



Transcript of **Meeting**

Friday, June 15, 2018

*Public scoping meeting for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Coastal Plain Oil*

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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COASTAL PLAIN OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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7

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

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Friday, June 15, 2018

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4:30 p.m.

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National Association of Home Builders

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1201 15th Street, NW

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Washington, D.C.

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1 PARTICIPANTS

2

3 David Batts, Moderator, EMPSi

4

5 Federal Government Representatives:

6 Joe Balash, Assistant Secretary for Land and

7 Minerals Management, U.S. Department of the Interior

8 Nichole Hayes, Project Manager, BLM

9 Karen Mouritsen, State Director (Acting), BLM

10 Greg Siekaniec, Regional Director, Alaska Region,

11 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

12 Steve Wackowski, Alaska Advisor to the Secretary

13 of the Interior, U.S. Department of the Interior

14

15 Interest Group Speakers (in order of speaking):

16 Andy Mack, Commissioner, Alaska Department of

17 Natural Resources

18 Jamie Williams, President, The Wilderness Society

19 John Hopson, Jr., Mayor of Wainwright, Chairman of

20 NSB Assembly

21 Tonya Garnett, Executive Director, Native Village

22 of Venetie Tribal Government

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Interest Group Speakers (in order of speaking)

5 (Continued):

6 Richard Ranger, American Petroleum Institute

7 Mark Magaña, President & CEO, GreenLatinos

8 Cathy Giessel, Alaska State Senate

9 Dana Tizya-Tramm, Vuntut Gwich'in Government,

10 Whitehorse

11 Shantha Ready Alonso, Executive Director, Creation

12 Justice Ministries

13 Fenton Rexford, Native Village of Kaktovik, Voice

14 of the Arctic

15 Jerrald John, Elected Official, Native Village of

16 Venetie Tribal Government

17 Richard Glenn, ASRC, Native Village of Barrow

18 Bernadette Demientieff, Gwich'in Steering

19 Committee

20 Kara Moriarty, President & CEO, Alaska Oil and Gas

21 Association

22

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Interest Group Speakers (in order of speaking)

5 (Continued):

6 Adam Kolton, Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness

7 League

8 Forrest "Deano" Olemaun, North Slope Borough

9 Sarah James, Gwich'in Steering Committee

10

11 Public Comment Speakers (in order of speaking):

12 Jane Lyder

13 Sophia Marjanovic

14 Drew McConville

15 Karen Scherer

16 Paula Clements

17 Sandra Ashley

18 Rhonda Hungerford

19 Lydia Weiss

20 Mark Anthony Herrera

21 Mark Salvo

22 Lena Moffitt

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Public Comment Speakers (in order of speaking)

5 (Continued):

6 Subhankar Banerjee

7 Finis Dunaway

8 Mary Ann Rudy

9 Dana McCoskey

10 Kelly Eigler

11 Milo Donovan

12 Michael Harris

13 Jenny Keatinge

14 Greg Singleton

15 Marjorie Gimmel

16 Erik DuMont

17 Laura Franklin

18 John Robinson

19 Keith Shue

20 Mariana Egea

21 John Noël

22 Craig Stevens

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Public Comment Speakers (in order of speaking)

5 (Continued):

6 Chase Huntley

7 Marissa Knodel

8 Maryanne Adams

9 Charlene Stern

10 Garrett Reppenhagen

11 Jim Pepper

12 Jennie Gosche

13 Myra Thumma

14 Rebecca Ashley

15 Deana Steege

16 Wendy Hall

17 Tara Miller

18 Pat Wadlington

19 Pat Parkhurst

20 Anna Davidson

21 Martin Hayden

22

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 Opening Remarks and Presentation

3 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Okay. Welcome, everybody.

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

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

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

18 Just a few logistical announcements before we get
19 started. If you need to use the restroom, we have
20 restrooms directly out the door to your right. If we
21 need to vacate the room, there are a couple number of
22 exits, two behind me, and then two doors where you came

1 in. There are exit signs right above those.

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

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

16 Outside, hopefully you were able to enjoy some of
17 the stations that we have out there. We also have a
18 comment station where you can go in and directly be
19 connected onto the Internet and onto the live comment
20 website, where you can leave your comments there if you
21 like. And we'll talk a little bit more about
22 commenting here in just a little bit.

1 We will be wrapping up at 9:00. We do have this
2 building secured until then, but we will need to vacate
3 it at that point in time. So we'll talk a little bit
4 more about how we'll all work together so we can try to
5 get as many people to speak this evening as possible.

6 That's all that I have for the logistics.

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

12 Joe.

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

22 This particular program and in this particular

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

12 So with me today, I'm watching a couple of folks
13 continue to walk in here, but we have with us the
14 Acting State Director for BLM in Alaska, Karen
15 Mouritsen; the Regional Director for Alaska for the
16 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Greg Siekaniec; and the
17 Secretary's Senior Advisor on Alaska Affairs, Steve
18 Wackowski, is walking up to the dais here right now.
19 And then finally probably the most important person in
20 this room and on this project is Nicole Hayes. She is
21 the Project Manager for this EIS program and is going
22 to be very, very busy with all of this work so that we

1 can get the job done right and be able to move forward
2 in the manner Congress has directed.

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

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

21 Thank you.

22 MS. NICOLE HAYES: Thank you, Joe.

1 As he mentioned, I'm Nicole Hayes. I'm the
2 Project Manager for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas
3 Leasing EIS. I am going to quickly go through what
4 we're here for today, and the quicker I go through it,
5 the more time you all will have to speak. So we'll go
6 ahead and get started.

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

14 So on December 22, 2017, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act
15 of 2017 was enacted. Part of that act requires that
16 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the
17 Bureau of Land Management, implement an oil and gas
18 leasing program within the Coastal Plain. The Coastal
19 Plain is identified here on this map. That's displayed
20 as the 1002 area within the Arctic National Wildlife
21 Refuge. The Coastal Plain encompasses about 1.6
22 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 As I mentioned, there are two agencies that have
16 primary responsibilities within the Arctic National
17 Wildlife Refuge as it pertains to this EIS. BLM
18 administers all Federal mineral estate, including the
19 oil and gas, under Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
20 That's why we're the lead Federal agency for the EIS.
21 We're responsible for developing the leasing program,
22 conducting lease sales, and then down the road we would

1 approve the applications for permit to drill.

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

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

19 So this busy slide shows the National
20 Environmental Policy Act process. The purpose of NEPA,
21 which it's often referred to as, is it's intended to
22 help public officials make decisions that are based on

1 understanding of environmental consequences, and, most
2 importantly, take actions that protect, restore, or
3 enhance the environment. This is a critical part of
4 the environmental consequences, is going through the
5 public involvement process.

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

18 The NEPA process started with enactment of the
19 act. There are two major points where there is public
20 comment opportunity. We're in one of them, the scoping
21 period, which goes until June 19th, so you have until
22 then to submit your written comments, and, of course,

1 provide comment tonight. The other major public
2 comment period will be when the draft EIS comes out,
3 which we anticipate to be around this fall. And then
4 the NEPA process concludes with the Record of Decision
5 and a lease sale.

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

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

21 If the finding is an action may have a significant
22 restriction on subsistence uses, then we would hold a

1 public hearing on that matter. So the public hearing
2 usually coincides with the public comment period for
3 the draft EIS, so that comment period would conclude,
4 and then we would have a hearing on the subsistence
5 impacts. And after we receive the input on the
6 subsistence uses and impacts, then a final
7 determination is made and is appended to the final EIS.

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

20 To date, we have actually eight cooperating
21 agencies: the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the
22 State of Alaska, the North Slope Borough, the Native

1 Village of Venetie, the Arctic Village Council, the
2 Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government. I think I
3 mentioned the North Slope Borough. And just yesterday
4 or the day before, the Native Village of Kaktovik said
5 they wanted to be a cooperator also. So we now have
6 eight cooperating agencies.

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

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

1 and a lease sale is held.

2 As was mentioned earlier, we have had seven
3 scoping meetings. This is the seventh and final one.
4 We've been in Arctic Village, Fairbanks, Anchorage,
5 Utqiagvik, Venetie, Kaktovik, and, of course, here we
6 are today.

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

17 Thank you.

18 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you, Nicole.

19 All right. And this is the important part of the
20 meeting. My name is David Batts. I'm with the EMPSi.
21 We're the consulting firm that is helping facilitate
22 the scoping process. And I have two important roles

1 for this evening. First and foremost, my job is to
2 make sure that your voice is heard and that your
3 comments are incorporated into the EIS process. While
4 we look forward to getting your verbal comments this
5 evening, I do want to remind you that written comments
6 are also accepted. We have a variety of ways to do
7 that. All that information that was up on the slide is
8 also put on the comment card, which is available on the
9 handout table.

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

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

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

21 And, again, if you have any special needs or need
22 any help, please feel to grab any staff that have a

1 name tag and we'll make sure that we can accommodate
2 you.

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

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

16 For the speaking process this evening, we want to
17 try to accommodate as many different viewpoints as
18 possible and hear from as many people as we can, so we
19 have a two-tiered approach. First this evening, we're
20 going to start with a prearranged speaker list. We
21 have about 15, 16 individuals that will be speaking
22 first. Then we will be opening it up to the public at

1 large. If you're interested in speaking tonight,
2 please make sure that you've grabbed one of the
3 speaking cards and fill that out. We will be doing a
4 lottery for the drawing orders off of that, and I'll
5 come back and talk a little bit more about that in a
6 few minutes.

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

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

19 Interest Group Representative Comments

20 MR. DAVID BATTS: So, again, if you are interested
21 in speaking, please go grab your speaker cards.
22 Otherwise, we are going to go ahead and move into our

1 prearranged speakers. And please excuse me, I'm not
2 texting my mother right now, but I'm going to pull up
3 my list of our prearranged speakers. We're going to
4 start first with Andy Mack.

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

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

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

20 First, the State of Alaska believes the 40-year
21 history of successful development on the Arctic tundra
22 supports the view that modern standards applied in an

1 Arctic setting can protect the creatures and landscape
2 of the Arctic over a long period of time.

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

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

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

21 In 1971, Congress took up and passed ANCSA to
22 address the rights of the land claims of the Alaska

1 Native people. A decade later, the Alaska National
2 Interest Lands Conservation Act was passed, further
3 defining protection and uses of lands in Alaska. Often
4 overlooked in this discussion is that ANILCA doubled
5 the size of the United States' National Park System, it
6 doubled the size of the National Refuge System, and it
7 tripled the amount of land designated as Federal
8 wilderness. There is an amazing abundance of true
9 untouched wilderness in Alaska across our State.
10 Alaskans will be the first to tell you such.

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

19 We have applied technology. Many still believe
20 that activity in the Arctic is built on the data and
21 technologies from the '70s. Old news. Alaska leads
22 the globe in application of Arctic technology. When

1 Prudhoe Bay started producing in 1977, industry built a
2 65-acre gravel pad to develop each 3 to 5 square miles
3 of subsurface reservoir. Now because of extended-reach
4 drilling and multilateral drilling techniques, it is
5 possible to develop 113 square miles of subsurface
6 reservoir from a 20-acre pad.

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

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

22 Our request is that the DOI goes about creating

1 the requirements for leasing, or when it does, it looks
2 at traditional knowledge as having equivalent value as
3 Western science.

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

12 We call on DOI to analyze the data in the record
13 that shows this is without basis and not true,
14 especially given the modern technology and mitigation
15 measures. We also call on DOI to analyze the important
16 socioeconomic and security benefits of this development
17 on the appropriate local, national, and international
18 levels when conducting its analysis. Studies and
19 information about the positive public health and
20 economic benefits of development, as observed on the
21 North Slope and across Alaska, are an important part of
22 this review.

1 Additionally, the role of the 1002 area plays in
2 securing domestic energy supplies supporting
3 concomitant economic activity through promoting of
4 affordable energy prices, improving trade balance
5 through energy exports, and bolstering national
6 security.

7 We, finally, in the analysis of the value of the
8 1002 areas and undeveloped areas should take into
9 account millions of acres of existing legally defined
10 wilderness in close proximity to the area.

11 Thank you for your time.

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

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

19 Mr. Williams?

20 MR. JAMIE WILLIAMS: Thank you. Good evening.

21 Hi, I'm Jamie Williams. And I'm President of the
22 Wilderness Society. And our mission is to protect

1 wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild
2 places.

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

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

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

21 Now I'd like to focus on three specific issues and
22 concerns we have with the BLM process.

1 First, we urge the BLM to honor its obligations
2 under the 1987 international agreement with Canada for
3 the conservation of the Porcupine caribou herd as well
4 as treaty obligations related to the conservation of
5 polar bears and migratory birds.

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

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

20 Now, let me be clear on one point. This is
21 neither the time and certainly not the place for BLM to
22 take shortcuts on the EIS, and it does not bode well

1 that the BLM has scheduled this hearing on a Friday
2 evening in the middle of the summer in what appears to
3 be an attempt to limit public participation and game
4 the process. But it's not too late to do the right
5 thing and listen to public opinion on this critical
6 issue.

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

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

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

19 MR. JOHN HOPSON, JR.: Good afternoon. My name is
20 John Hopson, Jr., and I am the City Mayor for
21 Wainwright, Alaska, a community on the North Slope of
22 Alaska and a member of Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat.

1 Loosely, the aim of Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, which
2 we call "Voice," is to unite people from across the
3 North Slope to work together collectively to address
4 the needs of our people and to work to amplify the
5 voices of our local people over those who would speak
6 on our behalf about how we should live and manage our
7 homelands.

8 I am here today to elevate the voices of the
9 Kaktovikmuit, many of whom could not travel 6,000 miles
10 for what we are in the north to consider a local issue.

11 Since January of 2017, when ANWR legislation was
12 once again introduced into Congress, Voice has held
13 many meetings in the community of Kaktovik and worked
14 very closely with Kaktovik's leadership to determine
15 their feelings about the piece of legislation that
16 opens the Coastal Plain to oil and gas leasing.

17 Through our meetings, polls -- through our
18 meetings, polls taken in the community and information
19 we receive from fellow Voice members, Native Village of
20 Kaktovik, and Kaktovik Iñupiat Corporation, I have
21 heard strong local support on this issue. As the only
22 North Slope community located within the National

1 Wildlife Refuge, Kaktovik has long felt the strain of
2 solidified economy.

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

20 People seem to cling on the idea in the Coastal
21 Plain, and I am sure we will hear testimony today about
22 its stellar beauty from people who have been to the

1 Brooks Range a time or two, people who have chartered
2 airplanes from Fairbanks and Anchorage. They buy gear,
3 freeze-dried food from outdoor corporations, guided by
4 folks from Anchorage or the lower 48, who leave nothing
5 for the people of Kaktovik. Don't forget that you got
6 the refuge using oil, your Gore-Tex, polypropylene, and
7 nylon, carbon fiber, and waterproofing rafts and
8 kayaks, backpacks, boots, tents, camp fuel, all made
9 from hydrocarbons. So maybe it's time to admit that
10 virtually every member of our society still depends on
11 oil.

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

22 I myself come from a village located in the NPRA,

1 so I know firsthand how development can be done. I
2 know that caribou can survive. We also rely on caribou
3 as a subsistence resource. I know that the environment
4 can survive. And I know that the Iñupiat people will
5 thrive. Our message has always been about balance. We
6 know it can be done because we are already doing it,
7 and we're doing it well. We know how to co-exist,
8 partner with -- and partner with the industry. We've
9 been doing it for decades.

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

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

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

21 The next speaker is Tonya Garrett (ph).

22 MS. TONYA GARNETT: Tonya Garnett. (Speaking in

1 Alaska Native language.) My name is Tonya Garnett. I
2 am Neetsaii Gwich'in. I am from Arctic Village. I am
3 the daughter of Lillian and Jerry Garnett. I am the
4 granddaughter of the late Ezias and Martha James and
5 the late Edgar and Lucy Garnett. I have a 9-year-old
6 son named Ashton.

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

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

17 Many of the people that will be impacted by this
18 proposal have not been heard. We bring with us down
19 here representatives of our Gwich'in people, elder,
20 Tribal elected leaders, mothers, hunters, Tribal staff,
21 and a doctor. Our hunters, who provide not only for
22 their families but for the community, and elders that

1 have to live in the city due to medical are here
2 because this is important to all of us. All of us are
3 real. We are real people with real lives. There are
4 only a few of us here today, but we represent
5 thousands.

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

13 The Porcupine caribou and the Gwich'in people have
14 lived together since time immemorial. Our culture is
15 alive and strong. We do not support this proposal.
16 There will be dramatic impacts to the economic and
17 social well-being of our people. Our people still
18 practice their traditional way of life, one that
19 connects us to both the land, in both of our villages
20 and north to the Coastal Plain. We hope to continue
21 that. It's our whole identity at stake. Our tradition
22 and culture gets us through this ever-changing world.

1 It's a fact that the United States Government has
2 a long and sad history of treatment of the indigenous
3 people of this land. The potential opening of the
4 Porcupine caribou herds' birthing grounds to oil
5 development as part of the Tax Act is yet another
6 attack on indigenous people, my Gwich'in people.

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

21 There are many injustices happening right now with
22 this process. As we have seen in history, a process

1 that is foreign to us is being pushed on us fast and
2 hard. We are being pushed to learn fast and hard and
3 to act fast and hard. Why is there a rush to push an
4 EIS process that usually takes many years to 1 year,
5 especially since the Tax Act mandates the first lease
6 to be in the year 2022?

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

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

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

22 Isn't life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness

1 with the life, liberty, and happiness of my people,
2 United States citizens are under attack and at stake
3 here? You have the power to change this.

4 (Speaking in Alaska Native language.) God be with
5 you. God be with all of us. Mahsi'.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

8 Our next speaker will be Richard Ranger.

9 MR. RICHARD RANGER: My name is Richard Ranger,
10 and I am a senior policy advisor for API. I have
11 worked in the oil and gas industry for almost 40 years,
12 including 13 years in Alaska. In Alaska, I worked on
13 or commissioned environmental work for site
14 characterization and oil spill contingency planning for
15 drilling projects in Cook Inlet and on the Alaska North
16 Slope. I've done field environmental recon work and
17 supported various projects in Alaska by helicopter, by
18 boat, and on foot on wilderness game trails. I helped
19 train and equip one of the first oil spill response
20 teams based in an Alaska Native village. I've sat in a
21 truck on the North Slope's Spine Road, engine idling,
22 watching perhaps 5- to 7,000 caribou from the Central

1 Arctic herd cross the road because one of the operating
2 rules on the Slope is caribou have the right of way.

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

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

19 We believe that this balance is achievable in
20 portions of the Coastal Plain on the Arctic National
21 Wildlife Refuge, where crude oil and natural gas
22 resources of national and strategic significance are

1 believed to occur. We believe that the long record of
2 our industry's exploration and production operations on
3 lands elsewhere on Alaska North Slope, lands that are
4 likewise of significance to wildlife populations and to
5 the people who rely upon them, support this assertion.

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

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

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

22 Access to remote sites is provided by construction

1 of winter ice roads to allow transportation of
2 equipment and drilling supplies to the site. These
3 roads minimize environmental impacts because the ice
4 roads melt in the spring, leaving no permanent trace on
5 the tundra.

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

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

15 On the North Slope, the natural gas and oil
16 industry has participated as a partner in research with
17 the agencies of Federal, State, and borough
18 governments, including BLM and the Fish and Wildlife
19 Service, which administers the refuge, adding to the
20 literature about the Arctic that has benefited the
21 agencies as well as the broader research community that
22 continues to develop our knowledge of this important

1 region.

2 One of my industry friends, Bill Streever, now
3 retired, has written a book called "Cold" that I
4 commend to anyone in this room who desires to know more
5 about what it is like to work and live in an Arctic
6 environment, although Bill would be the first to tip
7 his hat to the first Alaskans, who have been doing so
8 on the North Slope for 10,000 years and who he
9 considers among his expert sources.

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

19 Alaskan oil and gas operations have been a proving
20 ground for technologies that have steadily reduced both
21 the footprint and the impacts of exploration and
22 production activities that the industry undertakes.

1 Contemporary field development practices and the
2 industry's long successful experience in other
3 sensitive areas in the Alaska North Slope show that
4 Americans do not have to choose between development of
5 valuable energy resources or the protection of Arctic
6 species and the habitat in which these species live.
7 Both can be accomplished, and we support the work to
8 demonstrate how that can be done.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

11 Our next speaker will be Mark Magaña.

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

22 Opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil

1 and gas drilling would cause irreparable harm to the
2 lives of the Gwich'in people, who have called the
3 Coastal Plain home since time immemorial. Such action
4 would be in direct offense of the health and well-being
5 of Americans across the Nation, who will be harmed by
6 the pollution and heightened climate change impacts
7 produced by fossil fuels.

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

18 It is important to protect this place for the
19 environmental and cultural value that it brings to
20 people and wildlife. Allowing oil and gas drilling
21 will cause irreparable harm that could never be
22 reversed or mitigated. We have a moral obligation to

1 our future generations to do what we can to ensure that
2 they have a world where they have clean air, clean
3 water, access to natural historic cultural landscapes
4 that we're able to enjoy now.

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

18 Secondly, oil and gas development in the Coastal
19 Plain would be a direct threat to the well-being and
20 future prosperity of the Gwich'in people, whose lives
21 for generations have been spiritually, culturally, and
22 physically connected to the Coastal Plain.

1 The Coastal Plain of the Refuge is a sacred place
2 that they believe to be the place where life begins,
3 and I've seen it. It is the birthplace for many of the
4 animals, including the vital caribou, native to the
5 region that they have depended on for food and a link
6 to their traditional culture for generations. Drilling
7 on this sacred land would be tantamount to ending their
8 life as they know it.

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

16 We oppose the Interior Department's extreme rushed
17 process for scoping of the Environmental Impact
18 Statement and echo the request of many in the
19 environmental justice organizations of an extension of
20 the public comment period for an additional 120 days.
21 Climate change is real and environmental justice is
22 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 BATTS: 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

1 I'm speaking in support of the opening of the 1002 area
2 of ANWR to hydrocarbon exploration.

3 As the chair of the Alaska Senate Resources
4 Committee, I could speak about the oil and gas in the
5 1002, the profits for governments, the long history of
6 safe resource extraction, and the positive data about
7 our healthy fish and game, but I ask you to consider
8 the most important factor, that being the effect on the
9 people of Alaska.

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

18 This research examined life expectancy over the
19 time, over time, and assessed factors affecting it,
20 such as socioeconomic, behavioral, and health care
21 access factors. The question posed: Are inequities in
22 life expectancy growing or diminishing? And what

1 factors can explain those differences? A few of the
2 factors considered: poverty, high school graduation,
3 unemployment, and access to health care.

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

10 While Alaska is in the wrong spot and is the wrong
11 size on this illustration, this comes from the research
12 report, the dark blue color is the highest increase in
13 life expectancy, going down to the green areas, which
14 are also increases. You can see the entire State of
15 Alaska, but most prominently the North Slope and the
16 Northwest Arctic Borough, was affected. This increase
17 in life expectancy rippled out to the other areas of
18 the State. The research identified socioeconomic,
19 behavioral, and health care access as responsible for
20 74 percent of the increase in life expectancy.

21 So what does this have to do with resource
22 development in ANWR? Data is useless until it's turned

1 into information. Remember the dates of this research
2 review, 1980 to 2014. Oil production on the North
3 Slope began in 1979. The Red Dog Mine, which is in
4 Northwest Arctic Borough, began operations in 1989.
5 Both of these resource development projects were
6 preceded by the exact same outcry, predicting
7 devastation and destruction if the projects were
8 allowed to go forward. But in reality, both projects,
9 and many others, have brought health and prosperity to
10 the Alaskans living in the area as well as the rest of
11 the State. In fact, health impact assessments have
12 become institutionalized in Alaska for the last 10
13 years. Details of this process has been published in
14 the International Journal of Circumpolar Health.

15 As a child, I often went to work with my dad, a
16 captain for Wien Airlines. I flew with him to the
17 North Slope and western Alaska villages. I saw the
18 struggle that true subsistence lifestyle entails. As
19 an intern for U.S. Senator Ted Stevens in 1970, I
20 accompanied him to our many rural villages that had no
21 health care clinics, clean water, or wastewater
22 facilities. It's different now. I don't call these

1 villages anymore. They are prospering communities with
2 Internet connectivity, schools, clinics, and healthy
3 people with jobs, aspirations, and hope for the future.
4 Yes, there is more work to do with safe water,
5 sanitation, and social issues, but jobs change lives
6 for the better. That's what resource development means
7 for Alaskans.

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

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

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

20 Our next speaker will be Dana Tizya-Tramm.

21 MR. DANA TIZYA-TRAMM: (Speaking in Alaska Native
22 language.) That means good day to all of my relations.

1 My name is Dana Tizya-Tramm, and I am here today,
2 as I have been tasked to carry the voices of my
3 ancestors and my people, who know the ways of the land
4 and the animals, a people that know that the land and
5 the animals speak for themselves. But as the elders
6 have told me, for those who cannot hear it, we have now
7 been forced to speak on behalf of them.

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

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

1 industry is going to fit into a healthy future.

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

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

21 In Section 1005 of ANILCA, and I quote, In
22 addition, the Secretary shall consult with the

1 appropriate agencies of the Government of Canada in
2 evaluation such impacts particularly with respect to
3 the Porcupine caribou herd. No opportunity has been
4 afforded to the government of my people, the Vuntut
5 Gwich'in, nor has there been an opportunity afforded to
6 any Canadians within the territory or Federal
7 Governments, as we have created a working relationship
8 together to deal with this.

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

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

1 everybody's time.

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

18 Mahsi'.

19 (Applause and cheering.)

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

22 MS. SHANTHA READY ALONSO: I'm Shantha Ready

1 Alonso, with Creation Justice Ministries. And I'm
2 testifying today on behalf of a Christian membership
3 organization of orthodox mainline Protestant,
4 Historically Black Church, Peace Church, and Baptist
5 traditions. Through our members, we serve
6 approximately 100,000 churches and 40 million people.
7 In my capacity as co-chair of the Interreligious Energy
8 and Ecology Working Group, which twice monthly convenes
9 dozens of religious organizations engaged in public
10 policy, I also bring concerns of Jewish, Catholic, and
11 Evangelical partner organizations.

12 For decades, religious communities have advocated
13 to protect the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National
14 Wildlife Refuge from any extractive activity that could
15 disrupt precious ecosystems therein. This religious
16 community advocacy priority originated through the
17 Episcopal Church, which has a deep and special
18 relationship with the Gwich'in Nation of northeast
19 Alaska and northwest Canada. For more than 150 years
20 -- 150 years ago, Anglican, and subsequently Episcopal,
21 missionaries traveled to Fort Yukon, Alaska, to
22 establish a mission there, and today more than 90

1 percent of the Gwich'in are Episcopalian. Since 1991,
2 the Episcopal Church has honored its General Convention
3 resolution to oppose oil drilling in the Arctic
4 National Wildlife Refuge. Since the 1990s, the cause
5 to protect the refuge from drilling has received long-
6 term institutional support from the Jewish Council for
7 Public Affairs, the National Council of Churches USA,
8 the Evangelical Environmental Network, to name a few.

9 Through our relationship with the Episcopal
10 Church, many religious communities have come to
11 understand the ecological integrity of the Coastal
12 Plain, as not only one of the last best intact examples
13 of the works of the Lord, but also as an essential --
14 as essential to the religious liberty and land-based
15 subsistence lifestyle of the Gwich'in people.

16 For daily sustenance, the Gwich'in depend on the
17 Porcupine caribou herd, whose birthing pattern would be
18 disrupted by oil exploration in the refuge, ultimately
19 threatening the survival both of the caribou and of the
20 Gwich'in. We understand the Porcupine caribou's
21 birthing ground, the Coastal Plain of the Arctic
22 Refuge, plays an important role in Gwich'in creation

1 stories. They call the Coastal Plain "The Sacred Place
2 Where Life Begins," and the Gwich'in believe that a bit
3 of every human heart is in every caribou, and that a
4 bit of caribou is in every person. Any threat to the
5 animal is a threat to the Gwich'in.

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

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

20 Over the past 15 years, the United Methodist
21 Church, the Episcopal Church, Mennonite Church USA, and
22 many other denominations have been undergoing processes

1 of study and repentance for Christianity's historic
2 role in devastating indigenous cultures,
3 spiritualities, and the ecosystems on which they rely.
4 And as part of our repentance, we're seeking to rectify
5 injustices towards indigenous communities, and we
6 refuse to allow the perpetuation of this historical
7 trauma. For these reasons, church communities have
8 become more aware and more forceful about our moral
9 responsibility to protect the Gwich'in people's ability
10 to culturally, spiritually, and physically rely on the
11 bounty of the Arctic Refuge, as they have for more than
12 10,000 years.

13 Most recently, in 2017, over 120 Episcopal bishops
14 met in Alaska to learn more and reaffirm their
15 commitment to the church's opposition to drilling. The
16 National Religious Partnership has circulated
17 petitions, getting support from tens of thousands of
18 faith communities about the strongest possible
19 conservation protection for the refuge as well as
20 please refraining from allowing oil and gas leasing.

21 I appeal to all who are faced with leasing
22 decisions to consider carefully the full scope of harm

1 that can be done to the ecological integrity of the
2 Coastal Plain, not only by drilling activities, but
3 also seismic testing and broader imposition of oil and
4 gas infrastructure, such as roads and pipelines. Such
5 harm to this special part of God's creation has no
6 moral justification.

7 Today, we face a question of whether or not in
8 2018 the U.S. Government will make the same grave
9 errors of centuries past towards indigenous peoples.
10 The Episcopal Church Creation Justice Ministries, the
11 Inter-Religious Energy and Ecology Working Group, and
12 the millions of people of faith we represent urge you
13 not to inflict these horrors once again.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

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

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

21 My name is Fenton Rexford. I come from the
22 community and Native Village of Kaktovik, where I was

1 born and raised, to speak to you on behalf of my people
2 and myself.

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

14 Again, the military came in, PLO 82 was set aside.
15 They assumed control over Barter Island, took over the
16 Native Village of Kaktovik, the cemeteries, and the
17 people there were forced to relocate three times.
18 We're at our third location there. Our traditional sod
19 houses and cemeteries were bulldozed for this military
20 protection of our lands. There were toxic materials
21 and waste were haphazardly dumped on our lands. Folks,
22 we have received no restitution, no acknowledgement for

1 what has been done to our community. There was no
2 outcry from outside groups who consider themselves to
3 somehow be the protectors of this land.

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

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

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

22 Then in 1970s, ANCSA passed. We used to -- we

1 were able to hunt around the 23 million acre area. And
2 then our traditional, our legal rights to take a
3 western title of 92,000 acres. Now we have finally
4 reached from Congress -- we have heard from Congress to
5 develop our own lands for our own economic means, and
6 we mean to seize this opportunity and actively
7 participate in this process.

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

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

19 I appreciate this opportunity to let you know a
20 brief history of our people in our lands. So thank you
21 for this opportunity. Again, in the early -- when the
22 refuge or range was established, no one from the

1 government gave us this opportunity. And I am honored
2 to come to Washington, D.C., the capital of our Nation,
3 and let you know that we exist there, and we support
4 the opening. Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

7 Our next speaker will be Jerrald John.

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

19 I have traveled over 5,000 miles to be here, and
20 I'm happy and I'm honored to be in our Nation's
21 capital. I come to talk about my way of life, which
22 has been around for nearly 25,000 years. Now the

1 caribou and the Gwich'in that depend upon them are
2 under threat by those who want to explore for gas and
3 oil in their calving grounds.

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

14 My people used to be nomadic, following the
15 caribou herd. Back when they -- back then, they
16 harvest caribou by constructing large fence-like
17 structures which help contain the migrating caribou, so
18 they could be more easily harvested. Recently, in Arctic
19 Village, the youth reconstructed a caribou fence for
20 the first time in many decades. Even in the hardest of
21 times, my people, even when there was famine, my people
22 would not go to the Coastal Plains because it is a

1 place where life begins. As we speak, there are not
2 1,000, but not 10,000, calves being born on the Coastal
3 Plain, but at least 80,000 calves are being born this
4 month free of disturbance.

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

15 Nowadays, within my family and surrounding
16 communities, the Gwich'in have doctors, lawyers, and
17 other professionals. We have also Gwich'in that have
18 enrolled in all branches of the military, as some are
19 currently in active duty. We are also really religious
20 people. I am a Native American, and my Native ways
21 come first. And I'm an American as much as any other
22 American around here. And we're watching news, and

1 when we see shootings going on in schools, and we see
2 young people hurting and young families hurting, we
3 feel mad and we feel sad, and we pray for them.

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

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause and cheering.)

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

12 MR. RICHARD GLENN: Thank you. Good afternoon.
13 My name is Richard Glenn, and I'm a resident of Alaska.
14 I'm a geologist by training, and I serve as Vice
15 President of Lands and Natural Resources for Arctic
16 Slope Regional Corporation, or ASRC. It's
17 headquartered on Alaska's North Slope.

18 ASRC is one of the 12 land-owning regional
19 corporations created by Congress in 1971, and it owns
20 approximately 5 million acres of land on the North
21 Slope, including the rights to 92,000 acres on the
22 Coastal Plain of ANWR. ASRC and the Kaktovik Iñupiat

1 Corporation, KIC, jointly own the 92,000 acres. Our
2 region includes eight villages: Point Hope, Point Lay,
3 Wainwright, Atqasuk, Utqiagvik, Nuiqsut, Kaktovik, and
4 Anaktuvuk Pass. North Slope residents there depend on
5 subsistence resources from the land, rivers, and ocean,
6 as they always have. The regional also depends upon
7 continued resource development for the survival of its
8 communities. Only by taxing the presence of the
9 industry in our region have we been able to build a
10 local economy and develop a means for improving the
11 quality of life in our remote villages, and it has not
12 come at the expense of any wildlife.

13 Running water, reliable power, local education,
14 and improved health care, things that most people take
15 for granted, can be furnished in our region only if
16 there is a tax base for our local government, the North
17 Slope Borough. The development of resources on the
18 North Slope has evolved over the years and today
19 occupies a much reduced footprint to access the same
20 resources that would have been developed years ago, and
21 it has done so without harming wildlife populations.
22 Caribou, fish, waterfowl, and polar bears coexist with

1 development because, one, there's room, contrary to
2 what you can -- what you might interpret from maps,
3 and, two, development itself is designed to be of no
4 threat to wildlife.

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

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

20 On the North Slope, we observe that development
21 and wildlife populations coexist. We see the
22 development in our people also coexist. The survival

1 of our region, in fact, and the development of our
2 communities today depends on continued development. In
3 addition, wildlife surveys funded by the State of
4 Alaska show that the Central Arctic caribou herd, which
5 calves in the vicinity of ongoing development today,
6 migrates southward over the Brooks Range and into the
7 Arctic Village area, where Gwich'in people live. So
8 the Gwich'in people themselves are harvesting from a
9 herd that coexists with development.

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

14 ASRC strongly encourages the BLM to work with the
15 Village of Kaktovik and the North Slope Borough. ANWR,
16 especially the 1002 area, is the ancestral homeland of
17 the Iñupiat people. In trying to listen to the will of
18 the American people regarding ANWR, extra attention
19 should be given to Kaktovik and the North Slope
20 Borough. ASRC understands that there is a public lands
21 public comment aspect to all of the wildlife refuge,
22 and that the American people have a role to play in its

1 management, but extra attention should be paid to those
2 who reside within the region. My analogy is if you're
3 about to occupy someone's house, you should not give
4 more attention to the neighbors down the street than
5 you do to the occupants of the house.

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

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

12 Our next speaker will be Bernadette Demientieff.

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

17 For thousands of years, the Gwich'in migrated with
18 the caribou. Our communities and the migratory route
19 are identical. We have always had a culture on
20 spiritual connection to the caribou. Our voice are
21 important also, so why are you choosing oil and gas
22 companies over the human -- over the human rights of

1 the Gwich'in, especially when over 70 percent of the
2 U.S. do not want development? We have Senators and
3 Representatives that stand with us. This is our
4 homelands, our way of life, and our food security, our
5 identity, and our future that you are destroying.

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

17 These steps to open up the Arctic Refuge is a
18 direct attack on the Gwich'in and the Porcupine
19 caribou. This government has disrespected our people
20 for long enough. Your lack of communication is
21 unacceptable. You don't respond to our concerns or
22 even just our comments. You sit there and you just

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

7 Sorry.

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

16 It frustrates me when I listen to people say that
17 the caribou and people can -- or the caribou and oil
18 can coexist when Murkowski's own expert at the Energy
19 hearing came out and said that it couldn't. So we need
20 to be doing our own research and listen to our elders.
21 My elders are my scientists, and they say this is not
22 the right thing to do. Your rush to process is

1 disrespectful and insulting, and you need to take it
2 more serious. Our lives depend on it. We need to take
3 care of the land and not destroy it.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause and cheering.)

6 MR. DAVID BATTS: Kara Moriarty.

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

12 I just want to share that my first job in Alaska,
13 however, was as an elementary school teacher in the
14 Village of Atqasuk. It was -- I taught first and
15 second grade, and it was in 1996, and I worked for the
16 richest school district in the Nation. And the reason
17 I worked for the richest school district in the Nation
18 is because 99 percent of the North Slope Borough's
19 revenues come from property tax of oil and gas
20 properties in the region. I could not see the oil and
21 gas properties from Atqasuk, but my kids had three
22 computers. We did videoconferencing. They all had

1 their own email addresses. It was a village of 250
2 people, and we had a swimming pool for exercise. So
3 that was my first experience in Alaska seeing firsthand
4 what development can do for local communities.

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

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

21 And so the Department of Interior, in the 19-mid-
22 '80s, conducted over 1,300 miles of seismic and issued

1 a report in 1987 that recommended an Environmental
2 Impact Statement, and it says, and I quote, that the
3 1002 area is, quote, the Nation's best single
4 opportunity to increase significantly domestic oil
5 production and most outstanding petroleum exploration
6 target in the onshore U.S., unquote. That is still
7 true today.

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

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

19 I just want to take a moment to reflect on some of
20 the things that were being said 40-some years ago when
21 the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline was being
22 considered. Some -- one critic said if TAPS was built,

1 caribou would go the way of the buffalo and the
2 passenger pigeon. That has not happened. Another
3 critic said, after the "haul road" was finished, that
4 the road would be -- the wilderness would be broken
5 forever. It is not the psychology of the North, and it
6 would be gone. Another critic said that TAPS would be,
7 quote, the greatest environmental disaster of our time,
8 unquote. TAPS today has a 99.98 percent reliability.
9 We have safely produced and transported over 17 billion
10 barrels of oil in the last 40-plus years.

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

18 There are no guarantees that the oil and gas
19 industry will participate in a potential lease sale;
20 however, a lease sale is the first step in the process,
21 and we think it is very important for BLM to offer the
22 lease sale to see what the interest is to see if we can

1 continue to partner with the local community to provide
2 stability, jobs, and a strong future.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

6 Our next speaker will be Adam Kolton.

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

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

1 right outside you're going to have it in 1 year.
2 You've denied requests for additional hearings in
3 Native villages. You've denied requests for hearings
4 all across the United States when all Americans have a
5 rightful ownership stake in the Arctic National
6 Wildlife Refuge and ought to have a say in it.

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

16 (Applause and cheering.)

17 MR. ADAM KOLTON: I don't think -- if I'm wrong,
18 and this isn't a box-checking exercise, is there are
19 certainly other steps that you can take. One concrete
20 step would be that the BLM should request an exemption
21 from this arbitrary and, frankly, unfounded and illegal
22 mandate to have an EIS done in a single year. Now,

1 that's not something that is a good, fair, or just, or,
2 frankly, legal process to undertake.

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

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

22 And when are we going to stop? You know, there's

1 got to be a point at which we set our sights in a
2 transition, and the EIA just this week is talking about
3 maybe getting a drop of oil more than a decade from
4 now, maybe -- maybe we'll reach peak production if we
5 find oil 30 years from now, 40 years from now. What
6 about our dependence?

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

15 In terms of the process, you also need to look at
16 the wilderness character of the Coastal Plain. As was
17 stated, the original Arctic Wildlife Range had
18 wilderness as one of the -- as one of the fundamental
19 commitments to this area. It is the only place that
20 was legally protected by Congress from oil and gas
21 development. So are we now saying that 100 percent of
22 the American Arctic coastal landscape should be

1 available for oil and gas development? I don't even
2 think a majority of Alaskans want to see 100 percent of
3 the American Arctic turned over to the oil and gas
4 industry. Has that question been asked in a poll? I'd
5 like to see that poll result.

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

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

21 Thank you.

22 (Applause and cheering.)

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

7 Is Deano Olemaun present?

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

20 Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you
21 about the Interior Department's proposal to develop a
22 leasing program for the Coastal Plain of ANWR. Our

1 region, the North Slope, is about the size of the State
2 of Wyoming. ANWR, on the eastern side of our region,
3 is about the size of South Carolina. The Coastal Plain
4 of ANWR is about the size of Delaware. ANWR is
5 considered a special place for many reasons. Some in
6 this room are opposed to oil and gas development in
7 ANWR because they want to protect ANWR as a special
8 place, but I hope those of you who come from this part
9 of the country will also appreciate that you are
10 speaking about our homeland and how it should be
11 managed in your opinion. I hope you will listen
12 respectfully to the opinions of the people who are from
13 the North Slope and from ANWR itself.

14 Some of our residents testifying before the Senate
15 Energy Committee in support of developing the oil
16 resource in ANWR have been accused of hypocrisy for
17 supporting oil and gas, even as our villages are
18 threatened by impacts of climate change. We see
19 hypocrisy, too. We see people who want to protect
20 special places somewhere else where the residents have
21 little power in our government while all the land
22 around their own communities is paved over.

1 ANWR is a special place. It is certainly a place
2 worth protecting, but we should not be prevented from
3 using it. It is our backyard. Protecting it doesn't
4 mean locking up the entire region from development.
5 The Native Village of Kaktovik located within the
6 Coastal Plain of ANWR, and the only Federally
7 Recognized Tribe in ANWR, supports a leasing program
8 and believes that the resource can be developed while
9 protecting the land.

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

1 right for self-determination.

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

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

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

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. Thank you very much. I

1 would like to thank all of our speakers. You did a
2 wonderful job. And I think everybody minded the time
3 limit very well.

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

8 (No audible response.)

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

11 Sarah James? Sarah.

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

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

22 It's not easy today or easy for my grandma or

1 grandpa way before us. There was change got put upon
2 them. They were strong and wise and very organized,
3 and nobody die of anything but maybe old age. They own
4 very little, and they live with the land, and the land
5 was plenty. And now today, we could even hear the pin
6 drop. It used to be alive. It's supposed to be noisy
7 and alive.

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

17 And today, as a chairperson to Gwich'in Steering
18 Committee since 1988, first it was Jonathan, my elder,
19 Jonathan Solomon, and then his brother, Peter Solomon.
20 They're both passed, and they're our strength with us
21 today, and they're here today with us. And I've been a
22 chairperson. And we did everything right. We followed

1 the Congress, the right channel. We talked to the
2 right people. We did everything right. We did our job
3 for 30 years.

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

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

22 Me, as a mother, any living being, when I was

1 going to have my child, I went through the same thing.
2 I want a place where it's healthy and quiet and clean
3 and a place that's healthy, and that's the same thing
4 they need as a living thing, and that's the place we're
5 talking about, "Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit," "The
6 Sacred Place Where the Life Begin."

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

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you very much.

18 So this concludes our predesignated list of
19 speakers. We're going to go ahead and move over to the
20 public speaking portion this evening. We will take a
21 break here in a few moments, but first I'd like to go
22 ahead and get our ballot box brought down.

1 MS. SARAH JAMES: I forgot to hand in these
2 material I have here, a real map and real people laying
3 their life down, and the fish and wildlife. I did very
4 good on birds where they came from. And our own map,
5 that will tell everything, and this -- that beautiful
6 picture and --

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

8 (Applause.)

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

12 (Show of hands.)

13 MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. And we would love to hear
14 from as many of you as we can tonight. But this is
15 going to be kind of a two-way street here. My job is
16 going to try to get you guys up here as quickly as
17 possible to get you in and to get the comments going,
18 but I also ask that you please do your part. I know
19 there's a lot of emotion and you want to clap and you
20 want to cheer and support people, that's wonderful to
21 have positive energy, but if we could just limit our
22 clapping to just polite soft clapping, or even better

1 waving the hands, that just allows me to verbalize and
2 get people up to the microphones and get their comments
3 in a little bit quicker.

4 So the way this is going to work tonight is we're
5 going to do a random drawing. Everybody should receive
6 their cards, put half of their card in the ballot box
7 right here. We're going to conduct a drawing, we're
8 going to pull out 40 names right now based off of our
9 calculations, we think -- we know we can probably get
10 through 40 speakers if everybody adheres to the
11 3-minute rule. And then if we land up with extra time
12 this evening, we'll do another drawing and pull
13 additional names out of the box.

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

19 So with that, we're going to go ahead and draw 40
20 names. What we're going to do is we will announce the
21 number, so please pull out your card and look at the
22 number. This is just like Bingo night because it's

1 Friday night. So we'll draw a number. We will write
2 down the order of those numbers. We'll take a break.
3 And then we will on the screen have a scrolling screen
4 of numbers up here. And then we will seek people and
5 get them ready to go. So we're going to call out
6 numbers. Please don't leave for the break yet because
7 after we have our 40 names, I have just two more
8 announcements, and then I promise you a break.

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

12 AMY: I can. Hello.

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

15 Speaker Drawing

16 AMY: Okay, the first one is 119, 118, 116, 10,
17 83, 110, 61, 26, 109, 96, 89, 1, 75, 100, 4, 12, 24,
18 67, 99, 84, 13, 41, 103, 56, 82, 29, 73, 102, 35, 78,
19 60, 74, 122, 21, 81, 91, 49, 90, 64, and 51.

20 MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. So that's our first draw
21 of 40 people. As you will notice, we've captured those
22 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,

1 in the green area. 119, 116, 83, 61, 109 in the blue
2 area. So I'm missing some blue people.

3 Okay, so we're going to go ahead and get started.
4 So just a couple of quick reminders. While your card
5 has your name on it, and we'll be collecting your
6 cards, that will be part of the record of who you are,
7 but if you could please state your name clearly,
8 slowly, and your organization, that way our court
9 reporter will also be able to get that.

10 We have the timer up, and we'll start with number
11 119.

12 MS. JANE LYDER: My name is Jane Lyder. I worked
13 at the Department of the Interior for about 35 years.
14 I worked on the issue of the Arctic National Wildlife
15 Refuge for 40 years, starting in 1978, when ANILCA was
16 passed. I know this issue very well, and I know it
17 from both sides. I worked on it from both sides. And
18 I realize there's a new factor now in the Tax Act.

19 The Tax Act made one of purposes of the refuge an
20 oil and gas leasing program administered by the Bureau
21 of Land Management, but it did not take away any of
22 Fish and Wildlife Service's responsibilities. And

1 there are other purposes of the refuge. It did not
2 make the oil and gas program a predominant purpose, it
3 just made it one of the purposes.

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

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

19 And lastly I'm concerned about polar bears. I
20 went to a polar bear briefing a number of years ago at
21 Interior where the USGS basically told us that our
22 polar bears will go extinct because of melting sea ice.

1 And now we know that the sea ice is melting faster than
2 we thought. Bears are denning much more unsure, and
3 they're denning in the 1002 area, and they're denning
4 where the oil is. Bears end up getting killed in human
5 interaction with others on the North Slope. You're
6 allowed to shoot a bear if a bear threatens your life.
7 If there is development, if there is people on the
8 North Slope where there weren't before, there will be
9 more human-bear interactions. The polar bear is a
10 threatened species now, but it's not doing well,
11 they're losing weight, they're having trouble finding
12 food.

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

20 Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

1 We'll get number 118 queued up. You can go back
2 to your seat, and we will have number 89. If you're
3 number 89, you can come down to the blue side.

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

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

19 When I went home during the summertimes on my
20 reservation, water literally came out of the faucets,
21 red, yellow, orange, smelling of petroleum, having oil
22 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 So I sit here and I ask that you protect the
20 Arctic National Wildlife because those are our brothers
21 and sisters, and what has happened to us should not be
22 happening to anyone else in this country.

1 Thank you.

2 (Applause.)

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

4 Will 1 come down?

5 MR. DREW MCCONVILLE: So I want to thank you for

6 listening. I want to thank everybody for being here,

7 especially at a really difficult time slot.

8 Particularly, I want to thank our Gwich'in friends, who

9 have come all this way, others who have come from

10 Alaska and other places to be here. I'll be really

11 brief because I think you need to hear from everybody

12 in this room. I appreciate, you know, the schedule

13 that's been set for you, but I would urge you to listen

14 to everybody, as you've heard before.

15 And -- but let me just tell you, I'm the Senior

16 Managing Director for Government Relations at the

17 Wilderness Society. I speak for myself, though. I

18 speak for my family. I speak for my 1-year-old at

19 home, who is growing and inheriting this world. And I

20 speak for my family in Connecticut, in New York, in

21 South Carolina, and many other places.

22 The Wilderness Society and myself, we don't oppose

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

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

21 You know, setting arbitrary deadlines like a lease
22 sale within 1 year is not just illegal, it's reckless.

1 It devalues science, it devalues indigenous knowledge,
2 and it devalues all of the Americans who have a stake
3 in what's happening up on the North Slope of Alaska and
4 in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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

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

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

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

22 MS. KAREN SCHERER: I am Karen Scherer, from Fort

1 Myers, Florida. Florida's rising sea levels are
2 directly related to the melting of Arctic ice sheets
3 and glaciers. This melting process would be
4 accelerated by oil and gas drilling because of the
5 resulting byproducts, methane and black carbon, two
6 potent greenhouse gases. Black carbon settles on ice
7 sheets or glaciers, darkening the ground. This causes
8 the surface to absorb solar energy that would otherwise
9 be reflected back into space. As a result, glaciers
10 melt at a much higher rate, increasing both sea levels
11 and temperature of the ocean.

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

1 water to the South Florida area.

2 The environmental concerns of Florida are
3 reflected in a 2016 Nielsen survey. The Sunshine
4 State, the biggest environmental problems that are
5 facing Florida were water-related problems, 34 percent
6 of the respondents; loss of natural lands for wildlife,
7 20 percent; and climate global warming, 18 percent.

8 Together, these problems account for 72 percent of all
9 responses. Citation rates of climate change and global
10 warming were up 13 percent, and loss of natural lands
11 were up 9 percent since the last survey.

12 5,200 Floridians signed a petition urging their
13 Members of Congress to do what they can to protect the
14 Arctic Refuge. It is also important to Florida that
15 the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife
16 Refuge be free of drilling.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

20 Number 83?

21 MS. MCCARTER: Speaker 61?

22 MR. DAVID BATTS: So actually first we're on 83.

1 MS. MCCARTER: Oh.

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

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

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

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

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

20 Comments have been made today about providing jobs
21 and economic growth for the Alaskan people. Jobs in
22 the renewable energy field -- solar and wind -- are the

1 fastest growing market in the United States. In fact,
2 the number of people who are employed by renewables
3 today drastically outnumbers those employed by oil and
4 gas combined. Alaskan people can be trained to work in
5 these renewable energy fields without destroying the
6 pristine sacred Arctic Refuge. In fact, saddling the
7 Alaskan people with dirty fossil fuels is guaranteed to
8 doom them to a dying future.

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

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

19 Humanity cannot afford the extraction and burning
20 of any more fossil fuels. Our planet is warming at an
21 unprecedented rate. Unless we drastically cut our
22 carbon emissions, we are locking our future generations

1 into a life of hardship and misery. We all deserve a
2 stable climate, so please stop this insanity.

3 (Applause and cheering.)

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

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

14 All right, ma'am, thank you.

15 MS. SANDRA ASHLEY: Hi. Hello. My name is Sandra
16 Ashley. I'm from Wilmington, New York. I'm a middle
17 school teaching assistant. And I'm here with the
18 Wilderness Defense -- anyway. I strongly oppose lease
19 sales in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As a
20 middle school teaching assistant and independent
21 conservative, I understand the importance of fossil
22 fuels, yet I'd really like to see that emphasis

1 decrease as we make more jobs available in the area of
2 renewable energy.

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

19 As a class, we decided that it would not -- we
20 would not be okay with this happening to our home in
21 the Adirondacks of northern New York, so we must speak
22 out for this refuge as well. We need to support the

1 indigenous people who have been battling this issue for
2 nearly 30 years. We've exterminated the buffalo of the
3 past. Will we now exterminate the caribou? We say
4 what we did was wrong, yet will we simply repeat this
5 behavior: greed, grab, ruin, and then go?

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

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. DAVID BATTS: Number 61?

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

18 I adamantly oppose any lease sales in the Arctic
19 National Wildlife Refuge. As someone who places high
20 value on time spent hiking in the woods and by lakes
21 and streams in central New York and our Adirondack
22 Park, I have also visited beautiful Alaska. I was

1 there in May 4 years ago, and it was so warm, people
2 were wearing beachwear at the beach. This is in May in
3 Alaska.

4 The Arctic is ground zero for climate change.
5 Temperatures there are rising at twice the rate of the
6 rest -- of the rest of the U.S. Many iconic species of
7 wildlife live there. And the Arctic Refuge is home to
8 the two largest and most northerly Alpine lakes in
9 North America, five distinct landscapes, including
10 coast, tundra, mountains, taiga, and boreal forests,
11 and 18 major rivers, three of which are officially
12 recognized as wild and scenic.

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

1 danger to benefit already wealthy oil companies.

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

9 This is so unpopular with the American people that
10 it had to be slipped into the recent tax bill because
11 winning support for such a controversial measure in an
12 above-board process would have been impossible.
13 According to research conducted by the Center on
14 American Progress, two-thirds of Americans oppose this.
15 We Americans do not want, did not ask for, and will not
16 accept that the wildest place in our country will be
17 sacrificed to offset the tiniest fraction of tax cuts
18 for millionaires and billionaires.

19 It is time for our representatives in government,
20 namely, you members of this panel, to actually
21 represent us. This not just an administrative or
22 political decision, but a moral one. Climate change is

1 a moral issue, and we ask you to keep that in your
2 hearts and minds.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

6 Number 26. Again, if you are number 96, 89, 1,
7 75, 100, 4, or 12, please make your way down front.

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

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. LYDIA WEISS: Maybe if you're from a company,
14 don't your raise hand, though, because I'm talking to
15 the humans and my fellow Americans who are co-owners.

16 So we -- and I would just say if the key to making
17 this whole process work is to have people not clap,
18 maybe we should just have more public hearings. Maybe
19 that's the -- I mean, if tinkering around the edges --

20 (Applause and cheering.)

21 MS. LYDIA WEISS: -- like if this is the problem,
22 there are so many other solutions. Like that poor

1 woman from Florida, there's got to be something else
2 you'd rather be doing than doing this in Florida, but
3 thanks for coming because this is it, this is all we've
4 got, folks, right now.

5 So I'm a mom. And I also say I'm a mom of a D.C.
6 Public School kid, this was their last day. They're
7 all at the pool. We were supposed to go on vacation,
8 you probably know the last day of school, Friday,
9 6:00 p.m. So it's just tough, you know? I'm supposed
10 to be with my family right now. But I'm happy to be
11 here, and they're waiting, and I'll get to them at some
12 point.

13 So I, even though I sound cranky about this
14 process, and I am, and even though I know I'm
15 addressing my government officials, I am an incredibly
16 proud patriotic American, and I talk to my kids every
17 day about how lucky and blessed they were to be born in
18 this country. Any story we listen to on NPR, I say to
19 them, "But you are among the lucky ones who were born
20 in America." Those horrible stories every day that my
21 kids have to listen to, it doesn't happen, you were
22 born in the greatest country on Earth, and we believe

1 in equality and access for all people. To my little
2 girl, "You get to go to school. You were born in
3 America."

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

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

1 So thanks.

2 (Applause and cheering.)

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

5 Okay, number 109.

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

22 I know nothing about hunting caribou or being in

1 the snow that much, and to be quite frank, I hate the
2 snow, but the thing is, as Native people, our land is
3 our identity, you know. Truth be told, if I reached
4 into your pocket and stole your Social Security card
5 and stole your license and used your identity to get
6 what I wanted, I'd be going to jail or prison. This is
7 the same principle. These people, they're connected to
8 their land, and that's all they have and that's all
9 they know. The caribou are their identity. The
10 caribou are their Social Security card.

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

15 So I ask you that you find it in your heart to let
16 them keep their identity. You know, for 500 years
17 we've been giving you guys so much. You live on stolen
18 land, let's just face it, you know. That's the thing,
19 you know. What else do we have to give? You know,
20 we're losing our language, we're losing our culture.
21 We don't have anything else but our small pockets of
22 refuge. So I ask you that you really think deeply

1 about this decision you are making, you know. You
2 might never go up there and talk to these people, but
3 if you make the right decision, they'll always be up
4 there.

5 Thank you so much.

6 (Applause and cheering.)

7 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

8 Number 96.

9 MR. MARK SALVO: Good evening. My name is Mark
10 Salvo. I am the Vice President of Landscape
11 Conservation for Defenders of Wildlife. Thank you for
12 this opportunity this evening to comment on a potential
13 oil and gas program in the Arctic National Wildlife
14 Refuge. My colleagues and I -- and you will hear from
15 a number of us -- are proud to represent Defenders of
16 Wildlife. We are a national conservation organization
17 with more than 1.8 million members and supporters
18 focused on wildlife conservation and the habitat on
19 which they depend. Defenders of Wildlife and our
20 members and supporters have worked for decades to
21 conserve the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the
22 polar bears, caribou, wolverines, musk oxen, birds,

1 native fish, and a myriad of other wildlife species
2 that depend on the Coastal Plain.

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

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

18 This is a point worth underscoring. The
19 legislation did not require a profitable or profit-
20 driven leasing program, nor is it the Federal
21 Government's responsibility to provide one, including
22 the current occupant at 1600 Pennsylvania. Your job is

1 only to plan for potential lease sale on the Arctic
2 National Wildlife Refuge, not further subsidize one of
3 the most heavily subsidized industries in the United
4 States.

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

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

20 The Arctic Refuge is a global treasure. Defenders
21 of Wildlife stand with the Gwich'in and the majority of
22 Americans in urging you to protect refuge wildlife and

1 their habitat from rushed and reckless oil and gas
2 development on the refuge.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

6 Number 89.

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

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

22 It's evident to all of us in this room that

1 climate change is taking an increasingly devastating
2 toll on our entire country. This prospect poses an
3 existential threat to the human species and to all
4 species on the planet. Last year was the hottest year
5 on record for the third year running. We are working
6 with villages in Alaska that are literally falling into
7 the sea because of sea level rise, and, frankly, we
8 should know better.

9 Now is the time when we should be weaning
10 ourselves off of all fossil fuels, not opening up
11 increasingly extreme sources of oil like those from the
12 1002 area in Alaska or the tar sands. We have to start
13 saying no somewhere, and this is the perfect place to
14 start saying no.

15 And I would take issue with some of the prospects
16 that the friends from the American Petroleum Institute
17 and the oil and gas industry said that we have to do
18 this and this is the way we advance our society going
19 forward. In fact, we don't have to. The solutions are
20 out there. Electric vehicles are making huge gains
21 across the planet. China has committed to ending the
22 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

1 really we should know better.

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

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

11 Number 1.

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

19 My name is Subhankar Banerjee. I am the Lannan
20 Foundation Endowed Chair and Professor of Art and
21 Ecology at the University of New Mexico. I have spent
22 significant amount of time in the Coastal Plain and in

1 the indigenous Gwich'in and Iñupiat communities.
2 Through my photographs, writing, lectures, and
3 interviews, I've shared the ecological and cultural
4 richness of the Coastal Plain with the public across
5 the United States and around the world over the past 2
6 decades.

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

18 Protecting places where animals replenish their
19 populations, in the midst of the sixth mass extinction
20 that we find ourselves in, ought to be among our
21 highest ethical obligations. But, instead, the
22 government is considering to turn this nursery into an

1 oil field, which will inevitably displace and disrupt
2 wildlife and will lead to ill health and population
3 declines.

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

18 To bring attention to these biological, cultural,
19 and climate impacts of oil and gas development in the
20 Coastal Plain, I recently organized with historian
21 Finis Dunaway a letter campaign called "Scholars for
22 Defending the Arctic Refuge," which has been endorsed

1 by more than 500 scholars from nearly all 50 U.S.
2 States and 20 countries spanning more than 40 academic
3 disciplines.

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

11 (Applause and cheering.)

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

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

19 Moving on to number 1.

20 DR. FINIS DUNAWAY: My name is Finis Dunaway, and
21 I'm a professor of history at Trent University in
22 Peterborough, Ontario, Canada. And I'm here today

1 along with my 10-year-old daughter, Zoe, because we're
2 deeply concerned about the plans, the prospect, of
3 fossil fuel development in the Arctic Refuge.

4 Along with Subhankar Banerjee, who you just heard
5 from, I recently organized a letter campaign called
6 "Scholars for Defending the Arctic Refuge." This
7 letter has been endorsed by more than 500 scholars
8 representing almost all 50 U.S. States and 20 different
9 countries.

10 And I want to emphasize the international aspect
11 of this debate because that often does not get much
12 attention. The expertise of those signers ranges
13 across more than 40 different academic disciplines,
14 from climate science and history to conservation
15 biology and indigenous studies. We wrote this letter
16 to demonstrate that the Arctic Refuge debate is not
17 about what just happens in this one slice of land in
18 the northeast corner of Alaska. It also connects to
19 some of the most urgent issues of our time. These
20 include climate change, indigenous human rights, and
21 species extinction. This debate has significant
22 biological, cultural, and climate implications that

1 extend well beyond the Coastal Plain, and we ask for
2 the BLM to consider these larger issues.

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

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

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

19 The Arctic Refuge may seem far away to many, but
20 its Coastal Plain is one of the most significant
21 biological nurseries in the Circumpolar North. Opening
22 the Coastal Plain to fossil fuel exploration and

1 development would endanger this nursery. It would
2 violate the human rights and jeopardize the food
3 security of the Gwich'in people of the U.S. and Canada.
4 It would have detrimental effects on the health and
5 social life of the indigenous Iñupiat people, who live
6 nearby. And it would contribute to further warming of
7 the already rapidly warming Arctic, an action that
8 affects the whole Earth, as the Arctic is a critical
9 integrator of our planet's climate systems.

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

18 Thank you very much.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

21 Number 100.

22 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
4 represent myself, the Sierra Club, and millions of
5 others who cannot be here today for this hearing. We,
6 I, care deeply about protecting this beautiful precious
7 plant Earth, our only home. Fossil fuels are killing
8 it.

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

18 When I first heard the Arctic ice was melting, I
19 grieved for our planet. Then I heard the oil companies
20 could not wait to drill there. That was insane.
21 Further, development of fossil fuels is insane. We
22 must use only clean energy. I come as one, but I stand

1 for millions in the U.S. and Canada who want the Arctic
2 National Wildlife Refuge protected, not exploited, not
3 drilled for more unnecessary life-killing fossil fuels.
4 Will you protect our planet?

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

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

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

17 I strongly oppose the Department of Interior's
18 efforts to pursue oil and gas leasing in the Arctic
19 National Wildlife Refuge. I also find the notion of
20 disturbing one of America's last remaining wildernesses
21 deeply troubling. The Arctic Refuge is home to
22 millions of migratory birds, including some that travel

1 there on their annual migrations. In April, on an
2 evening walk in Northwest D.C., I was delighted to hear
3 tundra swans migrating high overhead on their way to
4 the Arctic. And just a few weeks ago, I caught a rare
5 glimpse of a grey-cheeked thrush during a brief
6 migration foraging stop in Rock Creek Park. These and
7 many, many other experiences in D.C. with birds that
8 migrate to and from the refuge have left me enchanted.

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

19 I am also confused by this proposed action because
20 the best available economic information clearly
21 demonstrates that oil and gas development in the refuge
22 is an unsound investment.

1 Overall, I firmly believe the Arctic National
2 Wildlife Refuge should remain undeveloped and preserved
3 as a legacy wilderness, to nurture the spirit of our
4 Nation and feed the minds of current and future
5 generations.

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

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

20 Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

1 Okay, number 12.

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

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

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

12 So pretend I'm at a sorority -- pretend I'm in a
13 sorority and I have a younger sorority sister, and I
14 take her to a frat party. She's a drinker. She's a
15 young girl. I'm supposed to protect her. I get ready
16 to go home. She's drunk. She doesn't want to leave.
17 I say, "All right, you stay here." The next morning,
18 what do I find out? She's been raped. Who's fault is
19 that? Legally, it's the man that raped her. Morally,
20 it's my fault. I did not protect her. I knew that
21 there was a danger. I knew that there were bigger,
22 stronger people there to prey upon her. I did not

1 protect her.

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

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

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

20 I hope that you will take this seriously and do
21 all that you can to protect this for future
22 generations. I stand with the Gwich'in people, I stand

1 with those poor birds that migrate pole to pole, and
2 those poor starving polar bears. Please, I beg you, do
3 the right thing.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. Thank you.

7 Number 24.

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

20 Drilling on the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge
21 will mean the destruction of vital habitat, disruption
22 of Native people, and acceleration of climate change,

1 where its effects are already felt the hardest.

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

13 The Porcupine caribou is of particular importance
14 to the Gwich'in people. For years, it has been one of
15 their primary food sources and more. The Department of
16 the Interior has an obligation to the Gwich'in people
17 and protecting the animals so crucial to their
18 existence. If they choose to move forward with their
19 destructive efforts, it should at least be done with
20 adequate scientific evidence and a just environmental
21 review process that would truly protect the herd and
22 other organisms.

1 Lastly, drilling on the Coastal Plain would
2 contribute to climate change and its detrimental
3 effects. Climate change is the greatest threat to the
4 Arctic region and its many sea ice-dependent animals,
5 as temperatures have risen twice as fast there than
6 here in the rest of the United States. Oil and gas
7 activities are completely averse to the protection of
8 the Arctic and the principles upon which the refuge was
9 founded.

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

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

18 Number 67.

19 MR. MICHAEL HARRIS: Hi, ladies and gentlemen. My
20 name is Michael Harris, and I work with Defenders of
21 Wildlife Government Relations. And I also formerly
22 handled natural resources and public lands issues in

1 the Senate. So I deeply care about these issues.

2 I'm going to start by saying there is no need for
3 this. The United States, according to the IEA, will
4 surpass Saudi Arabia and Russia to become the world's
5 largest producer of oil this year. We've experienced
6 an American energy renaissance, a shale revolution,
7 thanks to new technologies, fracking, horizontal
8 drilling, shale drilling, all of which have their own
9 problems and implications, but we're pumping oil out of
10 American soil at a rate unprecedented in history.

11 Last year, Secretary Zinke offered 11 million
12 acres of public taxpayer land for oil and gas leasing.
13 Only 800,000 acres were leased. That's 7 percent,
14 almost 250,000 acres leased for \$2.00 an acre. So
15 these are economic implications we have to think about
16 when we weigh the costs and benefits of what we're
17 proposing to do in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

18 There's a leasing bonanza out there. So I'm
19 wondering with all these lands open and all of these
20 newfound barrels being pumped, why do we need this? It
21 seems like the costs far outweigh the benefits here.
22 Despite the tax legislation, the Coastal Plain is still

1 part of the Arctic Refuge.

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

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

20 So I want to conclude by saying if the Arctic
21 Refuge can be attacked and opened to industrialization
22 in this manner, is any parcel of public land safe? And

1 do the protections that Congress afforded to these
2 public lands, do they matter anymore? And the answer
3 has to be yes. You have to do better. This process
4 has to be better. And don't mess this up because human
5 lives and animal lives are counting on you.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

9 Number 99.

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

14 The Interior Department is on the wrong track in
15 its reckless rush to industrialize the Arctic National
16 Wildlife Refuge. Oil and gas activities on the fragile
17 Coastal Plain will jeopardize sensitive species,
18 irreparably damage these public lands, and compound the
19 impacts of climate change. A comprehensive,
20 scientifically robust planning process for oil and gas
21 leasing will reveal this unmitigable destruction and
22 must provide full protection to wildlife and their

1 habitat under our environmental laws, which were not
2 waived by the Tax Act.

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

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

22 (Applause.)

1 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

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

5 All right. Number 84.

6 MR. GREG SINGLETON: Thank you, sir. My name is
7 Greg Singleton. I am from Virginia today. I grew up
8 in South Carolina on the coast, and was born and raised
9 there, and have always been a hunter and a fisherman.
10 So that's kind of where I got my love of the outdoors.

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

22 So much has been said here tonight, and other

1 people much smarter than I have given the facts that I
2 remember reading, but can't quote, and I wasn't
3 prepared to talk about this tonight, but when I learned
4 that there was a chance to comment, I jumped on it.
5 But I would just like to echo the comments of some of
6 those people with much better credentials than I,
7 people like Jamie Williams, the Wilderness Society, all
8 the Gwich'in people that spoke and talked about how
9 their way of life is going to definitely be impacted in
10 a negative way from any drilling of the Coastal Plains.

11 You know, since I'm not from Alaska, and I don't
12 know it like I do Virginia or South Carolina, I can't
13 speak to that, so I can speak from the national
14 perspective. So what we've done is we've made Alaska
15 National Wildlife Refuge a national resource, like we
16 have all of our parks.

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

1 in so many places already.

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

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

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

20 Number 13.

21 MS. MARJORIE GIMMEL: Hello. My name is Marjorie
22 Gimmel. I am the councilmember of Native Village of

1 Venetie Tribal Government. And, let's see, I'm here to
2 speak on behalf of my people, my tribe, not only them,
3 I'm here for the caribou, who cannot speak for
4 themselves. I'm here for my ancestors and the future
5 generations. I'm a mother of five, and as a mother, my
6 natural reaction of threat to my children is to protect
7 them from harm. To open the Arctic National Wildlife
8 Refuge is a direct threat to our way of life. All
9 children should matter. We should not sacrifice this
10 sacred land for greed.

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

19 They say there will be jobs. I know for a fact
20 that only 15 percent of the workforce in the Prudhoe
21 Bay area is Alaska Native, and that's the lower portion
22 of the pay scale. And it's just not true, it's not

1 true that there will be a lot more work or that the oil
2 in there is going to help America. That's not true. I
3 just wish they would remove this and pull for a no-
4 action alternative.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause and cheering.)

7 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

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

14 We're constantly told that oil exploration and
15 drilling can be done with minimal harm to the
16 environment, yet we are daily reminded that this is
17 simply not true. We're told that we need the oil, that
18 it will solve some part of our energy needs, yet we are
19 in a time of abundance of renewables, and we have no
20 idea actually how much or even if there is any oil
21 actually in -- under the Coastal Plain of the Arctic
22 Refuge. We're told that Alaskans want it and that it

1 will be good for the State, yet it is not Alaskan-
2 owned, and it will certainly not be good for the
3 wildlife for which it currently provides refuge.

4 Industrial oil development is not compatible with
5 the values and the purposes of a wildlife refuge. A
6 wildlife refuge is just that, a refuge for wildlife, a
7 place where some of our fellow animals can live out
8 their lives in peace, free from the manmade impacts of
9 an increasingly paved, drilled, and developed world.
10 Industrial oil development creates spills. That's just
11 a fact. Spills are tracked in the North Slope, as you
12 guys all know, and right now it averages over 1 per day
13 up there during the year.

14 We're here during the scoping process. Scoping
15 needs to make sure they consider, What are the impacts
16 going to be of all those kinds of spills happening in a
17 wildlife refuge? Scoping will need to consider that in
18 other parts of Alaska, where industrial oil development
19 has taken place, caribou, in particular, avoid it while
20 calving. We know that migrating caribou may well feel
21 free to walk down gravel roads or pass pipelines, but
22 studies have shown us that not only do the caribou

1 mothers avoid these areas for calving, but doing so,
2 places them in less desirable locations and has led to
3 decreases in their productivity.

4 In the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, we can
5 watch one of the most spectacular wildlife migrations
6 anywhere in the world happening every year. The
7 Porcupine caribou herd of almost 200,000 animals makes
8 their yearly trek to the Coastal Plain to calve.
9 Ironically, while we're here discussing their fate,
10 they're there right now enjoying the very wildlife
11 values which we are debating.

12 The Coastal Plain has exactly what they need. It
13 has the protein-rich cotton grass, which a nursing
14 mother needs for a growing calf. It has the ocean
15 breeze, vital to keep the hoards of mosquitoes away.
16 And this is not a minor point. We know we lose calves
17 every year just to mosquitoes.

18 Finally, the Coastal Plain is a relatively
19 predator-free environment. When the calves are at
20 their most vulnerable, one of their primary predators,
21 wolves, are up in the foothills of the Brooks Range
22 having their pups. Scoping needs to consider, What's

1 going to happen to the Porcupine caribou herd if they
2 are displaced from this very area, the one that
3 provides them the most things that they need during the
4 most critical time in their lives? It's why our
5 friends, the Gwich'in people, are here to defend this
6 area. And we've heard that it's sacred, "Iizhik
7 Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit," "The Sacred Place Where
8 Life Begins."

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

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

1 National Wildlife Refuge.

2 Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

5 Number 103.

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

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

21 "Various types of animals inhabit this region,
22 such as polar bears and caribou. Building pipelines

1 for drilling oil would force these animals to adapt to
2 a new environment, which would be impossible for them
3 to do. If drilling for oil occurs in the Arctic
4 National Wildlife Refuge, these species would have
5 issues surviving, and over time go extinct.

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

14 One more.

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

17 (Laughter.)

18 MS. LAURA FRANKLIN: "It would be in the best
19 interest of the United States and of our delicate
20 ecosystem that both you and President Donald Trump do
21 not," italics, "open up the Arctic National Wildlife
22 Refuge to exploratory drilling."

1 "The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is precious,
2 a safe haven for animals that are so sensitive to
3 climate change. Wilderness is dwindling in the United
4 States. Almost 98 percent of our forests and wildlife
5 are vulnerable to human disturbance, and the Arctic
6 National Wildlife Refuge makes up part of the 2 percent
7 that is protected, and, most importantly, free from the
8 web of industrial development. Mammals, such as the
9 gray wolf and brown bear; birds, such as the snow geese
10 and tundra swans; and fish, such as the Arctic grayling
11 and Dolly Varden; are all dependent on this small
12 sliver of land.

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

21 "As controversial as this topic is, it needs to be
22 addressed and taken care of so that our future

1 generations can look back on us with pride and commend
2 us for our preservative efforts. Thank you for your
3 time. Sincerely, Spiro."

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

7 56.

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

22 Waste from drilling, complex hydrocarbons, can

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

10 The issue of global warming has been brought up.
11 Back when I was employed, I worked at Goddard Space
12 Flight Center, and one of the things I was involved in
13 was tracking changes in the ice on the Antarctic
14 continent. And one of the most recent reports just
15 came out, the rate of melting of ice on Antarctica is
16 three times faster than it was in the '80s and '90s
17 when they started monitoring the rate, and it's
18 accelerating. This will lead to the type of flooding
19 that we've seen in coastal regions, the loss of coastal
20 villages in places like Alaska from the thawing of the
21 permafrost, as has been mentioned.

22 Those people who think that they will escape from

1 the consequences of global warming by dying before
2 things get really intolerable obviously don't live in
3 Puerto Rico or the coastal villages of Alaska or in
4 Houston or New Orleans.

5 Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

8 Number 82.

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

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

22 I realize that tackling climate change requires

1 global action. Some of that's in our control and some
2 of it's not. However, preserving the Coastal Plain as
3 a refuge for this iconic species that is endangered
4 because of us is entirely within our power. It is
5 something that we can do; it's something that we must
6 do.

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

19 Equally important, the refuge embodies the spirit
20 of another nation, that of the Gwich'in, the people who
21 rely on the Porcupine caribou to sustain their culture
22 and their way of life. We're obliged to honor that.

1 Finally, let's talk about the words "Wildlife
2 Refuge." This place was not named the Arctic National
3 Oil and Gas Industrial Zone. It was not designated
4 Prudhoe Bay Phase 2. It was designated a wildlife
5 refuge because that is its purpose, to serve as a safe
6 haven for the diversity of species that live there. In
7 addition to polar bear and caribou and musk oxen,
8 wolves and over 200 species of migratory birds rely on
9 this pristine, undisturbed habitat.

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

22 I implore each of you not to let that happen on

1 your watch.

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

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

10 Number 29. Ma'am?

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

16 I am 21 years old. As a young person, I am
17 concerned about the climate implications of expanding
18 oil and gas development on our public lands, including
19 this proposal to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife
20 Refuge. Of course, climate change is a concern in the
21 Arctic, where temperatures are rising at twice the rate
22 of the rest of the country.

1 When you consider this drilling proposal, I ask
2 that you consider the cost, the negative externalities
3 of climate change, and the human health effects of
4 toxins released during production and consumption of
5 oil.

6 With climate change being one of the greatest
7 threats our natural world faces today, it is concerning
8 that the U.S. Government isn't tracking greenhouse gas
9 emissions from Federal fossil fuel production that
10 occurs on our public lands. The lack of effort to
11 record and understand climate change emissions is
12 outstanding given that the Federal Government is one of
13 the largest energy asset managers in the world.
14 Limited data leaves Americans, the owners of public
15 lands, and shareholders of Federal energy resources, in
16 the dark on the extent to which fossil fuel emissions
17 from public lands are contributing to the rising global
18 temperatures.

19 Rushing to sell off one of the most treasured
20 public lands is irresponsible and reckless. We
21 shouldn't continue to blindly lease public lands
22 without considering the impacts to our climate and what

1 the impact will have on the Arctic, on coastal
2 communities, and on others across the country that are
3 at risk.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

7 I just want to quickly thank all the speakers.

8 You guys are doing an awesome job. Thank you.

9 Number 73.

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

20 Energy dominance is not an energy policy. I think
21 we all know that. It's a slogan, and it sounds like it
22 was made up by someone who is not a geologist.

1 I'm just going to touch on a collection of stories
2 to add context to this hearing because it doesn't
3 happen in a vacuum.

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

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

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

20 But what do all these things have to do with a
21 Notice of Intent to drill in the Arctic? This is all
22 part of a civilizational defense of the natural world,

1 and it will never let up. A handful of temporary
2 politicians who have lost touch with our shared home
3 will not change this.

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

15 My only hope today, one of my only hopes today, is
16 that this is being recorded and archived so a
17 government affairs high school class can come and look
18 at it in 20 years and say, "Wow," some kid in the back,
19 "Wow, were they really going to hand over the Arctic to
20 the oil industry in 2018, even with a global agreement
21 and moral imperative to do whatever it takes to pique
22 climate emissions? That was an actual idea? Thank God

1 they couldn't pull it off."

2 (Applause.)

3 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

4 Number 102.

5 MR. CRAIG STEVENS: Hi. My name is Craig Stevens.

6 I'm a sixth generation landowner in Silver Lake
7 Township, Pennsylvania. I'm not here to tell you what
8 oil and gas does for communities. I'm here to tell you
9 -- for communities, what it did to mine. That's our
10 well water in northeastern Pennsylvania from oil and
11 gas drilling. (Shows bottle of dirty water.) You see
12 the swirly stuff? That's diesel and antifreeze.
13 That's what they used to call slickwater, but they
14 don't have the balls to call it slickwater anymore
15 because somebody will ask what slickwater is.

16 Gandhi said it is health that is real wealth, not
17 pieces of gold and silver, and I believe him. Managing
18 the resources is not possible if you destroy them in
19 the process. "Mni Waconi," "Water is life." You can't
20 drill your way out of a problem that you drilled your
21 way into. The U.S. oil and gas industry, at \$3- to
22 \$500 billion, that's half a trillion dollars in debt,

1 are we going to trust these idiots who can't figure out
2 how to make a profit on this to drill holes in one of
3 the most pristine areas on this planet? Not this
4 child.

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

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

15 Injection wells in Pennsylvania didn't exist when
16 I moved there in 2010 to my ancestral property. Now we
17 have 70 permitted injection wells because nobody else
18 wants the waste from the drilling in Pennsylvania.
19 Diesel fuel was outlawed in 2005 by law to be used to
20 drill underground, but it's still being used today in
21 unconventional drilling.

22 Martin Luther King said the true neighbor will

1 risk his position, his prestige, and even his life for
2 the welfare of others. Count me in on that one.

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

7 (Applause.)

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

19 And I want to take my children and grandchildren
20 to these parks. And they weren't set aside 100-plus
21 years ago for us to destroy. They're to preserve, and
22 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,

1 the Department may be instructed to look at the
2 potential for leasing, but it hasn't abrogated -- the
3 law has not abrogated it from its other
4 responsibilities, and one of those is fiscal
5 stewardship.

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

21 And as a father, that's a point I want to dwell on
22 a little bit more because I simply can't overlook the

1 existential threat that drilling in the Coastal Plain
2 presents to the Gwich'in people. They rely on the
3 caribou for food. We've heard a number of other
4 speakers speak to the academic side of this, but the
5 fact is the right to feed their families and continue a
6 traditional lifestyle has to trump the prospect of oil
7 development. No amount of oil should ever outweigh
8 fundamental human rights.

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

22 Our public lands have powered this Nation for more

1 than a century, and they're going to continue to
2 provide energy of all kinds, hopefully more renewable
3 than fossil, for years to come, but gone are the days
4 when the energy industry is the only tenant of concern
5 on our public lands.

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

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

17 MS. MARISSA KNODEL: Good evening. My name is
18 Marissa Knodel. I live in Washington, D.C., and work
19 at Associate Legislative Counsel at Earthjustice, a
20 nonprofit environmental law firm that works on behalf
21 of thousands of clients to enforce, defend, and
22 strengthen our Nation's bedrock environmental laws.

1 Today I am speaking on behalf of Earthjustice and
2 over 36,000 of our members, who have already submitted
3 comments in opposition to oil and gas development on
4 the Coastal Plain and anywhere within the Arctic
5 National Wildlife Refuge.

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

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

18 Oil and gas drilling would have devastating and
19 irreversible impacts on the people and wildlife for
20 whom the Arctic Refuge is home as well as on our
21 climate. Recent scientific research concludes that
22 Arctic oil and gas reserves must remain in the ground

1 to avoid dangerous levels of global warming.

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

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

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

21 Finally, the expedited timeline on which this
22 proposed oil and gas lease program is proceeding is

1 reckless and dangerous. Trying to complete a thorough
2 and accurate EIS in an area as ecologically and
3 culturally rich and sensitive as the Coastal Plain in
4 less than a year is simply unrealistic.

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

13 Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

16 Number 60.

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

21 For many years, the mission of the Bureau of Land
22 Management has been to sustain the health, diversity,

1 and productivity of the public lands for the use and
2 enjoyment of future generations. The Arctic National
3 Wildlife Refuge is a place that deserves protection in
4 perpetuity. That is why I vehemently oppose oil
5 drilling in this magnificent biologically diverse
6 ecosystem. Development would be especially devastating
7 for the birds that have used the Coastal Plain as a
8 breeding ground for millennia. This area is a nursery
9 for birds from 6 continents and 48 States, a place to
10 raise the next generation. The fact that Arctic terns
11 fly 12,000 miles from Antarctica to breed and raise
12 their young up there indicates how important the refuge
13 is.

14 Almost every bird species on Earth is already in
15 decline due to habitat loss, climate change, and
16 pollution. Adding the loss of a crucial breeding
17 ground would significantly accelerate the decline of
18 all the species that depend on the refuge for
19 reproduction. Birds that would radically be impacted
20 by opening the refuge to drilling are the 23 shorebird
21 species that use the refuge during their breeding
22 cycle.

1 Birders in the lower 48 are very well aware of
2 opportunities to catch glimpses of the iconic species
3 like the buff-breasted sandpiper, who follow flyways
4 over the continent on their journey north. Because
5 they nest on the ground in the open, they are
6 particularly vulnerable to predators. Predators are
7 drawn to manmade disturbance. In addition, in order to
8 drill for oil, roads, buildings, and industrial
9 facilities would need to be built. This would fragment
10 and degrade the habitat so much that nests would either
11 be abandoned or not built at all.

12 Breeding birds would experience less nesting
13 success and population decline would result.

14 There is no such thing as drilling responsibly
15 unless you consider that you'd be responsible for
16 negative impact on bird population.

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

22 It's clear that there is great pressure to open

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

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

14 Number 74. Is number 74 in the room?

15 (No audible response.)

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

18 (No audible response.)

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

20 DR. CHARLENE STERN: I'm here.

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

22 DR. CHARLENE STERN: My name is Dr. Charlene

1 Stern, and I am from Arctic Village, Alaska. I am
2 Gwich'in. My grandfather was a caribou hunter. My
3 uncles were caribou hunters. My brother is a caribou
4 hunter. And one day my 5-year-old son will grow to be
5 a caribou hunter, provided that the Porcupine caribou
6 continues to exist, and provided that they continue to
7 be a healthy herd, and that the animals themselves are
8 healthy enough to be consumed, and also provided that
9 these caribou continue to migrate within range of our
10 communities.

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

17 In addition to being Gwich'in, I am also a
18 researcher, and as a researcher, I understand the
19 critical importance of good data to inform decision-
20 making. Currently, the harvest data that we have is
21 adequate. What data we do have is limited and
22 outdated. In order for the ANILCA 1-0 -- 180 process

1 to be done competently, more data needs to be collected on
2 regional and local harvests, subsistence harvests. The
3 caribou and the Coastal Plain and all the resources
4 that depend upon it are shared resources. The Gwich'in
5 aren't just neighbors down the street from this place.
6 We are both historic and active users of the resources
7 that depend upon it.

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

19 When we -- most villages that I know experience
20 these things like my own. Caribou and moose are some
21 of the first things that our communities harvest in
22 order to provide for the family. They provide some

1 comfort as our families go through grieving. They are
2 there for our celebrations. They're an important part
3 of our spirituality and our coming together as we cope
4 with different life events.

5 Lastly, I want to say that I have a degree in
6 community planning, and I have been trained
7 professionally to facilitate public processes like
8 these, and I know firsthand the importance of feeling
9 good about the quality and breadth of such processes.
10 There have been many concerns expressed about the
11 expedited nature of this process, and even though it is
12 unjust to many and poses an undue burden on Gwich'in
13 communities, we have to engage because it endangers our
14 way of life and we have no other choice. We flew a
15 long way to be here today -- be here today, and we plan
16 to be there every step of the way to ensure that our
17 interests are represented.

18 Mahsi'.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

21 Number 81.

22 MR. GARETT REPPENHAGEN: Thank you. I left to

1 one-site unit training weeks after the attacks on 9/11.
2 I became a Cavalry Scout, a sniper, for the U.S. Army,
3 First Infantry Division. You know, I come from a
4 family of military. My father served in Vietnam. He's
5 buried in Fort Logan Cemetery in Denver. Both of my
6 grandfathers served in World War II. My father,
7 Edward, is named after my great-uncle, who died in the
8 Battle of the Bulge.

9 You know, when I was in Iraq, I would be on sniper
10 missions, and I'd often close my eyes and dream I was
11 in some better place, you know, usually some mountain
12 terrain. I come from Colorado. You know, one sniper
13 mission, I remember it was hot, about 130 degrees, and
14 I'm sitting there in my ghillie suit, which is, you
15 know, a camouflaged suit made of wool, and we're
16 sitting in a garbage dump overseeing a road looking for
17 people planting IEDs, roadside bombs, that are killing
18 my friends. And, you know, I was going to my happy
19 place trying to -- trying to get away, and my spotter,
20 Sergeant Watkins, nudges me, and he's -- you know, he
21 knew my routine, and he was like, "What are you
22 thinking about?" And I told him, "I'm thinking about

1 the Arctic Ocean, I'm thinking about icebergs floating
2 in the Arctic Ocean." And he laughed at me. And
3 little did I know years later my dream would come true.
4 I came home with serious PTSD, hypervigilance, night
5 terrors, moral injury, the whole gamut of PTSD, and I
6 naturally instinctively went outdoors, and it saved my
7 life. And I got an opportunity to go to the Arctic
8 National Wildlife Refuge and canoe the Canning River
9 for 12 days, and it was lifesaving. It was just an
10 amazing wild place, and it's so unique.

11 And I signed up to defend "the land of the free,"
12 and I can't think of any other place in the world that
13 was more free than that place. You could walk miles in
14 any direction, and no matter what your color of skin,
15 your religion preference, your sexual identity, no
16 matter who you are, that land will treat you the same,
17 the rainstorm is going to treat you the same, the
18 grizzly bear is going to treat you the same. It is --
19 it is truly wild and free. And it's American. It's
20 uniquely American. And we have the responsibility and
21 the honor and privilege of protecting it and defending
22 it. And, you know, these places are part of our

1 identity, who makes us up, and we should treasure them.

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

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

13 Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Number 91.

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

22 This is a world historical moment. I know that

1 you all probably feel that your higher status
2 colleagues are not the ones who are having to sit here
3 listening to these conversations, and because you
4 probably feel it, you don't have much influence on what
5 the outcome is going to be today. And you're going to
6 look at and hear these comments from these people, and
7 you're going to dismiss them because you're going to be
8 able to call them -- you're going to be able to dismiss
9 them because you're going to call them political
10 comments, and they're vote comments, and they don't
11 have anything to do with substance, and they don't have
12 anything to do with a new insight into the evaluation
13 or any kind of impact or analysis that you need to
14 provide.

15 But I'm suggesting to you that because this is a
16 world historical moment, that you really need to kick
17 out your standard of evaluation, and even if you feel
18 that you're at the bottom of the pecking order in your
19 group and that's the only reason you're sitting here
20 today, because everybody knows this is a done deal,
21 consider the words, because words have meaning. We
22 know that words can kill, but words can do even worse

1 than that, they can deaden the spirit of this country,
2 and the cynicism that we can create when we take a
3 process that is supposed to have meaning and turn it
4 into something that is debased. People can lose their
5 confidence in the agencies that they work for, they can
6 lose their belief in the United States Government. So
7 I'm suggesting to you that when you evaluate these
8 comments tonight, or the other ones you've received in
9 writing or in speeches, that you consider what they
10 mean to America because they're going to have tangible
11 impacts on our future.

12 We have a group led by the Bureau of Land
13 Management, which is an agency set up by FLPMA in order
14 to basically be a multiple-use agency, and we have the
15 Wildlife Refuge Service, which manages these 19 million
16 acres, which is in a secondary role, even though its
17 legislation requires the agency to consider the
18 compatibility test when it evaluates oil and gas
19 development. You've got an existing system within the
20 Refuge Administration Act that allows you to properly
21 consider how to balance wilderness and subsistence
22 values and wildlife values with the significance of the

1 oil and gas development, and you've got professionals
2 in an agency that actually know how to do this. And,
3 instead, what are you doing?

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

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

11 We'll move over to number 49.

12 MS. JENNIE GOSCHE: My name is Jennie Gosche, and
13 I live in Kensington, Maryland. I strongly oppose oil
14 and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife
15 Refuge. I have been to the refuge. I am a polar bear
16 photographer. By day, I work as a therapist for
17 Montgomery County, Maryland, Government, but when I'm
18 not working, I am dreaming of the Arctic. The cold
19 air, the overcast sky, the deep quiet. The roads are
20 few, and only in the Native villages, such as Kaktovik,
21 where I was in 2016, to photograph the Beaufort Sea
22 polar bears.

1 Polar bears are listed as threatened under the
2 Endangered Species Act. And it's interesting to note
3 they were the first mammal added to the list because of
4 climate change. It is estimated that more than 40
5 percent of the Beaufort Sea polar bears now den on land
6 near Kaktovik because there is not enough ice on which
7 to den. The pregnant polar bears go into the birthing
8 dens in November or in December and have their cubs.
9 They don't come out until March or April. The Fish and
10 Wildlife Service designated 77 percent of the 1002 of
11 the refuge as critical denning habitat for polar bears.

12 Oil and gas exploration and drilling would
13 certainly disrupt the denning mother polar bears and
14 may cause them to abandon their dens. That would mean
15 certain death for the cubs. When I visited Kaktovik, I
16 was particularly happy to see the healthy cubs. Two
17 mothers had three cubs, and that's -- the three were in
18 that picture. And others had two. The cubs appeared
19 well fed, happy, and were certainly playful. Watched
20 over by their always vigilant mothers, the cubs played
21 and slept all day. The Iñupiat of Kaktovik share
22 their whale meat with the polar bears since so many are

1 now staying on shore during the warmer months.

2 Oil and gas development will change the 1002
3 forever. The companies attempting to drill in the
4 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge insist they will work
5 in winter, use ice roads that will melt, and their work
6 will not disturb the wildlife. Having been to the 1002
7 and the refuge, I don't see how that will be possible.

8 Oil rigs, flares, trucks, people, power lines,
9 pollution, oil spills, all of that will irreparably
10 damage the 1002. When the Porcupine caribou arrive in
11 the 1002 in the spring from their long migration from
12 Canada to have their calves, will they be met by oil
13 rigs, pollution, and oil spills? We can't allow that
14 to happen.

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

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

22 Thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

3 Number 90.

4 MS. MYRA THUMMA: Thank you. My name is Myra

5 Thumma. I'm a Gwich'in. I'm from Native Village of

6 Venetie. I also serve on the board. And I'm also a

7 member of Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government.

8 And this is my third scoping meeting. I went to Arctic

9 Village, Venetie, and here.

10 And you guys heard the voice of my people, how

11 they depend on the caribou. It's their life. Our life

12 is at stake, and this is our cultural way of life, and

13 that's going to be disturbed. And I just want to thank

14 everybody that was here, our supporters, and I thank

15 you.

16 And I speak behalf of my people. I don't

17 represent myself, I represent my people, who they are,

18 who we are, how we live. And we deeply depend on

19 caribou. We live the cultural lifestyle. Our life is

20 at stake. We have identity. We know who we are. I

21 know my grandparents, I know my parents, I know who my

22 auntie. And we all strongly oppose drilling in the

1 Arctic National Wildlife. This place, where the life
2 begins. It's a sacred place for the birthing place of
3 the caribou.

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

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

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

22 Number 64.

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

18 As a 24-year-old journalist and organizer, I've
19 spent the past year working with my community to raise
20 awareness about the issue of climate change and the
21 opportunities that we have, as Millennials, this year,
22 as one of the largest blocks of the electorate, to vote

1 for a Congress who will take action on things like
2 climate change, to vote for a Congress who understands
3 that an assault on one community is an assault on all
4 communities.

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

19 In closing, I want to add that I hope the
20 Department will consider the conversations that they
21 will have to have with their children, as their
22 decision to drill in the Arctic is only going to

1 accelerate the climate crisis. Drilling there will
2 create emissions equivalent to 898 coal plants, or 767
3 million cars. I cannot comprehend how the Department
4 of Interior could ignore the climate impacts that our
5 country and other parts of the world are already
6 facing, from high temperatures that are fueling
7 unprecedented storms across the country that our
8 communities are paying the price for, from wildfires to
9 floods and hurricanes and heat waves deemed "Lucifer."

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

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

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

19 (No audible response.)

20 MR. DAVID BATTS: All right. Just -- you guys did
21 an awesome job with speaking and did wonderful in
22 keeping us on track. So instead of drawing numbers

1 here, can I just see a number of hands of people that
2 still would like to speak that have not spoken yet?

3 (Show of hands.)

4 MR. DAVID BATTS: Okay. So if you have not spoken
5 yet and you would like to speak, if you could please
6 come up front, and we'll let folks that have not had
7 the chance at the microphone, we'll get you up here
8 first. Come on down up front, we'll get you organized.
9 And if you can just make sure we get you to sign your
10 name with our microphone keepers, they'll get you
11 situated.

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

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

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

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

22 (Applause.)

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

6 75 percent of the Coastal Plain is designated as
7 critical habitat for the endangered polar bears, as we
8 have heard a lot about tonight already. As sea ice
9 continues to melt due to climate change, pregnant
10 females from the southern Beaufort Sea polar bear
11 population are increasingly forced to come ashore to
12 birth and rear their young. What will happen to this
13 species when their home is invaded by and entangled
14 with oil rigs, roads, pipeline, other infrastructure?

15 We know from a September 15, 2017, report from the
16 New York Times that the scars of these developments
17 never really go away, as shown by satellite images of
18 the first and only oil rig ever drilled and established
19 in a refuge in the 1980s, remnants of which still scar
20 the Earth today. And still to this day we do not know
21 how much or how little oil was actually produced from
22 this site.

1 The Arctic Refuge is a unique and unparalleled
2 landscape, home not only to polar bears, but to musk
3 oxen, wolves, Arctic fox, nearly 200 species of
4 migratory birds, the Porcupine caribou herd, that
5 sustains and maintains the Gwich'in Nation, a culture
6 that has survived and thrived off this species for
7 thousands of years.

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

16 It is our moral obligation to protect this iconic
17 landscape for the Gwich'in, who depend on it for their
18 culture and way of life. It is our moral obligation to
19 protect this landscape for the wildlife who give birth
20 there and who are part of some of the greatest
21 biodiversity in the Nation. And it is our moral
22 obligation to protect this landscape for the benefit of

1 future generations who need clean air to breathe and
2 clean water to drink and whose chances of growing up on
3 a planet that afford them these basic necessities
4 diminishes with every new oil and gas program developed
5 around the globe.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

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

10 Okay, ma'am?

11 MS. WENDY HALL: Hello. My name is Wendy Hall,
12 and I am the founder of the Adirondack Wildlife Refuge.
13 I have been a wildlife rehabilitator for over 45 years.
14 And the changes that we've seen from our indicator
15 species are astounding in not a good way.

16 I have heard and been very inspired by these
17 speakers. I had no -- I had no plans to speak, but I'm
18 -- it just -- just touches me in a way that I must talk
19 about one example that is not the Arctic National
20 Wildlife Refuge, but in the Adirondack Park, which is
21 also a protected area, as a wildlife rehabilitator, my
22 intern and I, sitting over there, have just -- the most

1 recent case we had was three beautiful gray fox kits
2 that we thought were abandoned by the mother. We
3 weren't sure. So we had people keep an eye on them in
4 a State park. When it was reported to me that she
5 hadn't returned and the kits were freezing and dying,
6 we took them in, as we often do.

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

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

1 protected park.

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

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

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

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

1 communities.

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

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

15 And so my parents helped with other community
16 members to form a citizen group to go through to look
17 at the science, to do the job that our county
18 legislators weren't doing, weren't properly going
19 through all of this information, weren't doing due
20 diligence on what could be a very serious health crisis
21 for our community. And this has been going on for
22 years.

1 Lesson number two: take the time for going
2 through from proposing this legislation to drill in the
3 Arctic and planning to sell leases fewer than 2 years
4 later? That's not enough time to go through everything
5 everyone has been bringing up today, all of these very
6 serious issues, not just at a county level, something
7 that my community has been dealing with for years,
8 going through all of this information, going through
9 the environmental impact assessment process. And this
10 has been going on for years already, enough time for
11 the community group my parents started to be having
12 squabbles about who should be running meetings and
13 coming up with agendas. So to go through something
14 that has such huge national and international
15 implications with this rushed of a process, with this
16 limited number of public hearings, access to public --
17 having everyone have their voices heard adequately.
18 This is not enough time at this level.

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

22 Thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

3 Okay. Ma'am?

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

17 Thank you for this time.

18 (Applause.)

19 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you.

20 MS. PAT PARKHURST: Hi. I'm Pat. I'm from
21 Upstate New York. And I'm going to read a letter from
22 a 12-year-old named Faith, and she's from Upstate New

1 York, and she could not be here.

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

10 "My point is that animals have feelings, too. The
11 places you are drilling are homes of many animals,
12 including the Porcupine caribou. They need food,
13 water, a clean and healthy environment, and, most
14 importantly, a safe habitat in which to live. My
15 friends and I feel very strongly about the animals that
16 would be losing their homes if you decide to drill for
17 oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We care
18 about the people and animals that live there and will
19 speak for them because if you ruin their homes, not
20 only will you destroy their way of life, but our entire
21 world will be affected by the harm caused to our
22 environment by drilling for gas and oil."

1 It's totally insane. I mean, dig down. Talk to
2 your children, talk to your grandchildren, and look
3 them in the eyes. This is not the right thing to do.

4 And thank you.

5 (Applause.)

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

12 And I helped my fellow Yup'ik people write letters
13 to Congressmen saying we oppose because we ourselves
14 live off the land. We fish. Salmon is our main food,
15 and it's very important to us that we have food for the
16 winter. Every summer, as far as I can remember, and
17 all the stories I heard from my ancestors, that
18 summertime to fall is our preparation to make sure we
19 have food for the winter. We fish, we hang them, we
20 smoke them, and put them away. And then we pick
21 berries. Fall time, we hunt moose, caribou, reindeer,
22 and store them away, and wintertime, we make sure we

1 have food. That's what the Gwich'in people, they do,
2 too. And I am with them in my heart and as well as my
3 -- I know my fellow Yup'ik people will be supporting,
4 too.

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

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. DAVID BATTIS: Thank you.

10 Sir?

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

19 It saddens me that here I am over 30 years later
20 and the Arctic is at more threat than it has ever been,
21 and many of the reasons we've heard tonight are the
22 reasons I spoke to over 30 years ago before the Senate

1 Energy Committee, you know, but the top two of those
2 was the Gwich'in people and what this means to them.
3 And standing here as a white man, I can't begin to
4 fathom the pain, the risk, that this is to their
5 culture, their way of life; and that, in this whole
6 damn thing, is the moral issue.

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

11 The new issue that wasn't there 30 years ago is
12 climate change. And while the official opinion of our
13 President and this administration may be that climate
14 change is a hoax, the Arctic is ground zero for climate
15 change. You're all, most all of you, I believe, are
16 from Alaska. You've seen what's happening up there.
17 And we can officially declare it a hoax, but climate
18 change is going to come back and bite all of us in the
19 butt because real stuff is happening right now, real
20 stuff for the BLM. How's your firefighting budget
21 looking? How much are you spending on firefighting now
22 versus 30 years ago? We see it happening all over the

1 place. And the idea of drilling the Arctic Ocean, the
2 western Arctic, and the Coastal Plain is insane.

3 And I would like to say, you know, can we just
4 stop the insanity out of this process? But, I'm sorry,
5 the fact -- this process, I think, has as much
6 integrity -- and this isn't personal -- but this
7 process has as much integrity as the process by which
8 it came about, but putting in authorizing language,
9 burying it in a tax bill that was passed through
10 reconciliation, is the way that we decide that we're
11 going to drill the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? I
12 think the outcome here is set. So we will see you in
13 court.

14 (Applause and cheering.)

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

19 (No audible response.)

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

22 MS. SARAH JAMES: I would like to close this.

1 Since nobody is coming up now, that I would like to
2 play one song that represent our Nation as Neetsaii
3 Gwich'in. It's a caribou skin hunt dance. That means
4 we're welcome to this place. And you are welcome to
5 Arctic Village. You are welcome to Alaska, and see and
6 have Gwich'in host you, because that kind of people we
7 are. And I see I've got -- we've got a lot of friends,
8 so you are welcome to Arctic Village. If you haven't
9 been to Arctic Village, you haven't been to Alaska.
10 And every day in Arctic Village is a good day, so every
11 day is a good day to see Alaska.

12 (Plays and sings song.)

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

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

22 (Applause.)

1 MR. DAVID BATTS: Thank you, Sarah. We appreciate
2 you sharing with us.

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

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

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

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

20 And this does wrap up our final scoping meeting,
21 but, of course, whenever the next step in the process
22 occurs, when the draft EIS is made available for the

1 public, there will be another opportunity for hearings
2 around Alaska, around parts of the country. So I'm
3 certain you guys will stay engaged if you're already
4 here at this point.

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

8 Have a good night.

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

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