

I think the primary reason I am here to testify is for the protection of the porcupine caribou.

We have many friends out there that see the 1002 area and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as one of the last treasures of our country.

Each of us have our reasons for wanting to protect this pristine area, but my thoughts are for the caribou. The 1002 area is where as our people reiterated, "The place where life begins".

I do not understand the thoughts of the people who want to develop the 1002 area. We do have future generations coming and what are going to leave them?

The caribou, as you know, has been a blessing to the Gwichin both here in Alaska and in Canada. Without the caribou our culture would die. As someone said, "Our identity is not negotiable and our human rights inalienable".

There are many animals and birds that will be impacted if development occurs, but my pitch is for the caribou. They are our food source, our identity, our culture, and our spirit.

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Page 1