 by this rush to lease. The option value of the oil

18 itself, even if you agree that it makes sense to pull

19 it out of the ground, which I don't, but if you do, the

20 option value of that resource today versus future

21 markets, it doesn't pencil out.

22 As many of the other speakers have pointed out,
the Department may be instructed to look at the potential for leasing, but it hasn't abrogated -- the law has not abrogated it from its other responsibilities, and one of those is fiscal stewardship.

When you look at the risk to Native people and the irreplaceable resources that come with the potential for a spill and the costs that ultimately are borne by taxpayers for relocation, for cleanup, for reclamation, I certainly hope that that's being factored into your considerations. But it especially makes no sense when tremendous new finds are found just less than 100 miles away. With the scope and the possibility of the oil finds that have been announced by majors in the NPRA and adjacent areas, from an auditor's perspective, it just does not make sense to think about opening yet another new area that is not serviced by infrastructure, that comes with tremendous risk, and that, frankly, puts people who really do matter at huge risk.

And as a father, that's a point I want to dwell on a little bit more because I simply can't overlook the
existential threat that drilling in the Coastal Plain presents to the Gwich'in people. They rely on the caribou for food. We've heard a number of other speakers speak to the academic side of this, but the fact is the right to feed their families and continue a traditional lifestyle has to trump the prospect of oil development. No amount of oil should ever outweigh fundamental human rights.

And as a proud public landowner, I have to say that the decision to lease, it has to depend heavily on what the American public have to say. You've gotten a taste from at least 12 different States, by my count, in this one meeting held late on a Friday afternoon in Washington, D.C. And I can only imagine what the comment process is going to turn up when you read through the dozens of written comments that get submitted. I do wish that there were more opportunities like this so that you could hear the anger and frustration of the American people, which will be expressed in writing, and we're going to help try to amplify it over the next few months.

Our public lands have powered this Nation for more
than a century, and they're going to continue to provide energy of all kinds, hopefully more renewable than fossil, for years to come, but gone are the days when the energy industry is the only tenant of concern on our public lands.

You're going to continue to hear overwhelming opposition because this idea is simply wrong. It's financially irresponsible, it's a violation of fundamental human rights, and it's inconsistent with multiple use, and for that reason, I really urge you guys not to move forward with this. Congress required you to take a look at it, but your other statutory obligations give you the opportunity to decide not to move ahead.

(Appause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

MS. MARISSA KNODEL: Good evening. My name is Marissa Knodel. I live in Washington, D.C., and work at Associate Legislative Counsel at Earthjustice, a nonprofit environmental law firm that works on behalf of thousands of clients to enforce, defend, and strengthen our Nation's bedrock environmental laws.
Today I am speaking on behalf of Earthjustice and over 36,000 of our members, who have already submitted comments in opposition to oil and gas development on the Coastal Plain and anywhere within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The Arctic Refuge was established for the purpose of, quote, preserving unique wildlife, wilderness, and recreational values, values such as being home to endangered species, like the polar bear, habitat for thousands of migratory birds, and the calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd.

The Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge is considered sacred by the Gwich'in, who have sustained themselves and their culture on this land for centuries, and call it "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins." An oil and gas leasing program is fundamentally incompatible with these values.

Oil and gas drilling would have devastating and irreversible impacts on the people and wildlife for whom the Arctic Refuge is home as well as on our climate. Recent scientific research concludes that Arctic oil and gas reserves must remain in the ground.
to avoid dangerous levels of global warming.

In addition, oil development would emit dangerous levels of toxic pollutants that can lead to respiratory illnesses and other health problems among the Inupiat communities that live on the Coastal Plain.

Exploration and development of oil and gas on the Coastal Plain is irresponsible and unnecessary at a time when we should be transitioning to a renewable energy future.

The draft EIS must include thorough and complete assessments and analysis of the potential impacts of exploration, development, and operations, including seismic surveys, land disturbance, noise, construction of supporting infrastructure, and transportation and delivery of equipment to the land, vegetation, wildlife, air and water quality, climate, and subsistence, recreational, economic, cultural, and scientific research activities. Earthjustice requests the BLM include a no-leasing alternative in its draft EIS.

Finally, the expedited timeline on which this proposed oil and gas lease program is proceeding is
reckless and dangerous. Trying to complete a thorough
and accurate EIS in an area as ecologically and
culturally rich and sensitive as the Coastal Plain in
less than a year is simply unrealistic.

The Arctic Refuge must not be auctioned off to the
highest bidder in the oil industry. The values for
which the refuge was established are immeasurable
compared to those dirty profits. Earthjustice has and
will continue to stand proudly with the Gwich'in people
and the large majority of the American people who
oppose drilling on the Coastal Plain, to defend it and
the entire refuge.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 60.

MS. MARYANNE ADAMS: Hello, panel. My name is
Maryanne Adams. I am Conservation Chair for the
Onondaga Audubon Society. And I live in Upstate New
York.

For many years, the mission of the Bureau of Land
Management has been to sustain the health, diversity,
and productivity of the public lands for the use and
enjoyment of future generations. The Arctic National
Wildlife Refuge is a place that deserves protection in
perpetuity. That is why I vehemently oppose oil
drilling in this magnificent biologically diverse
ecosystem. Development would be especially devastating
for the birds that have used the Coastal Plain as a
breeding ground for millennia. This area is a nursery
for birds from 6 continents and 48 States, a place to
raise the next generation. The fact that Arctic terns
fly 12,000 miles from Antarctica to breed and raise
their young up there indicates how important the refuge
is.

Almost every bird species on Earth is already in
decline due to habitat loss, climate change, and
pollution. Adding the loss of a crucial breeding
ground would significantly accelerate the decline of
all the species that depend on the refuge for
reproduction. Birds that would radically be impacted
by opening the refuge to drilling are the 23 shorebird
species that use the refuge during their breeding
cycle.
Birders in the lower 48 are very well aware of opportunities to catch glimpses of the iconic species like the buff-breasted sandpiper, who follow flyways over the continent on their journey north. Because they nest on the ground in the open, they are particularly vulnerable to predators. Predators are drawn to manmade disturbance. In addition, in order to drill for oil, roads, buildings, and industrial facilities would need to be built. This would fragment and degrade the habitat so much that nests would either be abandoned or not built at all.

Breeding birds would experience less nesting success and population decline would result. There is no such thing as drilling responsibly unless you consider that you'd be responsible for negative impact on bird population.

Can the Bureau of Land Management stand up to profiteers and say, "No, oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge runs contrary to our mission to ensure the enjoyment and use of the refuge for future generations"?

It's clear that there is great pressure to open
the refuge to drilling. Joe Balash, President Trump's appointee for Assistant Interior Secretary for Land and Minerals Management, said the new mission is developing our resources there is an important facet for meeting our Nation's energy demands and achieving energy dominance. Please do not sacrifice the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in order to reach this dubious goal. Instead, keep the facets sparkling on the gem that is the wilderness here in Alaska. Future generations deserve you to protect it.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 74. Is number 74 in the room?

(No audible response.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. We're going to move over to 122. Do we have number 122?

(No audible response.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. 21? No 21?

DR. CHARLENE STERN: I'm here.

MR. DAVID BATTS: Right there. Okay, thank you.

DR. CHARLENE STERN: My name is Dr. Charlene
Stern, and I am from Arctic Village, Alaska. I am Gwich'in. My grandfather was a caribou hunter. My uncles were caribou hunters. My brother is a caribou hunter. And one day my 5-year-old son will grow to be a caribou hunter, provided that the Porcupine caribou continues to exist, and provided that they continue to be a healthy herd, and that the animals themselves are healthy enough to be consumed, and also provided that these caribou continue to migrate within range of our communities.

With this leasing program, those things are called into question. There have been comments made about how other herds have learned to coexist with development, but I want to point out the fact that those developments did not occur in their birthing grounds, which is an entirely different situation altogether.

In addition to being Gwich'in, I am also a researcher, and as a researcher, I understand the critical importance of good data to inform decision-making. Currently, the harvest data that we have is adequate. What data we do have is limited and outdated. In order for the ANILCA 1-0 -- 180 process
to be done competently, more data needs to collected on regional and local harvests, subsistence harvests. The caribou and the Coastal Plain and all the resources that depend upon it are shared resources. The Gwich'in aren't just neighbors down the street from this place. We are both historic and active users of the resources that depend upon it.

As a researcher, I have also learned that for every study conducted, there are limitations, and there are also counter-studies that often conclude something different or the opposite. We heard earlier about a study that indicated that the quality of life, such as life expectancy and other indicators, are increasing on the North Slope. I hope that that's true. If it would, it would make them an exception to most of the rest of the Arctic, where indigenous peoples have some of the highest rates of suicide, premature death, violence, and other negative health indicators.

When we -- most villages that I know experience these things like my own. Caribou and moose are some of the first things that our communities harvest in order to provide for the family. They provide some
comfort as our families go through grieving. They are
there for our celebrations. They're an important part
of our spirituality and our coming together as we cope
with different life events.

Lastly, I want to say that I have a degree in
community planning, and I have been trained
professionally to facilitate public processes like
these, and I know firsthand the importance of feeling
good about the quality and breadth of such processes.

There have been many concerns expressed about the
expedited nature of this process, and even though it is
unjust to many and poses an undue burden on Gwich'in
communities, we have to engage because it endangers our
way of life and we have no other choice. We flew a
long way to be here today -- be here today, and we plan
to be there every step of the way to ensure that our
interests are represented.

Mahsi'.

(Appause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 81.

MR. GARETT REPPENHAGEN: Thank you. I left to
one-site unit training weeks after the attacks on 9/11.

I became a Cavalry Scout, a sniper, for the U.S. Army, First Infantry Division. You know, I come from a family of military. My father served in Vietnam. He's buried in Fort Logan Cemetery in Denver. Both of my grandfathers served in World War II. My father, Edward, is named after my great-uncle, who died in the Battle of the Bulge.

You know, when I was in Iraq, I would be on sniper missions, and I'd often close my eyes and dream I was in some better place, you know, usually some mountain terrain. I come from Colorado. You know, one sniper mission, I remember it was hot, about 130 degrees, and I'm sitting there in my ghillie suit, which is, you know, a camouflage suit made of wool, and we're sitting in a garbage dump overseeing a road looking for people planting IEDs, roadside bombs, that are killing my friends. And, you know, I was going to my happy place trying to -- trying to get away, and my spotter, Sergeant Watkins, nudges me, and he's -- you know, he knew my routine, and he was like, "What are you thinking about?" And I told him, "I'm thinking about
the Arctic Ocean, I'm thinking about icebergs floating in the Arctic Ocean." And he laughed at me. And little did I know years later my dream would come true. I came home with serious PTSD, hypervigilance, night terrors, moral injury, the whole gamut of PTSD, and I naturally instinctively went outdoors, and it saved my life. And I got an opportunity to go to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and canoe the Canning River for 12 days, and it was lifesaving. It was just an amazing wild place, and it's so unique. And I signed up to defend "the land of the free," and I can't think of any other place in the world that was more free than that place. You could walk miles in any direction, and no matter what your color of skin, your religion preference, your sexual identity, no matter who you are, that land will treat you the same, the rainstorm is going to treat you the same, the grizzly bear is going to treat you the same. It is -- it is truly wild and free. And it's American. It's uniquely American. And we have the responsibility and the honor and privilege of protecting it and defending it. And, you know, these places are part of our
identity, who makes us up, and we should treasure them.

And, you know, another thing I fought to protect is our Constitution. And I want to make sure that this process is truly democratic. You know, I think we should be more honest and more capable of holding a good true hearing, all of the Nation, so everybody has an opportunity to give their comments to you people and to talk to you about how they feel about the National Arctic Wildlife Refuge.

So do what honors the people who have served and sacrificed and, you know, truly honor the Constitution and make this a democratic process.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Number 91.

MR. JIM PEPPER: Good evening. My name is Jim Pepper. I first moved to Anchorage in 1974. I first moved to Fairbanks in 1983. I have worked in a lot of different parts of the country. I'm retired now, but we came to Washington for work, and that's why I'm here now.

This is a world historical moment. I know that
you all probably feel that your higher status colleagues are not the ones who are having to sit here listening to these conversations, and because you probably feel it, you don't have much influence on what the outcome is going to be today. And you're going to look at and hear these comments from these people, and you're going to dismiss them because you're going to be able to call them -- you're going to be able to dismiss them because you're going to call them political comments, and they're vote comments, and they don't have anything to do with substance, and they don't have anything to do with a new insight into the evaluation or any kind of impact or analysis that you need to provide.

But I'm suggesting to you that because this is a world historical moment, that you really need to kick out your standard of evaluation, and even if you feel that you're at the bottom of the pecking order in your group and that's the only reason you're sitting here today, because everybody knows this is a done deal, consider the words, because words have meaning. We know that words can kill, but words can do even worse
than that, they can deaden the spirit of this country, and the cynicism that we can create when we take a process that is supposed to have meaning and turn it into something that is debased. People can lose their confidence in the agencies that they work for, they can lose their belief in the United States Government. So I'm suggesting to you that when you evaluate these comments tonight, or the other ones you've received in writing or in speeches, that you consider what they mean to America because they're going to have tangible impacts on our future.

We have a group led by the Bureau of Land Management, which is an agency set up by FLPMA in order to basically be a multiple-use agency, and we have the Wildlife Refuge Service, which manages these 19 million acres, which is in a secondary role, even though its legislation requires the agency to consider the compatibility test when it evaluates oil and gas development. You've got an existing system within the Refuge Administration Act that allows you to properly consider how to balance wilderness and subsistence values and wildlife values with the significance of the
oil and gas development, and you've got professionals
in an agency that actually know how to do this. And,
instead, what are you doing?

So I would just suggest to you that you consider
the social, the economic, value of what you're doing
because it's going to degrade an America that already
has men with guns in wildlife refuges. And so these
are significant and real. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTs: Thank you.

We'll move over to number 49.

MS. JENNIE GOSCHE: My name is Jennie Gosche, and
I live in Kensington, Maryland. I strongly oppose oil
and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife
Refuge. I have been to the refuge. I am a polar bear
photographer. By day, I work as a therapist for
Montgomery County, Maryland, Government, but when I'm
not working, I am dreaming of the Arctic. The cold
air, the overcast sky, the deep quiet. The roads are
few, and only in the Native villages, such as Kaktovik,
where I was in 2016, to photograph the Beaufort Sea
polar bears.
Polar bears are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. And it's interesting to note they were the first mammal added to the list because of climate change. It is estimated that more than 40 percent of the Beaufort Sea polar bears now den on land near Kaktovik because there is not enough ice on which to den. The pregnant polar bears go into the birthing dens in November or in December and have their cubs. They don't come out until March or April. The Fish and Wildlife Service designated 77 percent of the 1002 of the refuge as critical denning habitat for polar bears. Oil and gas exploration and drilling would certainly disrupt the denning mother polar bears and may cause them to abandon their dens. That would mean certain death for the cubs. When I visited Kaktovik, I was particularly happy to see the healthy cubs. Two mothers had three cubs, and that's -- the three were in that picture. And others had two. The cubs appeared well fed, happy, and were certainly playful. Watched over by their always vigilant mothers, the cubs played and slept all day. The Iñupiats of Kaktovik share their whale meat with the polar bears since so many are
now staying on shore during the warmer months.

Oil and gas development will change the 1002 forever. The companies attempting to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge insist they will work in winter, use ice roads that will melt, and their work will not disturb the wildlife. Having been to the 1002 and the refuge, I don't see how that will be possible. Oil rigs, flares, trucks, people, power lines, pollution, oil spills, all of that will irreparably damage the 1002. When the Porcupine caribou arrive in the 1002 in the spring from their long migration from Canada to have their calves, will they be met by oil rigs, pollution, and oil spills? We can't allow that to happen.

This pristine place must remain free of development for the Gwich'in people, who depend on the wildlife for their subsistence lifestyle, and for the polar bears, who depend on the open spaces in the 1002 to den and safely raise their cubs.

Please do not allow oil and gas exploration and drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you.
(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 90.

MS. MYRA THUMMA: Thank you. My name is Myra Thumma. I'm a Gwich'in. I'm from Native Village of Venetie. I also serve on the board. And I'm also a member of Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government. And this is my third scoping meeting. I went to Arctic Village, Venetie, and here.

And you guys heard the voice of my people, how they depend on the caribou. It's their life. Our life is at stake, and this is our cultural way of life, and that's going to be disturbed. And I just want to thank everybody that was here, our supporters, and I thank you.

And I speak behalf of my people. I don't represent myself, I represent my people, who they are, who we are, how we live. And we deeply depend on caribou. We live the cultural lifestyle. Our life is at stake. We have identity. We know who we are. I know my grandparents, I know my parents, I know who my auntie. And we all strongly oppose drilling in the
Arctic National Wildlife. This place, where the life begins. It's a sacred place for the birthing place of the caribou.

Why is this place really important where the caribou is really attracted to this place? It's a place where they go. It's a special place that they only go every year. And it's special. And that place is going to be disturbed. And it's -- I mean, it's -- it hurts me because, you know, I think about my kids, my people, and it's -- we're human beings. We have the human rights. We have sovereignty rights. And we have the right to speak up. We're Americans.

My son went to Iraq, Afghanistan, served this country. And I'm just thankful that he is back safe. And we have our Alaska Senators who does not support us at all. This is American, and all you guys panel there, you guys are from Alaska. You know how we live. This place where the caribou are -- well, you know my story. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Number 64.
MS. REBECCA ASHLEY: Hi. My name is Rebecca Ashley. I am from Lake Placid, New York. And I strongly oppose fossil fuel development on the Coastal Plain. I've never been to the Arctic Refuge before, like many Americans in this country. However, the more I learn about the threats of oil development that -- and the risks that they pose there, the more I feel for my own -- for our country, as the administration's agenda to rush the EIS and open the Coastal Plain represents the worst parts of our history, the same history of colonization that we have tried to hide, a history that is so horrific it's not often discussed or acknowledged, when as a country we need to acknowledge the truth of this moment. We need to decide that we'll do better. And we cannot disregard the biological, cultural, and the climate impacts that drilling in the Arctic Refuge will have.

As a 24-year-old journalist and organizer, I've spent the past year working with my community to raise awareness about the issue of climate change and the opportunities that we have, as Millennials, this year, as one of the largest blocks of the electorate, to vote
for a Congress who will take action on things like
climate change, to vote for a Congress who understands
that an assault on one community is an assault on all
communities.

I just wanted to share that in the last midterm
election, only 41 percent of people in this country
voted for their Member in Congress. Only 20 percent of
people in my generation, those of us between 18 and 35,
that is, voted at all. I think it's important to
underscore this because the lack of transparency and
the accountability that has been such a trend of this
administration, such as the provision in the tax bill
to open up the refuge for drilling, it's woken up the
Millennials in this country, it's woken up everybody,
and it's a midterm year. If the administration was
paying attention, if they were thinking rationally,
they would make better choices for all people in this
country, not just a few of us.

In closing, I want to add that I hope the
Department will consider the conversations that they
will have to have with their children, as their
decision to drill in the Arctic is only going to
accelerate the climate crisis. Drilling there will
create emissions equivalent to 898 coal plants, or 767
million cars. I cannot comprehend how the Department
of Interior could ignore the climate impacts that our
country and other parts of the world are already
facing, from high temperatures that are fueling
unprecedented storms across the country that our
communities are paying the price for, from wildfires to
floods and hurricanes and heat waves deemed "Lucifer."

I encourage you all to look at this issue from the
multiple dimensions that it has. It's not just an
environmental issue, it's a humans right issue, it's an
economic issue, it's a social justice issue, it's a
public health issue.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: All right. Is number 51 in-
house?

(No audible response.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: All right. Just -- you guys did
an awesome job with speaking and did wonderful in
keeping us on track. So instead of drawing numbers
here, can I just see a number of hands of people that
still would like to speak that have not spoken yet?

(Show of hands.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. So if you have not spoken
yet and you would like to speak, if you could please
come up front, and we'll let folks that have not had
the chance at the microphone, we'll get you up here
first. Come on down up front, we'll get you organized.

And if you can just make sure we get you to sign your
name with our microphone keepers, they'll get you
situated.

Molly, do you want to queue up over here first?

Go ahead and speak, and we'll get you afterwards.

MS. DEANA STEEGE: Thank you for letting us speak
if our numbers were not chosen.

I first wanted to give a shout-out to 10 people
who have been sitting since probably 7:00 a.m. this
morning, who drove here from New York State because
they were not allowed an opportunity to attend the
public hearing in their State, so thank you all to
those 10 people, and everybody else.

(Applause.)
MS. DEANA STEEGE: My name is Deana Steege. I am the Director of National Outreach with Defenders of Wildlife. I live here in D.C. And I am here to strongly oppose any oil and gas leasing on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

75 percent of the Coastal Plain is designated as critical habitat for the endangered polar bears, as we have heard a lot about tonight already. As sea ice continues to melt due to climate change, pregnant females from the southern Beaufort Sea polar bear population are increasingly forced to come ashore to birth and rear their young. What will happen to this species when their home is invaded by and entangled with oil rigs, roads, pipeline, other infrastructure?

We know from a September 15, 2017, report from the New York Times that the scars of these developments never really go away, as shown by satellite images of the first and only oil rig ever drilled and established in a refuge in the 1980s, remnants of which still scar the Earth today. And still to this day we do not know how much or how little oil was actually produced from this site.
The Arctic Refuge is a unique and unparalleled landscape, home not only to polar bears, but to musk oxen, wolves, Arctic fox, nearly 200 species of migratory birds, the Porcupine caribou herd, that sustains and maintains the Gwich'in Nation, a culture that has survived and thrived off this species for thousands of years.

This hasty and shortsighted plan to plow through the lease sale process and complete the EIS in 1 year is a clear indication that the administration has its sights set on drilling in this remote region no matter the cost and no matter the opposition from the majority of Americans. The fact that 49 States were offered one hearing outside of Alaska is a clear indication that the administration is moving forward at whatever cost.

It is our moral obligation to protect this iconic landscape for the Gwich'in, who depend on it for their culture and way of life. It is our moral obligation to protect this landscape for the wildlife who give birth there and who are part of some of the greatest biodiversity in the Nation. And it is our moral obligation to protect this landscape for the benefit of
future generations who need clean air to breathe and
clean water to drink and whose chances of growing up on
a planet that afford them these basic necessities
diminishes with every new oil and gas program developed
around the globe.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you. And if you could
please write your card number on that.

Okay, ma'am?

MS. WENDY HALL: Hello. My name is Wendy Hall,
and I am the founder of the Adirondack Wildlife Refuge.
I have been a wildlife rehabilitator for over 45 years.
And the changes that we've seen from our indicator
species are astounding in not a good way.
I have heard and been very inspired by these
speakers. I had no -- I had no plans to speak, but I'm
-- it just -- just touches me in a way that I must talk
about one example that is not the Arctic National
Wildlife Refuge, but in the Adirondack Park, which is
also a protected area, as a wildlife rehabilitator, my
intern and I, sitting over there, have just -- the most
recent case we had was three beautiful gray fox kits
that we thought were abandoned by the mother. We
weren't sure. So we had people keep an eye on them in
a State park. When it was reported to me that she
hadn't returned and the kits were freezing and dying,
we took them in, as we often do.

What happened was these animals were so covered
with ticks of three different varieties that we have
pictures of, they were dying of literally being
poisoned by these horrible creatures that are an
absolute sign of climate change. Well, the mother did
return about 3 or 4 days later, so covered with ticks
that she basically crawled to the den, and we had
already had the kits that my intern spent all night
pulling the ticks off of.

If you people don't believe in this, then you must
need to understand the difference. These animals,
which this is what I do, I'm a wildlife rehabilitator,
there are so many more examples of this. What you're
doing in the Arctic I don't understand. We need to
take care of so many more absolutely vitally important
situations now with our nature that exists in a
protected park.

That's all I have to say. And thank you for the brilliant speakers that I heard today. Thank you.

(Appplause.)

MR. DAVID BATTs: Thank you.

MS. TARA MILLER: Hi. My name is Tara Miller. I drove down from Upstate New York to be here this morning. It would have been great to have a hearing a little closer to home. I wrote up a statement, which I'll submit for the record, but a lot of those great points have been made already, so instead I'd like to tell you about my parents and how that relates to this process.

So I come from Cortland County in Upstate New York. We have a landfill in the county. Our county legislators informed us the landfill is losing money, so we've got to do something about it. So they proposed something called "Ash for Trash," which was to accept incinerated trash ash from an incinerator north of us and take that into our landfill. Now, that has a lot of really devastating implications for our groundwater, for health, for the surrounding
communities.

So, going back, the first thing is we were told that our landfill was losing money. My mom actually went through and crunched the numbers, did some proper accounting on it. The landfill is not actually losing money, and there are a lot better ways than importing toxic ash to solve this problem. I think that's pretty similar to what's going on with the Arctic, selling oil leases in the Arctic Refuge is not the best way to pay for tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires.

So lesson number one: take the time, take the time to go through the numbers to see what is the best economically feasible plan for the problem you're looking to solve.

And so my parents helped with other community members to form a citizen group to go through to look at the science, to do the job that our county legislators weren't doing, weren't properly going through all of this information, weren't doing due diligence on what could be a very serious health crisis for our community. And this has been going on for years.
Lesson number two: take the time for going through from proposing this legislation to drill in the Arctic and planning to sell leases fewer than 2 years later? That's not enough time to go through everything everyone has been bringing up today, all of these very serious issues, not just at a county level, something that my community has been dealing with for years, going through all of this information, going through the environmental impact assessment process. And this has been going on for years already, enough time for the community group my parents started to be having squabbles about who should be running meetings and coming up with agendas. So to go through something that has such huge national and international implications with this rushed of a process, with this limited number of public hearings, access to public -- having everyone have their voices heard adequately. This is not enough time at this level.

So I urge you, take the time, take the time that is necessary to go through all of this and to do due diligence for this importance place.

Thank you.
MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.
Okay. Ma'am?

MS. PAT WADLINGTON: Hi. Thank you for letting me speak. I don't have anything prepared. I'm speaking from my heart. My name is Pat Wadlington. I'm from Black River, New York. That is about an hour and a half north of Syracuse. I am deeply concerned about the aspect of drilling especially on the plateau, but in the Arctic National Refuge because there is very limited knowledge of how much oil or gas might actually come out of this drilling, and the damage and costs that would be incurred would far exceed what we might actually get out of it. And I urge you to think very carefully about what we're doing, and is it really worth it?

Thank you for this time.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

MS. PAT PARKHURST: Hi. I'm Pat. I'm from Upstate New York. And I'm going to read a letter from a 12-year-old named Faith, and she's from Upstate New
York, and she could not be here.

"Oil companies want to drill in multiple places, but do they know whose homes they are ruining? There are so many beautiful and phenomenal animals out there, and if we don't do something, those animals are going to lose their homes and have no place to go. What if someone came and wanted to tear down your home? What would you do? How would that make you feel? Where would you go?

"My point is that animals have feelings, too. The places you are drilling are homes of many animals, including the Porcupine caribou. They need food, water, a clean and healthy environment, and, most importantly, a safe habitat in which to live. My friends and I feel very strongly about the animals that would be losing their homes if you decide to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We care about the people and animals that live there and will speak for them because if you ruin their homes, not only will you destroy their way of life, but our entire world will be affected by the harm caused to our environment by drilling for gas and oil."
It's totally insane. I mean, dig down. Talk to your children, talk to your grandchildren, and look them in the eyes. This is not the right thing to do.

And thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. ANNA DAVIDSON: (Speaking in Alaska Native language.) My name is Anna Davidson. I'm a Yup'ik Eskimo from southwest Alaska in a village called Akiachak. It's near Bethel. And I'm here as an Alaska Native in support with the Gwich'in people, and I have supported them for the last almost 29 years.

And I helped my fellow Yup'ik people write letters to Congressmen saying we oppose because we ourselves live off the land. We fish. Salmon is our main food, and it's very important to us that we have food for the winter. Every summer, as far as I can remember, and all the stories I heard from my ancestors, that summertime to fall is our preparation to make sure we have food for the winter. We fish, we hang them, we smoke them, and put them away. And then we pick berries. Fall time, we hunt moose, caribou, reindeer, and store them away, and wintertime, we make sure we
have food. That's what the Gwich'in people, they do, too. And I am with them in my heart and as well as my -- I know my fellow Yup'ik people will be supporting, too.

I just wanted to say, let you guys know, that the Yup'ik Eskimo from southwest Alaska is with the Gwich'in people.

(Applause.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

Sir?

MR. MARTIN HAYDEN: My name is Martin Hayden. I live in Alexandria, Virginia, and I am here on behalf of myself. I have never been to the Arctic Refuge. And over 30 years ago, I was living back home in Defiance, Missouri, and I got the opportunity to come to Washington, D.C., for the first in my life, and that was to testify before the Senate Energy Committee on making the Coastal Plain a wilderness.

It saddens me that here I am over 30 years later and the Arctic is at more threat than it has ever been, and many of the reasons we've heard tonight are the reasons I spoke to over 30 years ago before the Senate
Energy Committee, you know, but the top two of those
was the Gwich'in people and what this means to them.
And standing here as a white man, I can't begin to
fathom the pain, the risk, that this is to their
culture, their way of life; and that, in this whole
damn thing, is the moral issue.

And the other, of course, is the Arctic, as you've
heard more eloquently than I can do, is one of the most
wildest, pristinest, most fantastic places left on
Earth, and it should stay that way.

The new issue that wasn't there 30 years ago is
climate change. And while the official opinion of our
President and this administration may be that climate
change is a hoax, the Arctic is ground zero for climate
change. You're all, most all of you, I believe, are
from Alaska. You've seen what's happening up there.

And we can officially declare it a hoax, but climate
change is going to come back and bite all of us in the
butt because real stuff is happening right now, real
stuff for the BLM. How's your firefighting budget
looking? How much are you spending on firefighting now
versus 30 years ago? We see it happening all over the
place. And the idea of drilling the Arctic Ocean, the
western Arctic, and the Coastal Plain is insane.
And I would like to say, you know, can we just
stop the insanity out of this process? But, I'm sorry,
the fact -- this process, I think, has as much
integrity -- and this isn't personal -- but this
process has as much integrity as the process by which
it came about, but putting in authorizing language,
burying it in a tax bill that was passed through
reconciliation, is the way that we decide that we're
going to drill the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? I
think the outcome here is set. So we will see you in
court.

(Applause and cheering.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: All right. We have time for a
couple more speakers. Anybody else that has not had a
chance to speak that would like to provide comments?
Anybody else?

(No audible response.)

MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay, Sarah, please come on
down.

MS. SARAH JAMES: I would like to close this.
Since nobody is coming up now, that I would like to play one song that represents our Nation as Neetsaii Gwich'in. It's a caribou skin hunt dance. That means we're welcome to this place. And you are welcome to Arctic Village. You are welcome to Alaska, and see and have Gwich'in host you, because that kind of people we are. And I see I've got -- we've got a lot of friends, so you are welcome to Arctic Village. If you haven't been to Arctic Village, you haven't been to Alaska. And every day in Arctic Village is a good day, so every day is a good day to see Alaska.

(Plays and sings song.)

MS. SARAH JAMES: This every song, our traditional song, we have this song to welcome you. We have this song to have the Gwich'in Nation healthy and, you know, to keep the Gwich'in people strong and healthy, and that means to keep the Porcupine caribou birthplace strong and healthy. And every traditional song we have are prayers.

So thank you for letting me sing this song tonight. It's not very easy for me, but thank you.

(Applause.)
MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you, Sarah. We appreciate you sharing with us.

I don't think we can top that for a closer, but I would like to just thank everyone again, the remaining people here, for your time tonight, for your insightful comments, for those of you that traveled, making that extra effort. I do want to thank the Eskimo, the Gwich'in, Alaskan residents for making the trip all the way from Alaska to be with us.

And for the Gwich'in, we do want to recognize their presence at all these meetings. That is appreciated.

Mr. Balash, would you like to make any other closing remarks?

MR. JOE BALASH: As David said, I want to thank people for their patience this evening and moving through the process as efficiently and effectively as you all did. I think it's a credit to all of you here to work cooperatively to allow that to happen.

And this does wrap up our final scoping meeting, but, of course, whenever the next step in the process occurs, when the draft EIS is made available for the
public, there will be another opportunity for hearings around Alaska, around parts of the country. So I'm certain you guys will stay engaged if you're already here at this point.

So thank you. Be safe this evening. And, please, if you have further thoughts, further comments, take advantage of our other means of submitting those to us.

Have a good night.

(Whereupon, at 8:55 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.)