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[EXTERNAL] Environmental Impact Statement for proposed leasing for oil drilling on Alaska's coastal plain1 message

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To: blm_ak_coastalplain_EIS@blm.gov

Two sales of leases for drilling for oil on Alaska's coastal plain were included in the recently passed federal tax bill. This represents a flagrant miscarriage of democracy, as an issue that required careful review by scientists and widespread public input and consideration was rushed through Congress in a totally unrelated piece of legislation. The Bureau of Land Management and the Department of the Interior should both reject this deceptive, misguided legislation and refuse to hold the stipulated sales. The lands within the Arctic Wildlife Refuge must remain off limits to industrial development. Although the area seems vast, the environment it comprises is fragile and is home to many species whose numbers are severely diminished. We need every acre of this land as a safe place for all of the plants and animals who thrive in this last unspoiled arctic landscape in the United States. Furthermore, native peoples call the Alaskan coastal plain their home. They retain the rights to their lands for their very existence. Passing a tax bill should not result in tribes losing their very way of life. The fossil fuel industry stands to gain from opening this area to oil leasing. However, Americans overwhelmingly oppose sacrificing our public lands for private, corporate gain. There is no urgency to access oil in these fragile areas. However, there is an urgent need to stop burning fossil fuels as quickly as possible to mitigate the effects of global warming. Therefore, I urge you to reject drilling for oil in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. Thank you for taking my comments.

Lucy Kennedy