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Transcript of Meeting - Auditorium

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

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

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1 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
2 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
3
4 COASTAL PLAIN OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM
5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

6
7 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

8
9
10
11 Wednesday, February 13, 2019

12 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

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14
15 National Housing Center
16 1201 15th Street, NW
17 Washington, D.C.

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20
21
22

1 PARTICIPANTS

2

3 Amy Lewis, 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 Nicole Hayes, Project Manager, BLM

9 Josh Kindred, Alaska Regional Solicitor

10 Ted Murphy, Acting State Director for the Bureau

11 of Land Management

12 Greg Siekaniec, Regional Director, Alaska Region,

13 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

14 Steve Wackowski, Alaska Advisor to the Secretary

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

16

17 Public Comments (in order of comment):

18 Linda Rawles, Self

19 Sarah James, Native Village of Venetie Tribal

20 Government

21 Myra Thumma, Native Village of Venetie Tribal

22 Government

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Gabrielle Tourtellotte, Student at George Mason

5 Bernadette Demientieff, Gwich'in Steering

6 Committee

7 Marleanna Hall, RDC Alaska

8 Adam Houser, CFACT

9 Glen Solomon, Kaktovik, AK

10 Galen Gilbert, NVTG

11 Jerrald John, NVTG

12 Kara Moriarty, AOGA

13 Donetta Tritt, Arctic Village

14 Richard Glenn, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation

15 Chief Timothy Roberts, Venetie Village Council

16 Marjorie Gemmill, Arctic Village

17 Tonya Garnett, Arctic Village

18 Geoffrey Haskett, National Wildlife Refuge

19 Association

20 Anna Jane Joyner, Climate Activist

21 Desiree Sorenson-Groves, National Wildlife Refuge

22 Association

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Chuck Feerick, Environmental Engineer

5 Reverend Lennox Yearwood, Jr., Hip Hop Caucus

6 Michael Wald, Wilderness Guiding Company Owner

7 Jeff Chen, Gwich'in Steering Committee

8 Bernadette Demientieff, Gwich'in Steering

9 Committee

10 Amanda Robinson, Creation Justice Ministries

11 Adam Kolton, Alaska Wilderness League

12 Sally Andersen, Wilderness Guiding Company Owner

13 Lena Moffitt, Sierra Club

14 Mary Anne Hitt, Sierra Club

15 Richard Ranger, API

16 Betsy Loyless, Self

17 Leo Wald, Self

18 Noah Wald, Self

19 Arian Rubio, League of Conservation Voters

20 Wendy Hall, Adirondack Wildlife Refuge

21 Dr. Charlene Fisher, Council of Athabaskan Tribal

22 Government

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Gabriel Arellano, STEMS

5 Jeffrey Stoddard, Defenders of Wildlife

6 Dr. Charlene Stern, Native Village of Venetie

7 Tribal Government

8 Jennie Gosche, Polar Bear Photographer

9 Rhonda Anderson, Kaktovik Shareholder

10 Robert Vessels, Sierra Club, "Military Outdoors"

11 Program

12 Astrid Tuuli Grace Determan, Epic-Animals.com

13 Greg Singleton, NRDC, AWL, Defenders of Wildlife,

14 Sierra Club

15 Jean Buzby, Agriculture Economist

16 Karla Bright, Self

17 Aimee Delach, Defenders of Wildlife

18 Mark Salvo, Defenders of Wildlife

19 Jill LaRue, Self

20 Phil Lu, Defenders of Wildlife

21 Michelle Harmon, Alabama Coast United

22 Sally Magaziner, Self

1 PARTICIPANTS

2 (Continued)

3

4 Kristen Miller, Alaska Wilderness League

5 Dan Roseman, Self

6

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

2 MS. AMY LEWIS: Good afternoon, everybody. We're
3 going to get started here. Okay, welcome, everyone.
4 This is the start of the Public Meeting for the Draft
5 Environmental Impact Statement for the Coastal Plain
6 Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

7 My name is Amy Lewis. I am with EMPSi. We are
8 the contractor that is working with the Bureau of Land
9 Management on this Environmental Impact Statement. My
10 colleague Chad Ricklefs is up here in the front and
11 will be helping to manage the flow and the speakers
12 tonight.

13 I'm going to introduce some other BLM folks as
14 well. Here to my right is Nicole Hayes. She is the
15 project manager for the Bureau of Land Management, and
16 she will be available throughout the day to answer
17 questions, and additionally at 3:00 and at 6:00 she
18 will be giving a presentation to walk through different
19 aspects of the project.

20 Here on the stage with us so you all know who's
21 here, first here to my left is Joe Balash. He is the
22 Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management

1 for the Department of Interior.

2 Next to him is Steve Wackowski. He is the Senior
3 Advisor for Alaska Affairs for the Department of
4 Interior.

5 Next to him is Josh Kindred. He is the Alaska
6 Regional Solicitor.

7 Then next to him is Ted Murphy. Ted is the Acting
8 State Director for the Bureau of Land -- oh, sorry --
9 for the Bureau of Land Management.

10 And then finally on the end is Greg Siekaniec. He
11 is the Regional Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
12 Service, who is a cooperating agency with the BLM on
13 this project.

14 So the format for today, as you signed in, if you
15 wish to provide public testimony, we'll be starting
16 that as soon as I'm done up here. You should have
17 received a red ticket, and on that ticket, it has a
18 number, and we'll be calling numbers in order. And if
19 you are not around when your number is called, we have
20 to move on in order to fit as many speakers in as
21 possible. So please pay attention. We'll make
22 announcements at the end of each speaker about where we

1 are in the number chronology so you know if you're on
2 deck. But pay attention because if you miss your
3 number, you'll have to go get a new ticket if you want
4 to speak.

5 We also have an additional court reporter that is
6 just outside the room here in a separate room if you do
7 not wish to speak publicly, but you would like your
8 comment captured by a court reporter today. So at any
9 time, he will be available for the duration of the
10 meeting from 2:00 to 8:00 p.m. You can go in there and
11 speak to him privately one-on-one. And just like here,
12 we have a court reporter. Those comments are captured
13 for the record, and you have no time limit in either
14 place.

15 One thing that I would note for those giving
16 public testimony in the room is even though you do have
17 no time limit on your testimony, just please be aware
18 that we have a number of people that want to speak
19 tonight, and we want to get through as many as we
20 possibly can, so just be respectful of the rest of the
21 folks today here as well.

22 We also have other methods that you could provide

1 comments here today. We have two computers set up in
2 the back of the room that are linked to the Bureau of
3 Land Management E-Planning website. You can type your
4 comments directly in there, and it will be fed into the
5 comments system.

6 We also have hard copy comment forms that you
7 could fill out today and leave in the comment box or
8 with one of us. And all of those comments are captured
9 and analyzed in the same place. No one method is more
10 valuable than another; they're all treated the same.

11 Okay. At 3:00, there will be media availability
12 with Joe. I'm not sure exactly where that will be, but
13 -- okay, out in the room on the left where the court
14 reporter is located. And, additionally, in the back of
15 the room, I'm seeing my colleagues back there, you may
16 notice we have posters set up outlining, highlighting,
17 different aspects of the EIS. We have resource
18 specialists here that worked on different sections.
19 They can help answer questions for you and provide
20 further detail or clarification, and they will be here
21 throughout the duration to answer questions, so don't
22 feel like they're going to disappear at any point.

1 Anything else that I missed?

2 So again, Nicole will give her presentations at
3 3:00 and 6:00. And with that, I think we will open the
4 microphone with the first number, which is 125 through
5 135, if you guys could kind of move towards the front
6 and start staging up here. But the first number that
7 we'll hear from tonight is 125. And when you do come
8 up, Chad will be making sure that you sign in your name
9 and checking your number off.

10 So thank you.

11 MS. RAWLES: I don't know, I've never gone first
12 before. This is kind of scary. Closer? How's that?
13 Thanks for making it short.

14 Good afternoon, gentlemen. Thank you for
15 listening to me and thank you for having this hearing.

16 I've been a corporate lawyer for more decades than
17 even my hair evinces. I've represented a lot of
18 corporations, been in politics for -- Linda Rawles.
19 I'm sorry, I guess I should start with that -- R-A-W-L-
20 E-S, from Carefree, Arizona, where we're carefree, but
21 not lately.

22 I've been a Republican most of my life, and I'm

1 usually not nervous when I speak. I am today because
2 this is very near and dear to my heart, and I'm here as
3 an individual citizen, not representing anyone. Excuse
4 me.

5 So I want to talk to you with my two different
6 hats that I have: my non-lawyer hat, my non-corporate
7 hat. One of those is actually philosophically I'm a
8 Libertarian, classic liberal, the Madisonian variety.
9 So I'm here against the drilling. And you say, well,
10 that's kind of interesting, a Libertarian who's not for
11 deregulation?

12 Well, we believe in personal and economic freedom
13 as Libertarians, but we also believe in this doctrine
14 called the "tragedy of the commons." Have you ever
15 heard of that concept? It's a concept not just
16 Libertarians but also social scientists believe in,
17 which means that if you hold something in common, but
18 you open it out for individual people or individual
19 companies or corporations or individual interests, like
20 fossil fuels, to take advantage of that commons, that
21 usually ends in tragedy, and that that's because the
22 individual interests use that common good in a way that

1 doesn't equal the common good. Think, if you will, of
2 a public park that people trash or something that isn't
3 owned directly through property rights, right? Or the
4 refrigerator in your company office, you know, that
5 nobody takes care of. And even though this is much
6 more important than a refrigerator, I feel like we're
7 trashing our communal property, and that this is a
8 classic example of the tragedy of the commons, and that
9 someday we will recognize it as such and we will
10 recognize it as such a tragedy.

11 So I am here for one reason today, to ask you to
12 think about that tragedy and think about the fact that
13 even some of us who are for property rights and
14 freedom, who have been Republicans most of our life,
15 who are for deregulation, who have represented
16 corporations for decades, think that this is not the
17 right thing to do, gentlemen.

18 Another hat that I wear, and I don't want to
19 insult any of the indigenous folks in the audience, but
20 I do practice neo-shamanism is my belief system, which
21 I know is also unusual for a corporate attorney. But
22 we believe that every individual life is sacred, every

1 buffalo, like you have on your vest there, sir, every
2 caribou, you know, every polar bear, every indigenous
3 person, every non-indigenous person, we're all sacred,
4 and we're all interconnected, and everything that
5 happens to one happens to everybody.

6 And so when you're extracting fossil fuels, which,
7 by the way, are going to die eventually, and I'm sure
8 that is a horrible thing for some people in this room
9 to hear, but with climate change, it's not sustainable,
10 so if in some last desperate attempt to get every bit
11 of fossil fuel out of our ground, including the
12 wilderness, is affecting all these precious creatures
13 and all these folks who have lived there for time
14 immemorial, you're hurting you and me, everyone in this
15 room, every animal, and that's also a tragedy of the
16 commons.

17 So wearing my hat for freedom, my hat for all of
18 creation and Mother Earth, I plead with you to look in
19 your hearts and think that people change. You know, I
20 was a Republican for decades till we ended up with a
21 madman in the White House. So now I'm a Democrat by
22 necessity. I've been different religions and changed

1 my religion. If you can't look at the world and the
2 Earth and think, "Am I doing the right thing? Do I
3 need to be here, do something else?" then we don't have
4 any hope.

5 So I won't take up much more of your time, but I
6 appreciate you listening to me. And I'd ask you to
7 reconsider going forward with this.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. SARAH JAMES: Once again I'm here, and I'm
11 honored to be here, speaking on behalf of my people. I
12 was born there and I was raised there, and English is
13 my second language. And I'm honored that.

14 (Speaking Alaska Native language.) I said I come
15 from Arctic Village. My name is Sarah Agnes James. My
16 father's name is Isias (ph) James, and my mom's name is
17 Martha (ph) James. And Martha James is from caribou
18 country. My father is from salmon country, Yukon. So
19 they are both Neetsaii Gwich'in. And on my mother's
20 side, my grandpa, his name is Reverend Albert E. Trip
21 (ph), and he was the first ordained Episcopal Church
22 that he taught himself from going into wilderness.

1 That's how he learned the Bible. And his wife named
2 Sarah.

3 And on Birch Creek side, my father come from Birch
4 Creek, Salmon River, Salmon Village, and Fort Yukon,
5 and Birch Creek. His father's name is Chief Birch
6 Creek James, and his wife name is Agnes. And I'm named
7 after two of my grandma, Sarah Agnes James. I honor
8 that. I honor my elders. I honor people that's not
9 yet born. And I'm going to speak behalf of everybody
10 that want to protect the Arctic National Wildlife
11 Refuge, the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National
12 Wildlife Refuge, Neetsaii Gwich'in, we call it "Iizhik
13 Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit."

14 I'm an elder spokesperson for -- I am a Tribal
15 member to the Native Village of Venetie Tribal
16 Government. And I'm honored that they appoint me as
17 elder adviser on their board to be speaking on behalf
18 of the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife
19 Refuge.

20 This is not the first time I'm talking to
21 government about the coastal plain, "Iizhik Gwats'an
22 Gwandaii Goodlit," "Sacred Place Where the Life Begin."

1 That's a historical site we're talking about, a Tribal
2 honor, and we -- that's why we call it "Iizhik Gwats'an
3 Gwandaii Goodlit," not only for caribou, for many, many
4 other animals. Right now today polar bear is
5 threatened big time. In fact, there's one came to
6 Arctic Village this winter. That was not the first
7 one. It went even further into -- inland to Fort Yukon
8 years ago. There's even one further into inland in
9 Canada. So if we can't wake up to that, then I don't
10 know what we can wake up to. Right now over in Russia
11 they threatened a whole village. There's 52 running
12 around in a village. And if we can't wake up to that,
13 I think you -- I think -- I think you're sleeping or, I
14 don't know, ignoring it.

15 (Speaking Alaska Native language.) I walked this
16 Earth many years. I'm 75 years old. And I represent
17 my Tribe, and we have our own government, we have our
18 own way of life. Today, I'm worried my mom, Martha
19 James. My dad passed in '70, and being out there in
20 the relocation program, and my father died 1970, June
21 -- January 19, I had to come back. I was on Alcatraz
22 Island exercising our Tribal power. I was young then.

1 And then I had to come home. And always knew we had
2 relative in Canada. We knew that we protect the
3 caribou. We depend on the caribou from the time
4 beginning. We're not -- we're not wrong about that.

5 So when I came home, we help with our village, my
6 brother and sister.

7 Come 1988, back in 1988, there was a threat to the
8 caribou. That means there's a threat to the Gwich'in
9 Nation. So elders from both sides, they got together
10 and say we've got to have a gather just like we did bow
11 and arrow days, and that's how we're going to handle
12 it. When they got to Arctic Village, they threw away
13 written agenda, and they said we'll do this in our own
14 way, bow and arrow way, just how we used to live, how
15 we used to make decision. And most days when they make
16 decision, they make decision for seventh generation,
17 and that's what they did. They said we're going to do
18 something about stopping the gas and oil development
19 within the Porcupine caribou birthplace. But there was
20 15 chiefs from 15 Gwich'in village. There's 8,000 or
21 more of us. All the chiefs said this is really good,
22 it's just like a rebirth of the nation. Everybody

1 came. Some had -- some people came with boats, some
2 people came with their own -- they paid for their own
3 charter. We had 15 chiefs, we had 15 elders, we had 15
4 young leaders. And they said this is really good. And
5 they said the only way it's going to work, the only way
6 that we are going to know about this, unless it's in
7 white and black, and that means we have to pass a
8 resolution.

9 So the chief came up to the Hill and passed a
10 resolution to be united and do it in a good way and
11 have gather every 2 -- every 2 years to renew the
12 resolution. And they took it to the elders. They even
13 had to convince elders.

14 Instead of paper, they introduced a talking stick
15 with an eagle on it because talking stick is very
16 important because we talk for things that cannot talk
17 for themselves: caribou, birds, trees, water. We need
18 to talk for them. And that's what God put us down here
19 for. So that's -- that's why they introduce a talking
20 stick. They said, "We're going to use a talking stick.
21 It keep us warm. We've got our cabin. So we're going
22 to have to use a talking stick." So that's how they

1 ran the meeting.

2 But the chief came back with a resolution, and
3 they convinced them and they passed it. And that was
4 15. Altogether, it was 8,000 Gwich'in. And we did
5 good. We did good till the time when Obama left the
6 office. We did really good. We educate the world. At
7 that time, they didn't know there was Gwich'in, they
8 didn't know caribou, they didn't know Arctic National
9 Wildlife Refuge, they don't know "Iizhik Gwats'an
10 Gwandaii Goodlit." Now they do, the world do.

11 So that, we won battles after battles. They put
12 down money against us. The State of Alaska put \$1
13 million every year to fight us to open up for gas and
14 oil development, that maybe if I count right, it's \$30
15 million now.

16 Well, anyway, that's what we were against. But
17 we've been winning. We've been battles after battles.
18 We won. We educate world. They know what we're
19 talking about now. They know there's Gwich'in up
20 there, they know there's Porcupine caribou, they know
21 what (inaudible) are, caribou dance, and caribou skin
22 hunt (ph) dance (speaking Alaska Native language). Hey

1 ha hey. Hey ha hey.

2 Well, anyway, but they keep denying us. They
3 approach us. Even worse I've run after another. We
4 had to fight that. We had to fight that. Now us
5 Native Village of Venetie Tribal Government, and Arctic
6 Village, and Venetie, we are government, Tribal
7 government, so now we're -- that's where I'm coming
8 from. That's where I am. That's who I am. I'm proud
9 to be a Tribal member. I -- we always exercise that.
10 We always govern ourself. That's why we're here today.

11 And now we have -- the application with Tribal,
12 and that's how we're going to win and because that's
13 the right thing to do. It's always been the right
14 thing to do, all since 1988, even before, when I was
15 born, 1944. I know that my way of life is very
16 important because I hear story from the past and what
17 happened. I have to protect my -- my family, I have
18 to protect our people, our village, our river, our
19 water. There is not enough water on the coastal plain.
20 How can they make ice -- ice road? It's just going to
21 pollute. Once they pollute, there's not -- there's no
22 technology in the world will clean up the tundra like

1 that. And when I had my boy, I want to have him where
2 it's quiet, clean, private. That's what each animal --
3 we're talking about birthing, we're talking about
4 birthplace of the Porcupine caribou, not only Porcupine
5 caribou, but many, many, many life. Gwich'in, because
6 we survive from year to year. And it's just not a
7 simple issue that can be tucked away and rush and push.
8 No. It's going to stay there and meant to be there
9 because the Creator made it that way. We want it that
10 way.

11 It's the last place. There's no other place like
12 that in the world. I travel talking about this all
13 over the world. I haven't seen a safe place and a
14 healthy place and a quiet place yet. So simple as
15 that. I'm so honored to represent my people, on behalf
16 of my family, James family, on behalf of my son. I
17 gave my life to tell the story, and that's the best I
18 know how to do, traditional story. So we do have
19 historical history, and that needs to be protected.
20 And later on, if I get a chance, you're going to hear
21 from me and I'll say, "Hey ha hey."

22 Màhsi' cho.

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. MYRA THUMMA: Mâh'si'. My name is Myra Thumma.

3 I'm a Second Chief for our Native Village of Venetie

4 Tribal Government. And I represent my people, the

5 Gwich'in people, Arctic Village and Venetie.

6 Throughout this process, throughout the NEPA, I got to

7 meet a lot of you guys, and it's kind of different

8 being away from home standing here and talking, but I

9 know who I am and I know who my people are. We exist.

10 We have identity. And I carry my elders with me.

11 They're standing here with me like I sit in Venetie

12 when I made the speech. All our elders are all gone,

13 they're all sleeping, and they put words in our heart

14 and our life, and they taught us who we are, that we

15 are Gwich'in people, and we stand up for our

16 (inaudible).

17 And when I made the speech in Venetie, I had my

18 little granddaughter with me, my little Holland (ph).

19 That was my granddaughter. And I went back and thought

20 about my grandma, how my grandma raised us up, live off

21 the land, and respect who we are and what we have. And

22 also my people, you know, if there is drilling that

1 open up, we know that it will have a major impact, the
2 way we live, of who we are. We are trying to protect
3 this area, which is really sacred for us. Like Sarah
4 was saying, it's a sacred place, where we cannot go.
5 That's why nobody go up there. They did, and time
6 immemorial people talk about our ancestors been up that
7 way, they've been everywhere, but we've been taught
8 that we can't go up there, and we respect that. And I
9 do want to go up there and see where all the calving
10 ground, where the -- and all the animals go, our
11 caribou, our birds, our waterfowl, everything goes up
12 there because they know it's a peaceful place. It's a
13 safe place that they go. That's what we're trying to
14 defend because they cannot speak for themselves.

15 And I was thinking about when I was growing up, we
16 used to always go out camping with my mom and dad, and
17 we go up on the mountain. It's so pretty, peaceful up
18 there, and see all the caribou herd just go by. And
19 last year when I went back up to Arctic, because that's
20 where I grew up during my childhood, then we moved to
21 Venetie, but when I went back up there, all the
22 memories, everything, came back to life. And I'm just

1 so thankful I did. I've seen the world. I've seen the
2 beauty. I mean, that's what's going to be destroyed.
3 No matter what, you guys are saying that it's safe,
4 "We're going to take care of everything," I don't think
5 it would. And that's what we're trying to tell you
6 guys. I mean, you guys listen to all the Gwich'in
7 people.

8 You know, a lot of times I would just get mad and
9 stuff like that. No. I was taught to be humbled and
10 to have respect. That's what I was taught. And to my
11 -- I mean, I would take it to the grave. For my
12 people, my grandkids, I would not sell my land to open
13 up for this coastal plain to gas and oil. I would not
14 do that. I carry my -- what my ancestors taught me,
15 and I will not turn back on my people. I mean, we need
16 to look at from 10, 20 years from now, how is this land
17 going -- how the climate change, everything?

18 We're talking about human beings. We're alive.
19 Our children. I mean, I'm sure you guys have got
20 children. You've got to protect them. That's what
21 we're trying to fight for. We are a human being and we
22 have rights, and we're trying to fight for the animals.

1 There are just so many things to be -- I mean --
2 and I just thank God, I forgot to bring Him up, because
3 I just thank God that everything that he created, he
4 created, he gave us land, he created all the animals,
5 everything, the world, and we're trying to fight for
6 that. It's a peaceful life that we have. And I just
7 hope that you guys put it in your heart. I mean, it's
8 -- I'm just talking for my people. I think about my
9 grandma, how she's just so hard worker. She works
10 hard. She goes out and trap little animals so we could
11 eat. She sews. I mean, she does a lot of work, and
12 that's who I want to become, who she is, and I always
13 carry that in my heart.

14 And I just thank you for listening. Thank you
15 very much. Mähsi' cho.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. GABRIELLE TOURTELLOTT: Oh, boy. I feel like
18 I can't feel my fingers.

19 Hello? Oh, okay. Just like that? Cool.

20 So I'm not a public speaker. It actually
21 terrifies me. At the moment, I can't feel my fingers.

22 So I'm here to try and do this. I've actually got

1 some statistics that I brought up on in terms of the
2 drilling in the wildlife refuge. I'm 22. I'm a
3 student at George Mason. And this matters to me quite
4 a bit.

5 So I've got -- huh?

6 MR. STEVE WACKOWSKI: What's your name again?

7 MS. GABRIELLE TOURTELLOTTE: It's Gabrielle. The
8 last name is really, really long, but I'm from Herndon,
9 Virginia.

10 So I wanted to touch on the amount of oil that can
11 be extracted from this place versus how much we consume
12 on a yearly basis. So I have a statistic here from the
13 Energy Information Administration that the United
14 States consumes 7.8 billion barrels of oil per year.
15 And then a 1988 report by the U.S. Geological Survey,
16 there is only 4.3 to 11.8 billion barrels of
17 technically removable oil from that -- from that --
18 from the wildlife refuge.

19 And so the point is the oil extracted from that
20 area would only give us, give or take, between 6 months
21 to about a year and half's worth of oil, and all of the
22 trouble that's going to go into building this oil

1 platform -- the gravel roads, the airports -- the
2 drilling extraction process refinement is really not
3 worth it is the point I am trying to make here.

4 I am not quite sure what the cost of this project
5 is. I couldn't find a statistic for that, but the risk
6 versus revenue is not -- is really not worth it. And
7 I've got a quote actually from an article titled "The
8 Energy Case Against Drilling in the Arctic National
9 Wildlife Refuge" from the Center for American Progress,
10 and that reads, "The North Slope oil fields average
11 more than 400 oil spills per year across Alaska, and
12 there were 16 major spills from 2002 to 2016 that
13 released at least 10,000 gallons of oil into the
14 environment." Now, that's not -- it's just really not
15 something you should be doing, guys.

16 I know I'm hard to take seriously because I'm a
17 young person, but this is really nerve-racking to speak
18 on. I mean, a lot of people here have touched upon the
19 Porcupine caribou. There are species that gravitates
20 to one particular mating ground, and oil development
21 here would cut through that, and it would hurt the
22 species. At the moment, there is a herd of about

1 197,000 Porcupine caribou there. That's something I
2 pulled from the Fish and Wildlife Service website
3 earlier. So that was -- that's a cool read, but you
4 can't -- cutting through their habitat is going to hurt
5 their species, and Area 1002 is right there.

6 But it's hard to take a young person seriously,
7 but the reason -- the reason this matters to me so much
8 is it's actually my dream to work in Alaska as a park
9 ranger. Most specifically, my goal is to be a sign
10 language interpreter in the National Parks. That's my
11 ultimate end goal. I applied for 20 positions with the
12 Student Conservation Association, 14 of which are in
13 Alaska, and that's why this matters to me so much, is I
14 don't want these lovely pristine places to be trashed
15 by oil drilling platforms. It's not worth it because
16 one platform is just one too many, even then.

17 But we can't mess with these places because if we
18 want them around for future generations, if we mess
19 them up now, we're not going to have them. To quote my
20 grandmother, who's a wise old Italian woman, "Beauty
21 fades, and stupid is forever." If you mess up this
22 place for a year or so's worth of oil, there is no

1 going back if there is any foreseeable damage. If
2 something breaks and more oil spills into those areas,
3 you can't go back from that, or the cleanup would take
4 forever, or it just wouldn't happen.

5 This matters because I want to be a park ranger,
6 and I want these places to stay intact for future
7 generations. I mean, it honestly would be a heinous
8 act of violence against our protected lands, the
9 wildlife species, and the indigenous peoples who have
10 owned that place for who knows how many thousands of
11 years. It matters to a lot of people, and that's why
12 I'm here saying something even though public speaking
13 terrifies me. I can -- I can feel my fingers again,
14 but I can feel my knees shaking. But that's kind of
15 why this matters to me.

16 I would actually like to close this out with -- I
17 need my notebook -- with a quote from Senator McCain.
18 So -- and on his campaign trail, he actually spoke a
19 little bit about the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge,
20 and what he said was, "As far as the ANWR is concerned,
21 I don't want to drill in the Grand Canyon and I don't
22 want to drill in the Everglades. This is one of the

1 most pristine and beautiful places on Earth."

2 I think that's about as much as I can manage at
3 the moment. I can't stand up anymore. But thank you
4 for taking the time to listen to a young person to
5 which this matters quite a fair deal. So thank you.
6 Cool.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: Hello again. First I
9 want to recognize the traditional lands that we're on.
10 The Piscataway Tribe. (Speaking Alaska Native
11 language.)

12 I'm the Executive Director for the Gwich'in
13 Steering Committee, which was formed in 1988 by the
14 Gwich'in chiefs and elders of Alaska and Canada. I'm
15 from Fort Yukon, and I oppose any disturbance or
16 destruction to the calving grounds of the Porcupine
17 caribou herd. It's obvious that you're not -- that
18 you're ignoring Tribes and the elders that are telling
19 you to stay out of the Arctic Refuge, and you would
20 rather listen to the corporations. Never in my life
21 have I heard any respected leader or elder encourage us
22 to produce oil or drill for oil or gas, but, instead,

1 they directed us to honor and take care of our land and
2 our animals. Nor would any elder encourage us to fight
3 each other for oil development. That's just plain
4 greed.

5 The process that you're doing is excluding many
6 Gwich'in communities, including other Alaskan villages
7 that get the caribou. You're also leaving out our
8 Canadian relatives, who have a cultural and spiritual
9 connection to the caribou herd as well. We are all
10 going to be deeply impacted by the destruction that you
11 are causing. It feels like you don't care about our
12 human rights or our food security. Whether this is the
13 law or not, you have the authority to recommend slowing
14 down this very embarrassing and sloppy process.

15 Yesterday, over 100 House Representatives
16 introduced a bill to restore protection. This shows
17 you that the congressional leaders are listening to the
18 Gwich'in and to the American people. This is not just
19 about oil or gas development, this is about our human
20 rights and our food security. It's about our way of
21 life. This is about corporations versus (inaudible),
22 and we will not be bullied or we will not be dismissed.

1 What you are doing is wrong to do to another human
2 being, but yet here you are moving ahead with
3 destroying a whole nation. You should be ashamed of
4 yourself. This is one of the last untouched ecosystems
5 in the world, and it's in our country. We should
6 respect that and stay out of the Arctic Refuge.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. MARLEANNA HALL: Thank you. Hi. Good
10 afternoon. Before -- my name is Marleanna Hall.
11 Before I begin my comments regarding the oil and gas
12 lease sales in the coastal plain, I'd like to share a
13 little bit about myself.

14 I am Iñupiat, born in Nome, Alaska. My family is
15 originally from Shishmaref for the most part, a
16 community that is facing many struggles and economic --
17 and with few economic opportunities. My father's
18 siblings, of which there were 15 total, all eventually
19 grew up in Nome as well. My Iñupiat name is Toytuck
20 (ph). It means "to see."

21 While my family was not wealthy in the sense of
22 the dollar, we celebrated our traditional and cultural

1 ways of life, but without proper education, training,
2 et cetera, many of my aunts and uncles, and my father
3 included, did not have proper skills and education to
4 compete in the workforce. This is a common theme for
5 Alaska Natives, particularly in rural communities.

6 High rates of unemployment and dependence on the
7 government are often the norm.

8 However, I do believe that these families and
9 these communities would be some of the best -- would
10 benefit some of the most from future development across
11 Alaska, including in the coastal plain. Development
12 can be beneficial to the cultural and traditional
13 aspects of all Alaska Natives and Alaskans as a whole.
14 While I didn't learn my native language, I did learn
15 much of my culture. I have grown up to respect my
16 elders whether they are or are not native. I'm not
17 implying that any of you are my elders. I have been
18 taught to be respectful to others no matter their
19 belief. I have learned to use my voice in a way that I
20 hope makes a real difference by finding common
21 interests and working in a collected way to push back
22 against the lies that often misrepresent the interests

1 of few as the interests of many.

2 I attended the Anchorage public hearing this week.

3 I heard many stories, some full of emotion, while

4 others were not. The overarching message from

5 activists was clear: no development anywhere. This

6 approach will not help Alaska Natives and our children

7 or any Alaskans for that matter. What I support

8 strongly is the positive benefits development in the

9 coastal plain can offer. Opportunities like this will

10 not only provide economic benefits, but jobs, jobs that

11 typically come with training and skills that cannot be

12 taken away.

13 We, as Alaska Natives, are a proud people, and

14 living a balanced life of cultural and traditional

15 customs and economic security can help us going

16 forward. I have appreciated growing up with the

17 benefits we have seen since statehood. We don't have a

18 choice to say let's go back to a subsistence lifestyle

19 and let the world pass us by. If we weren't part of

20 the greatest nation on Earth, I would wonder where

21 Alaska Native people would be today.

22 Many subsistence lifestyles don't only include but

1 often require access to modern products, from the snow
2 machines that uncles use to check the trap lines to the
3 four-wheelers the aunties use to pull in a seine, we
4 are a part of a modern world. There is no reason to
5 believe subsistence will be compromised from
6 development. There is no reason to believe we can't do
7 it right.

8 I have lived in Alaska my whole life and hope to
9 be able to continue living here for the rest of it. I
10 grew up fishing, hunting, and boating the rivers around
11 the Seward Peninsula as well as much of the rest of our
12 State on the road system. I grew up during the
13 construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System,
14 through the administration and creation of the
15 Permanent Fund Dividend, and other significant economic
16 developments that make Alaska's economy tick, and
17 provides us with the ability to live and work there.

18 I attended the University of Anchorage, Alaska,
19 and earned a bachelor's degree in business management.
20 I went on to work for a nonprofit and quickly realized
21 that working for private industry -- private -- a
22 private company was something I was more interested in.

1 It eventually led me to my job today. My husband and I
2 have been fortunate to be able to raise our son and our
3 Labradors in a way where we can enjoy our fantastic
4 bits and pieces of Alaska.

5 All of that said, I would like to now share my
6 formal comments for consideration by the (inaudible)
7 line management.

8 Good afternoon. My name is Marleanna Hall. I am
9 the Executive Director for the Resource Development
10 Council for Alaska, commonly referred to as RDC. RDC
11 is an Alaskan business association comprised of
12 individuals and companies from Alaska's fishing,
13 forestry, mining, oil and gas, and tourism industries.
14 My membership includes all 12 of the land-owning Alaska
15 Native corporations, local communities, organized
16 labor, industry support firms, and thousands of
17 Alaskans supporting responsible resource development.
18 RDC's purpose is to encourage a strong diversified
19 private sector in Alaska and expand our State's
20 economic base through the responsible development of
21 our natural resources.

22 I am here today to express strong support for the

1 proposed oil and gas lease program that would allow
2 limited activity within the non-wilderness portion of
3 the Coastal Plain. It is important that BLM's EIS
4 evaluate the alternatives that allow for development.
5 Any alternatives that do not allow for eventual
6 development production and transportation of oil and
7 gas from the coastal plain would not -- would not meet
8 the requirements established by Congress.

9 Alaska depends on the responsible development of
10 its natural resources to expand and support its
11 economy. Article 8 of our State constitution mandates
12 that we develop our resources to the maximum benefit of
13 all Alaskans. In fact, it wasn't until the discovery
14 of oil in the 1950s that led Congress to finally vote
15 in favor of Alaska's statehood. Through that discovery
16 of oil, Congress realized Alaska could have a healthy
17 economy through the development of natural resources.
18 From that, Alaska's North Slope has produced more than
19 17 billion barrels of oil safely since the discovery of
20 the Prudhoe Bay oilfield. Oil production has been the
21 economic engine of growth in Alaska.

22 In 1980, Congress identified the 1002 area of ANWR

1 for its potential oil and gas resources. By 1987,
2 Department of Interior report, fulfilling requirements
3 under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation
4 Act, ANILCA, recommended the 1002 area for oil and gas
5 development specifically. Since completion of that
6 report, numerous oilfields have been discovered near
7 the coastal plain, and oilfield technologies have
8 significantly evolved.

9 The coastal plain was specifically identified by
10 Congress pursuant to 1002 of ANILCA for its potential
11 oil from the non-wilderness portion of the coastal
12 plain is an important resource for meeting our nation's
13 energy needs. Billions of barrels of oil that have
14 been produced on the North Slope have been produced
15 without causing any significant harm to the environment
16 there. The program area covered by the EIS contains an
17 estimated 7.68 billion barrels of technically
18 recoverable oil, and another 7 trillion cubic feet of
19 natural gas. This is a valuable resource to Alaska and
20 our nation.

21 Alaskans statewide have strongly supported oil and
22 gas exploration and development in the coastal plain.

1 In fact, polling has consistently shown some 70 percent
2 of Alaskans supporting the energy development. Local
3 residents and Iñupiat people who actually live adjacent
4 to the 1002 area also support development.

5 Under the three development alternatives, the
6 footprint of production and support facilities will be
7 limited to no more -- no more than 2,000 square acres
8 of the 1.6-million-acre 1002 area, which is the non-
9 wilderness portion of the refuge's coastal plain. That
10 is equivalent to just 0 point -- or, excuse me -- .01
11 percent of ANWR's 19.3 million acres. Responsible oil
12 and gas development in the small fraction of the
13 coastal plain proposed for leasing will help ensure
14 America's energy security for decades and allow Alaska
15 and our nation, as a whole, to realize the benefits
16 that come from expanding energy production.

17 The EIS includes a wide range of alternatives
18 which contain measures to avoid or mitigate surface
19 impacts and minimize ecological disturbance throughout
20 the program area. Advances in technology have greatly
21 reduced the footprint of development in the Arctic. As
22 much as 60-plus square miles can now be developed from

1 a single 12- to 14-acre gravel drill site. New
2 drilling capabilities are being developed every day
3 that may increase the surface development possible from
4 the same size drill site to as much as 150-plus square
5 miles. The net effect is an ever decreasing impact on
6 surface resources.

7 Over four decades of experience on Alaska's North
8 Slope have shown that caribou who visit the area for a
9 few months each year have not been harmed by
10 development activities. The Central Arctic caribou
11 herd, which migrates into existing North Slope fields,
12 has expanded from 5,000 animals in 1970 to over 60,000
13 miles -- excuse me -- 60,000 animals today.

14 Oil and gas operators and the U.S. Fish and
15 Wildlife Service have jointly developed procedures,
16 training, and best practices that have set a gold
17 standard worldwide for managing human-polar bear
18 interactions. Thanks to improving -- continuing
19 improvements in technology, practices, and oversight,
20 the oil industry has demonstrated over the past 40
21 years that North Slope energy development and
22 environmental stewardship can and do coexist. The

1 industry has a proven track record of responsible
2 development in sensitive areas, protecting the
3 environment, wildlife, and subsistence needs of local
4 residents. As the non-wilderness coastal plain is less
5 than 60 miles from the existing Trans-Alaska Pipeline
6 System, commonly referred to as TAPS, development of
7 energy resources there is one of the most
8 environmentally sound ways to increase oil production
9 in Alaska.

10 ANWR can be developed without significantly
11 affecting wildlife and the environment. However, there
12 are special interests in our nation that are opposed to
13 further development of America's energy resources.
14 They advocate leaving oil in the ground, but even in
15 this era of climate change, reality requires continued
16 development of America's oil and gas resources. While
17 renewable and alternative energy will make up a growing
18 part of the U.S. energy portfolio, they will not
19 significantly reduce our reliance on oil in the near or
20 mid-term.

21 We don't deny renewable energy is a growing part
22 of America's energy portfolio, but it is still only

1 projected to account for a minority of energy
2 production in 2040. New oil and gas production will be
3 required to power America's economy and can serve as a
4 bridge until renewable energy becomes a dominant energy
5 source decades into the future. Every barrel of oil
6 not developed in America will simply be imported from
7 overseas, where environmental regulations are often
8 weaker. To further reduce our reliance on foreign
9 sources of oil, America must continue to pursue
10 responsible oil and gas development onshore and
11 offshore Alaska. New production would provide a bridge
12 to the alternative and renewable energy sources in the
13 future.

14 Energy production from the non-wilderness coastal
15 plain has the potential to offset a decline in lower 48
16 Shell production, which is expected to commence in
17 approximately a decade. Without limited oil
18 development on the coastal plain, America will be
19 forced once again to increase its reliance on foreign
20 imports. With limited development in ANWR, Alaska and
21 America can continue to grow the economy and reduce
22 dependence on the foreign oil. Further, Alaska's

1 economic lifeline, TAPS, which is now running at one-
2 fourth of its capacity -- phone call, sorry -- would --
3 it would increase the -- it would increase throughput
4 in TAPS, a vital component of American energy
5 infrastructure.

6 Were oil production occurring today on the coastal
7 plain, TAPS potentially could be operating at two-
8 thirds capacity versus its one-third current operation,
9 reducing Alaska's budget deficit and helping Alaskans
10 as a whole.

11 Oil development on a fraction in the coastal plain
12 would create thousands of jobs nationwide, generate
13 billions of dollars in government revenue for public
14 services, and provide improve -- and further improve
15 energy security for decades into the future.

16 And, lastly, development of native-owned lands on
17 the non-wilderness coastal plain would provide
18 significant economic benefits to Alaska Natives on the
19 North Slope as well as throughout the State through
20 direct payment of royalties and revenue sharing among
21 the Alaska Native corporations and their thousands of
22 shareholders.

1 Not only does Alaska need oil and gas development
2 in the coastal plain, but America will benefit from it,
3 too. We are one nation. Let's help one another and
4 fuel America's future with ANWR.

5 Thank you for listening to Alaskans and our
6 support for development in the coastal plain this week
7 and last week in Alaska and again today in D.C. Thank
8 you for the opportunity to comment today.

9 (Applause.)

10 (Break.)

11 MR. CHAD RICKLEFS: Good afternoon, everyone.
12 Folks that just came in, my name is Chad Ricklefs, and
13 I'm going to help facilitate organizing the speakers up
14 here this afternoon and this evening.

15 Prior to Nicole's presentation, we went through a
16 series of speakers already based on the number you
17 received when you signed in. We stopped with number
18 132, so we're going to start with number 133 now, Adam,
19 if Adam is available. We're missing two folks up here,
20 a few folks on the panel. They are getting interviewed
21 right now and they will be joining as soon as -- as
22 soon as they're finished with that.

1 So come on up, Adam.

2 MR. ADAM HOUSER: Thanks. Thank you for holding
3 this hearing. Thanks, everybody who has shared prior
4 to me.

5 My name is Adam Houser. I'm with CFACT, the
6 Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow. CFACT is a
7 nonprofit public educational organization that works on
8 environmental and development issues. We've been
9 around since 1985; I haven't, but our organization has.
10 And our organization has over 100,000 citizen
11 supporters, a collegiate network on over 50 college
12 campuses, and a scientific and academic advisory board
13 of over 50 leading experts.

14 We are submitting these comments in support of the
15 Draft Environmental Impact Statement that allows for
16 the lease sale of land in ANWR for oil and gas
17 activities.

18 Alaska has 57 million acres, more than all of
19 Utah, set aside as wilderness, as well as tens of
20 millions more wild acres off limits to drilling in
21 national park, wildlife refuge, and similar
22 designations. Whatever final acreage is decided upon

1 as being open to lease and the options laid out in the
2 DEIS will be but a small percentage of the tens of
3 millions of acres of land already set as wilderness or
4 off limits to development in Alaska.

5 In terms of the impact on wildlife, there is
6 little wildlife activity in the area during the winter
7 months, when most drilling would take place. At these
8 times, temperatures reach -40 degrees Fahrenheit, and
9 most food is buried under layers of ice and snow.

10 Similar concerns of environmental or wildlife
11 impact were raised when the Trans-Alaska Pipeline was
12 proposed, but years later, the proposed -- but years
13 later, the pipeline has proved to be reliably safe
14 while providing much needed energy for our nation. For
15 example, the Prudhoe Bay oilfield Central Arctic
16 caribou herd is over 20,000 today compared to 5,000 in
17 1975.

18 Oil and gas seeping into water or the surrounding
19 area does happen naturally. Sometimes this is how we
20 know certain areas are good targets for oil and gas
21 development. Harvesting oil and gas in these areas can
22 prevent such leaking from occurring in the future. Of

1 course, caution and oversight must be in place to
2 ensure that when spills or other accidents occur, there
3 can be quick response to minimize any environmental
4 impact. Responsible parties should be made to clean up
5 and pay for remediation. Requirements in recent years
6 for double-hull ships are wise and necessary
7 initiatives.

8 To conclude, CFACT supports this Draft EIS that
9 allows leasing for oil and gas development in ANWR. We
10 support it because there are already the tens of
11 millions of acres placed off limits to protect nature;
12 there has been a proven track record of development in
13 the area; and ANWR will provide much needed jobs,
14 revenue, and energy for both Alaskans and all
15 Americans.

16 Thank you.

17 (Applause.)

18 MR. GLEN SOLOMON: Good afternoon. My name is
19 Glen Solomon. I'm from the Village of Kaktovik from
20 the 1002 area.

21 Good evening. My name is Glen Solomon, and I'm
22 here today to represent my community, Kaktovik. In my

1 village, I'm a Tribal member, I'm a father, I am
2 husband, I am a whaling captain, and also I'm a leader.

3 I have traveled here today in hope that people
4 will listen without judgment to see the needs of my
5 people, who live in Kaktovik. It seems like a lot of
6 people feel like they deserve to have their say in how
7 we live, how we manage our own homelands, but I hope
8 they -- I hope that they will listen to the
9 Kaktovikmuits have to say on this issue. I know I
10 don't speak for some, but I know I speak for most
11 people in Kaktovik.

12 I am raising my four beautiful children in
13 Kaktovik, and my deepest wish is that when they grow
14 up, they will have the opportunity to raise their own
15 children in Kaktovik on the resources that our land
16 provides. Unfortunately, I am the only person from
17 Kaktovik who is able to attend the hearing today. We
18 had a storm blow through over the past several days
19 with about 70-mile-per-hour winds, and they ground all
20 flights in and out of the community.

21 Today back home we are also honoring the life of
22 one of our great, greatly respected elders, Joe Kaleak,

1 who passed on last week. And then, of course, not many
2 people can afford to spend thousands of dollars it
3 costs to travel thousands of miles away from -- from
4 home to fight on behalf of their people and their
5 village. We don't have the same backing and resources
6 from environmental organizations to fly all over the
7 country, as some here today clearly do.

8 Our money is used in our communities, in the
9 schools, health clinics, and the practice to our
10 subsistent lifestyles. It is not my job. I'm not
11 getting paid to be here.

12 I want to thank the Gwich'in for highlighting the
13 subsistence importance of the Porcupine caribou herd.
14 We have the equal interest in their long-term
15 sustainability. In Kaktovik, we used to have access to
16 harvest from this herd. When I say "used to," I mean
17 that over time the Fish and Wildlife Service have
18 restricted our subsistence access to the herd and our
19 traditional hunting grounds.

20 We welcome -- we welcome the opportunity to work
21 with the Gwich'in to protect this critical resource
22 through the International Porcupine Caribou Board and

1 other outlets, but I cannot stand by while you claim
2 falsehood and try to speak for all Alaska Native people
3 on this issue.

4 We are the people of the coastal plain. We are
5 the people you should be listening to. We are here in
6 the spring before the caribou come, and we are still
7 here in the dead of winter when are no caribou around.
8 This conversation should be about people.

9 Anyways, we know from decades of development on
10 the North Slope that is not -- that it is not caribou
11 that you should be worried about, you should be worried
12 about the long-term economic sustainability of
13 indigenous communities who have occupied this land
14 since the time immemorial. You should be worried about
15 how they will support their people and preserve their
16 culture with no economic opportunity. You should be
17 worried about how -- you should be worried about your
18 bully tactics and the work that you have done to
19 elevate the voice of one native group over another
20 native group. You should worry about the millions of
21 dollars you have spent fighting this issue from
22 Anchorage and to Fairbanks and in the lower 48, where

1 you don't have the same difficulties as we do, when
2 none of the money makes it back to the real communities
3 who need it. I worry about the hypocrisy you have
4 displayed in trying your hardest to minimize the
5 economic opportunity of my community when you leased
6 your own lands for oil and gas development in the '80s.
7 In light of this, I wonder whether this -- whether this
8 is really about caribou.

9 The Porcupine Caribou Management Board website
10 states that the Dempster Highway that runs from Dawson
11 City to Inuvik runs through the Porcupine herd's winter
12 range and that, and I quote, The road provide hunters
13 with easy access to caribou, which means that caribou
14 can be harvested when they are close to the highway.
15 If the Porcupine herd isn't concerned about man-made
16 obstacles in Canada, then why would they in Alaska?
17 Canada is also working on plans to industrially develop
18 the Peel Plateau and the Peel River watershed, which is
19 part of the Porcupine caribou herd's winter range, not
20 to mention the 33 wells that were drilled in the Eagle
21 Plains area where the Porcupine caribou migrate range
22 up until 1985.

1 I could talk about health benefits, the public
2 safety and infrastructure benefits, the benefits to our
3 schools and children, that the money the North Slope
4 Borough was able to bring to our communities through
5 taxes levied on oil and gas facilities in the region,
6 and we have.

7 It is clear to us that you are not interested in
8 listening. You are in the audience. You in the
9 audience and those who are fighting us are only
10 interested in listening to indigenous people when they
11 are following your script and say what you want them to
12 say.

13 When people -- when people say that this is public
14 land, I want them to understand why. This is public
15 land because it was taken from us, the Kaktovikmiut.
16 You took our self-determination. You took our self-
17 determination. You took our access to subsistence
18 resources. You forced us through three military --
19 three military relocations. You imposed western
20 structures on land and animal management onto us in
21 effort to stifle our subsistence. And now you are
22 trying to minimize our opportunity to provide a future

1 for our community. But our people are strong. Our
2 people are proud. Our people adapt. And at least you
3 could do is listen. We will not become conservation
4 refugees.

5 Too often the national debate frame development
6 and presentation as an either/or argument as if they
7 cannot exist together. The Iñupiat know that this is a
8 false model that does not fit the realities of our
9 existence. We do not need to choose between our
10 culture and the economic security that comes with oil
11 and gas development of resources as long as the
12 development is done responsibly and with the concerns
13 of my community in mind.

14 The Arctic is a region with an interest in
15 striking a balance -- balance between environmental
16 stewardship and economic growth. As Iñupiat, we
17 maintain our traditional values while our culture
18 continues to evolve and adapt to the changes in the
19 world around us. We are not an exhibit. We are not --
20 we aren't -- we are not an exhibit in a museum. Nor
21 should the lands that have survived and thrived for
22 over centuries be locked away for the peace of mind for

1 those from far away places. This is not one of them
2 green colonialism, land grabbing in the name of the
3 climate. You cannot solve climate change on the backs
4 of indigenous people while doing nothing to curb your
5 own consumption. You don't think twice about jumping
6 on the plane for your family vacation but will fight an
7 indigenous community on one of their own legitimate
8 options to provide jobs and economic to their people.

9 We Iñupiat, for the most part, don't rely -- don't
10 really care that ANWR is a Federal wildlife refuge. We
11 care about the land, of course, and the animals that we
12 rely on to survive. But I can assure you that the
13 Federal Government did not consult us before they
14 turned our lands into Federal refuge -- into a Federal
15 refuge. This was no treaty. There was no public
16 meeting. There was no emotional testimony on behalf of
17 the Iñupiat people who would lose their access to
18 burial grounds, native allotments, and hunting grounds.

19 The Federal Fish and -- the Federal wildlife
20 refuge system operates on assumption that native
21 peoples are incompetent to managing their own land.
22 This is an assumption that we, as a people, reject. We

1 managed our land successfully for thousands of years
2 before outside groups arrived, and we will -- and we
3 will manage our lands for the next thousands of years
4 after your interest turns to the next breaking news.

5 You do not have to tell the Kaktovikmiut, who will
6 -- who have lived on this land for generations, the
7 importance of our land; we see it, we know it, we
8 depend on it, we are part of it. We consider our lands
9 to be our greatest gift from God. We consider what
10 comes from below -- below the ground to be a -- to be a
11 gift -- below to be a gift just as important as the
12 whales we catch and the bears we gather. With this
13 collaboration between the Federal Government, our local
14 people, and groups committed to legitimate
15 environmental conservation, we can -- we can secure the
16 protection of this and for generations to come.

17 We all share a commitment to protect this land,
18 and if we work in the pursuit of this goal, I know we
19 all can be successful. The Arctic is a vast, vibrant,
20 and diverse area that comes with unique challenges as
21 well as huge opportunities to better the lives of our
22 people who live in it. Collaboration is difficult, and

1 it takes time, but the outcome will be -- but the
2 outcome will be a land that has potential and peaceful
3 sustainable both human and wildlife communities well
4 into the future.

5 I will end this quote from esteemed Iñupiat leader
6 Joe Upicksoun, who guided our people and Alaska Natives
7 across the State through the turbulent Native Claims
8 process. He said this back in 1970, but it applies
9 just as well as today's fight, which will go to show
10 you just how long we, as Iñupiat, have been fighting
11 for self-determination over our own resources. "We
12 realize that each of you has pride in your own land.
13 By an accident of nature, right now the eyes of the
14 Nation and the world are centered on the North Slope.
15 Without intending to belittle your land, the real
16 reason for this entire settlement is the oil, which by
17 accident is on our land, not yours."

18 Here is a request for BLM. Given the alternatives
19 put forth in the Draft EIS, I support Alternative B,
20 with room for some amendments.

21 Number one, we need access into the refuge in the
22 summertime for subsistence.

1 Number two, we need access to our allotments.

2 Number three, we need a vocal village liaison.

3 Number four, we need a baseline village health
4 assessment.

5 Number five, we need a legitimate economic
6 opportunity and potential for local jobs.

7 Number six, we need you to include current animal
8 and subsistence use studies, not data that is almost 20
9 years old.

10 Thank you for this opportunity to speak. But also
11 I would like to -- I am very proud to be up here, to be
12 for my people. I had my youngest son ask me, "How come
13 you're not coming home?" and I told him, you know, I'm
14 going down to Washington, D.C., to -- to do this
15 testimony hearing for the BLM to show them that this is
16 our land. This ain't Gwich'in land, this is Iñupiat
17 land. They are trying to take something that doesn't
18 belong to them."

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. GALEN GILBERT: Hi. My name is Galen Gilbert.

22 I am the First Chief of Arctic Village. And I was

1 standing talking to you guys like over a week ago, not
2 too long ago. But I'm here on behalf of my people,
3 Arctic Village. It's a population of 150, 160 people.
4 In November, I was elected by all of them for me to run
5 as chief because they had faith in me and they knew I
6 could be a good leader. And here I am today literally
7 talking for them to stop the drilling at ANWR.

8 Elders. Somebody did mention in their speech
9 here, but I totally forgot, but you know when something
10 happens to the caribou, the elders, they literally get
11 sick. I mean, even the health aide, who's my cousin,
12 she treated -- when there was no caribou for like 3
13 months, she treated like all the elders because they
14 didn't have their native food, they were sick. And
15 that's just another thing to think about the caribou
16 has affected.

17 And also it's global warming here. I think it's
18 already enough that we're dealing with global warming
19 because we've seen a lot of changes, and I myself
20 experienced it. And it's -- it is pretty (inaudible)
21 subsistence lifestyle that we -- we're still struggling
22 going forward, and we just, in the words of my grandpa

1 (inaudible) we really don't know what's going to
2 happen, we don't, and -- but what he said is just in
3 his way he's telling us how to be prepared for
4 anything, and that's talking about, you know, stock up
5 on food, and, you know, stock up on food, you know, the
6 plants could get shipped -- shipped -- not get shipped
7 (inaudible), and that (inaudible), you know, no, if the
8 cities -- if the (inaudible) did get stopped, then the
9 shipment (inaudible), but I think our city will have --
10 you know, go (inaudible) faster, right? So (inaudible)
11 for you guys and all, but we'll still have the caribou
12 hopefully and then we'll have food. And us, as people,
13 our generosity, we'll be there, and if you guys
14 (inaudible) we'll help you with if you guys, you know,
15 needed it. That's just what kind of people we are;
16 animal or not, you know, we would help you. That's the
17 kind of people we are.

18 And (inaudible) chief to me (inaudible) you could
19 say (inaudible) chief in my village (inaudible), but it
20 got changed to two, but all those years was one, and I
21 experienced a lot of chief -- chiefs. Some are bad,
22 some are good. And -- but (inaudible) it's just they

1 were the men, you know, they were the man, and they had
2 -- they had to (inaudible), they had to (inaudible),
3 and I always respected that.

4 And now (inaudible) but me being chief now, but,
5 you know, now that I am, it's -- takes -- it's -- it's
6 a lot of work. I'm serious, it's a lot of work, but
7 I'm young, I can do it. And I (inaudible) a lot of
8 work (inaudible) heart. And I like to think that I
9 know how to do my subsistence lifestyle, but I know I'm
10 still learning, I am. And I'll always go on.

11 I have three daughters at home, and my oldest one,
12 she's turning 8 on Friday, on Valentine's Day. My
13 second one is 4 years old. And my third one is 2 years
14 old. My youngest, she is really sick, and I almost --
15 I almost stayed home, I almost didn't come on this
16 trip, but my (inaudible) said she heard about this
17 testimony thing, and, you know, I almost stayed home
18 for my baby, but then she said to me, "Galen, you have
19 to go. This is important. Our (inaudible) future
20 relies on this." So that made me think, and I said,
21 "You're right."

22 So here I am. I left my three girls, my wife, and

1 I have a lot of dogs, too, and, you know, my -- with
2 the help of my oldest daughter, and my wife is watching
3 the dogs, and -- but our baby, that's already a lot of
4 work on her. And obviously she misses me, and I miss
5 her, too, real bad.

6 But -- and, yeah, the past -- our past with this
7 caribou -- caribou has been there for us for thousands
8 of years, and they are the main reason why we're here
9 today and the people we are today. And today we still
10 carry that torch. And (inaudible) we'll go by the old
11 days than the new days. We'll still stay by the old
12 days. But, you know, change is like everything else,
13 (inaudible), you know, it goes to us.

14 And caribou, yeah, you know, caribou is our
15 future. I mean, I -- you know, every fall I take my
16 family up to a mountain in the fall time (inaudible)
17 have a camp. It's (inaudible) camp. And family
18 members go up there, our daughters, we'll camp out up
19 there, and we hunt caribou. We (inaudible) all that.
20 And I've got to say my girls love it. And (inaudible)
21 I couldn't -- I couldn't go on without my girls not
22 having (inaudible) because (inaudible) have what I had

1 growing up. And (inaudible) my grandfather (inaudible)
2 took me everywhere with him, everywhere. He taught me
3 so much, the right and wrong, you know, and he
4 (inaudible) priest (inaudible), he's a priest
5 (inaudible) there, and he brought me up more than my
6 father did because my father was just there to look
7 after me, and God bless his soul, that he went through
8 some tough times to care of me and my sister.

9 And caribou is our future, you know. And I just
10 can't imagine, I just can't, life without caribou will
11 not work, you know.

12 And I'd just like to end this by saying
13 (inaudible) we'll keep fighting, you know. If ANWR
14 opens, you're going to have to do it over our dead
15 bodies. Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. JERRALD JOHN: All right. Before I start, I
18 want everybody to raise your hands, just one hand, come
19 on, raise them. You harvested a moose before, right?
20 You showed me your picture. And as a native hunter,
21 you're going to have to feed these people. All right?
22 That's just the way we are. You're going to have to

1 feed them and help them. And it's just the way a --
2 it's just a part of our life.

3 My name is Jerrald John, and I'm an elected
4 leader, a hunter, a gatherer, and a provider from a
5 small Tribe in the southern part of the Brooks Range.
6 All you people, you guys know me. This is the second
7 time I have to come here.

8 What you guys are doing is wrong. Just stop and
9 think. We told you about the story of our recent hunt
10 up there in Arctic Village. And due to the government
11 shutdown and the unpredictable future, we, as a Tribal
12 council, discussed and coordinated four hunting groups
13 and sending them south out 45 miles south of Arctic
14 Village and 45 below weather to look and to harvest
15 caribou. Within days, we had 18 caribou within our
16 community hall. All members of our community -- the
17 young, the youth, the elders -- everyone taught each
18 other, as we always do.

19 We do this because of the threat of another
20 government shutdown. The last shutdown hit us pretty
21 hard. Now we don't really have to worry because we've
22 got meat in our freezers. We don't have cars out there

1 blowing hot air on us to keep us warm. We're pretty
2 much exposed. I, for one, as an elected leader, had to
3 stay behind and take care of things back in town, such
4 as taking names, taking gas, looking over rides. And
5 if we had no rides, we would use dogs. You know, we
6 would literally have our dogs pack our meat back to
7 town for us.

8 If you guys want data on how we harvest caribou,
9 you guys must first come back to Arctic and spend weeks
10 with us, you know, go out onto the land and see how we
11 live. Most caribou right now are pregnant, all female
12 caribou, 85,000, 100,000 strong. Come mid-April, all
13 caribou will be heading back up there to the calving
14 grounds, to the coastal plains. I don't think you'll
15 ever find that in your books.

16 We, the Gwich'in people, we make countless
17 documentaries on our life, on the way of our life, and
18 about 75 percent of our food we eat is caribou. I
19 myself and it's in a museum about this fight right now.
20 Caribou is our main source of food. We rely on it
21 heavily. Our people depend upon it.

22 We still practice our traditional ways no matter

1 what happens, if oil development and the refuge
2 threatens our very existence. We still tan animal
3 skins. You guys saw our finished product. We're still
4 trapping. We're still doing man-made fish traps with
5 willows. We all know that caribou can't talk for
6 themselves, so that's why I am here talking for them.
7 For some of the last -- some of the latest carbon
8 dating saying we were up there for 35,000 years, and it
9 will be that way, it will be that way for our life, for
10 35,000 years, and it will stay that way for the next
11 35,000 years.

12 I, for one, harvested my first caribou when I was
13 9, and that's when I was introduced to this fight, and
14 I will continue to fight now and to protect my way of
15 life, and I will continue to fight your guys'
16 government until we win.

17 Thank you.

18 (Applause and cheering.)

19 MS. KARA MORIARTY: Good afternoon. Thank you for
20 the opportunity to testify today. For the record, my
21 name is Kara Moriarty, and I'm the president and CEO of
22 the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, commonly referred

1 to as AOGA. We are the professional trade association
2 that represents the majority of oil and gas companies
3 that are exploring, producing, refining, and
4 transporting oil and gas in the State of Alaska.

5 I am here today to express our long support for
6 responsible development in the coastal plain, which is
7 like the majority of Alaskans. Still today, over two-
8 thirds of Alaskans support development of the coastal
9 plain. Just this past month, in January of 2019, a
10 survey was conducted of over 500 Alaskans with 64
11 percent statewide continuing to support this
12 development.

13 The oil and gas industry has a long history in the
14 State. Since statehood, we have contributed almost
15 \$160 billion unadjusted for inflation through different
16 forms of royalties and taxes. We still provide up to
17 one-third of all jobs in the State can be attributed
18 back to the industry, and one-third of all private
19 sector wages. No other industry in Alaska comes close
20 to that level of economic impact.

21 I can also speak firsthand to what the industry
22 has done for the residents and communities of the North

1 Slope. I came to Alaska over 22 years ago as a school
2 teacher in Atqasuk. What drew me to the North Slope
3 over offers in Fort Yukon and the Chugach School
4 District in Alaska was that the North Slope was one of
5 the richest school districts in the nation. I didn't
6 know it at the time, but that is because of the
7 property tax that they generate from oil and gas
8 facilities. What did that mean? Well, of course, I
9 got a biggest paycheck. But more importantly, when I
10 showed up in the village in 1996, we had three
11 computers for 15 students. We had the best technology.
12 I was able to have pen pals via video conference over
13 22 years ago with the first and second graders in Point
14 Hope. I had the best curriculum and I had the best
15 equipment and I had the best students.

16 A little bit about the history of ANWR. The
17 Arctic National Refuge was formed in 1960 at 9 million
18 acres, and we've heard today that ANILCA expanded that
19 to over 19 million acres in 1980 with over 90 percent
20 being permanently protected as wilderness.

21 In ANILCA, there is a section called 1002.
22 Section 1002 of this Federal law says that at some

1 point, a small portion should be designated as
2 potential oil and gas development. How small? When we
3 talk about the area designated for leasing that could
4 be limited to 2,000 acres, that is about the size of
5 ranch I grew up on in South Dakota. But for an example
6 that may be more relevant to those of you here, Dulles
7 International Airport is 12,000 acres. Up a little
8 further to the north at Baltimore International
9 Airport, that airport is 3,596 acres. And back home,
10 the Ted Stevens International Airport is 4,608 acres.

11 So why are we even discussing more oil and gas
12 development as renewables continue to play a larger
13 role in the energy market? The reason is the U.S.
14 Energy Information Administration, or EIA, predicts
15 that by 2050, petroleum and other liquids, followed
16 closely by natural gas, will remain, by large
17 magnitudes, the most consumed energy source in the U.S.
18 The International Energy Administration predicts that
19 over 50 percent of the globe's energy by 2050 will
20 still come from the traditional sources of oil and
21 natural gas.

22 So this oil from the coastal plain is a very

1 important factor in meeting future U.S. demand, but if
2 the demand for oil and gas is going to be there at
3 least 30 years from now, why the coastal plain? In
4 different studies that the government has conducted
5 over the years, the average potential is roughly -- the
6 mean is 10 to 11 billion barrels of oil. How does that
7 compare? Today, over the last 40 years, we've produced
8 17 billion barrels of oil and counting from the North
9 Slope. So this has been described by the Federal
10 Government as the most significant oil potential in the
11 U.S., and it is clearly the largest onshore play on
12 Federal land in the entire country.

13 Production from the coastal plain will
14 significantly reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil. The
15 EIA predicts that from 2031 to 2050, when production
16 would finally come online from the coastal plain, it
17 would reduce U.S. expenditures on crude oil and
18 petroleum product imports by almost \$600 billion.

19 The Draft EIS is an important step toward
20 fulfilling Congress' directive that the Secretary of
21 Interior establish a competitive oil and gas program
22 for the leasing, development, production, and

1 transportation of oil and gas in and from the coastal
2 plain.

3 As the EIA projections demonstrate, the
4 implementation of Congress' mandate for the coastal
5 plain is key to reducing future U.S. reliance on
6 foreign oil.

7 Alaska's oil and gas industry has a history of
8 safe, effective, and environmentally responsible
9 development of Alaska and America's Arctic spanning
10 almost five decades. This record of development on
11 Alaska's North Slope and associated offshore areas
12 provides strong support for BLM's proposed leasing
13 program of the coastal plain.

14 I bought an example with me, this chart, this map,
15 that demonstrates that development today does not occur
16 the same way as it did 40 years ago. In the 1970s, a
17 typical oil pad would be approximately 65 acres above
18 ground, and the drilling areas underground would extend
19 about 3 miles. Today, the surface area has shrunk to
20 about 12 acres above ground, but with the advancement
21 of technologies and cutting-edge drilling techniques,
22 which, frankly, have been pioneered in the State of

1 Alaska, the drilling now extends up to 55 miles
2 underground. But we're not stopping there. There is a
3 new advancement with a new drilling rig owned by the
4 Interior Alaska Native Corporation of Doyon that we
5 expect extended-reach drilling will expand another 100
6 miles, so for a total of 154 square miles underground
7 while maintaining only a 12-acre gravel pad on the
8 surface.

9 In regards to the Draft EIS, in general, the Draft
10 EIS is well organized and provides a thorough analysis
11 of reasonably foreseeable impacts of a coastal plain
12 leasing program. BLM has made great strides to prepare
13 a Draft EIS that is responsive to Congress' directive
14 while analyzing anticipated effects of future
15 development consistent with the requirements of the
16 National Environmental Policy Act, or our favorite,
17 NEPA.

18 It is essential that BLM's EIS evaluate
19 alternatives that meet the purpose and need established
20 by Congress. Although we are still evaluating the
21 alternatives, and we will prepare detailed written
22 comments by the March deadline, it does appear that

1 some alternatives could make actual development of the
2 coastal plain challenging because some of the
3 alternatives would not allow or support integrated
4 development. Any alternatives that do not allow for
5 the eventual development, production, and
6 transportation of oil and gas in and from the coastal
7 plain would not meet the requirements established by
8 Congress, and, therefore, would not meet the need and
9 purpose of the EIS. We encourage BLM to continue to
10 carefully consider all detailed written comments and to
11 continue to proceed with the preparation of a final
12 EIS.

13 As the representative of industry, I often get the
14 question, Will the companies participate? I don't
15 know. We can't guarantee participation in any lease
16 sale, whether it's in the coastal plain, other Federal
17 areas across the country, or even in our State lands,
18 but I can guarantee that my member companies are going
19 to continue to participate in lease sales. The demand
20 requires that companies continue to build reserves of
21 oil and gas to meet the energy needs across the globe.

22 As a mother of three little Alaskans, I want

1 Alaska to be protected as much as anybody else, but as
2 I mentioned, more importantly, as a former teacher in
3 Atqasuk, with my former first and second graders, now
4 adults -- yes, I'm getting old -- they're adults in
5 villages across the Slope, they are now parents with
6 first and second graders. They want a strong economic
7 future where their subsistence lifestyle and cultural
8 values can be maintained. It's important to them, so
9 it's important to me.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. DONETTA TRITT: Hello. My name is Donetta
13 Tritt. I am from Arctic Village, but I live in
14 Fairbanks.

15 So like my first cousin, Galen Gilbert, Chief
16 Gilbert, said, there are elders who are -- who have
17 suffered because we saw what could potentially happen
18 if we don't have caribou. To go a little more into
19 that, as a health care provider, my sister had to look
20 at the correlating problems within these leaders and
21 why all of them were getting sick and they were
22 suffering from all of these gastric issues, and they

1 were violent. I explained that in Fairbanks. And the
2 biggest -- the biggest connection that I came to was
3 that their diet was Spam and macaroni and cheese, and
4 they didn't have their native good because we had none
5 for 3 months. And so this is what we're facing. One
6 of the most vulnerable populations, our elders, will be
7 suffering.

8 I want to thank Mr. Solomon for his comments
9 towards the Gwich'in. I don't know which ones were
10 directed at us because we did not move you to three
11 locations, but we are people, and I agree. And when
12 they go after your whale, we're going to be there with
13 you fighting because we respect you. That's respect.

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. DONETTA TRITT: We've had oil revenues in our
16 State for the past 40 years, since the '70s. It's no
17 big news. Tell me then, why do Alaska Natives have the
18 highest suicide rate in the Nation? We are the ones
19 that suffer. We haven't benefited from this. We have
20 40 years of data that show that. Open your eyes. Step
21 back from the greed. I'm asking to be allowed to be
22 Gwich'in and to always continue the way we always have,

1 sharing that land with our Iñupiat brother and sisters.
2 It's hard coming up here, and I commend all of you for
3 coming up here. It's scary. I'm shaking in my boots.
4 But I want to thank you guys for listening.

5 But one of the issues, one of the many, I have is
6 that there is no direct impact to the native people in
7 the EIS, and that's completely false. You can get the
8 data. Go get it. Take the time. We're here. You can
9 come out and hunt with us. We'll feed you. Get the
10 right numbers. It does affect us.

11 As for the calving grounds, the unique situation
12 is that it's the birthplace for these -- these female
13 cow caribous. My background is in childbirth. I'm a
14 birth doula, so I have the privilege of being next to
15 women bring life into the world. It's a powerful,
16 powerful process. It's beautiful. I don't ever leave
17 the same person I am; I leave better.

18 The coastal plain is where the caribou bring life
19 into the world. No amount of planning will make it
20 okay or safe. We dedicate entire wards to women who
21 are giving birth because it's a vulnerable process.
22 You can't do anything. You have to focus on giving

1 birth to your baby, your new life. We would never
2 allow construction, loud noises, to be on one end of a
3 maternity ward while we expect women to have safe,
4 healthy babies on the other end with those loud noises.
5 That's exactly what you're doing to these caribou.

6 Birth is beautiful, but it's fragile for all walks
7 of life and all spirits.

8 So I just want to end with, I don't want to go on
9 too long, that an elder told us that we may not be rich
10 with money, but we are rich in the knowledge of who we
11 are, and we're Gwich'in, and that's threatened right
12 now.

13 Thank you. Mähsi'.

14 (Applause and cheering.)

15 MR. RICHARD GLENN: Good afternoon. Thank you for
16 having this hearing. And I commend the panel for the
17 difficult logistics of traveling through our State and
18 our many communities for this important hearing. And
19 we were weighing in at this last hearing so that you
20 know exactly where our people stand.

21 My name is Richard Glenn. I work for Arctic Slope
22 Regional Corporation. We have 13,000 shareholders. We

1 have formed an association with all of the village
2 corporations and Tribes and municipalities in our
3 region, a nonprofit organization called the Voice of
4 the Arctic. The Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat have
5 passed a resolution supporting the people of Kaktovik,
6 supporting safe responsible exploration and development
7 of the coastal plain of ANWR.

8 Specifically, we support a modified warm -- a
9 modified form of Alternative B in the Draft EIS. We
10 support amending this alternative to address specific
11 community concerns of the residents of Kaktovik, year-
12 round subsistence access to the coastal plain and
13 community impact benefits to the village, much the same
14 way NPRA villages are -- are receiving impact date
15 today.

16 In case I forget, I have it written on my phone,
17 we stand with Kaktovik. The story is simple. And it's
18 in this decision, in this process, we're united like we
19 have been few other times in our history. And Glen
20 said it best when he said we don't speak for everybody,
21 but we speak for most.

22 ASRC strongly believes that all voices should be

1 heard throughout this process. There must be a balance
2 between preservation and responsible development. ASRC
3 contends that special attention should be given to the
4 community of Kaktovik and that exploration and
5 development, by its very own nature, is self-limiting.
6 When you put, in addition to that, the limitation of
7 acreage that's mandated by the act that authorized the
8 opening of the coastal plain, it's limited even
9 further.

10 So in addition to the specific support of a
11 modified Alternative B, I question the large swaths of
12 no surface facilities. There's not going to be surface
13 facilities everywhere when you're limited to the 2,000-
14 acre footprint. It seems like an unfortunate
15 consequence of a well-intended practice.

16 This is a part of a public lands practice
17 decision-making process that goes on all the time. It
18 takes community involvement, advocacy, standing up for
19 what you think is right, and seeing the process through
20 to the end, and ASRC is continuing to be with you every
21 step of the way.

22 So thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 CHIEF TIMOTHY ROBERTS: All right. I just want to
3 start off by thanking everyone that has come up here
4 speaking on our behalf and your own Tribe's behalf.
5 This topic here, all of this, I honestly didn't think
6 it was real some years ago, I just thought it was a
7 hoax, someone trying to scare us out of our homeland or
8 something like that, but I know it's real now, and I've
9 partly read the EIS, and I understand that there are
10 some things left out of it that some of us would like
11 to be in there.

12 And if you would just take a look at this picture
13 here and imagine it just getting developed, I mean,
14 getting full developed. It just -- I'm really in awe
15 by this honestly because I'm over 22 years old, I've
16 lived in the village all my life. I'm an elected
17 official now, the first chief of the Venetie Village
18 Council since last September the 29th. And I'm the
19 youngest chief Venetie has elected, and I believe
20 there's a reason for that, and they all do, too. There
21 are less than 200 people with the votes. So yes.

22 Again, my name is Timothy Roberts. And so when

1 you guys hear Gwich'in or any Native American in the
2 State of Alaska say that we live off of the land,
3 they're not just saying that because they lived there
4 for all their lives, they say that because they mean
5 that. They absolutely do live off of the land. Take
6 for example this vest or anyone else's beautiful vest
7 out there in the crowd. These come from the animals
8 that provide for us, that the land provides for us. I
9 can go on and on about this, but I probably have enough
10 already. But I am, say the Gwich'in and the Venetie
11 Tribal Government and Village Councils of Venetie and
12 Arctic Village strongly disagree with developments in
13 the coastal plain. Despite it being some hundred yards
14 from our lands, it will affect us. That's no gimmick,
15 we all know that. I mean, even with the few pipelines
16 that are in the State today, they are affecting us
17 today, scrambling different herds to blend in with
18 another herd, and sending coastal birds more inland or
19 whatnot. We have seen some strange -- I have seen some
20 strange things behind my backyard in my village. And
21 Arctic Village, for example, polar bears. Who sees
22 polar bears in Arctic Village? That's -- that's wild.

1 But yes. I've lived in the village all my life,
2 most of us have. And I tried to move into the city
3 once; I couldn't do it. I moved back as fast as I
4 could. Yes, with -- I don't know how much I can stress
5 it to you guys that what this development will do to
6 us. Economically, it may be appropriate for some, but
7 for others, our livelihood it will affect. Imagine us
8 not being able to make vests anymore or snowshoes
9 because we don't have willows anymore or there's no
10 healthy boombush (ph) running around anymore. That's
11 what I'm getting at.

12 And the Gwich'in of all different parts in the
13 States, Canada, we're all dependent on the land. If
14 the land isn't healthy, we aren't, and that's -- that's
15 the bottom line.

16 So once again I strongly consider you guys -- or
17 for you guys to reconsider this option, and with all my
18 heart, I -- well, Balash, gents, hear us out.

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause and cheering.)

21 MS. MARJORIE GEMMILL: Hello. My name is Marjorie
22 Gemmill. I'm Neetsaii Gwich'in from Arctic Village,

1 Alaska. My community is located on the southern border
2 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. My people, the
3 Gwich'in Athabaskans throughout Alaska and Canada, have
4 coexisted with the Porcupine caribou herd for thousands
5 of years. Gwich'ins rely on the caribou for food,
6 culture, and spiritual reasons. Our culture revolves
7 around the caribou, our traditional dances, our songs,
8 and the food nourishes our bodies.

9 If there is oil drilling in the refuge, we will
10 not be able to subsist off the land anymore. The
11 caribou will get sick. The place where they have their
12 babies will no longer be safe for them. As a result,
13 the caribou will have nowhere to go.

14 I grew up in a family of hunters, my brothers. My
15 brother Jerrald John is here with me. I learned at an
16 early age on how to -- my brothers learned at an early
17 age how to properly hunt and respect the animals. My
18 dad is a hunter. My late husband, Danny Gemmill was a
19 hunter, and he taught my sons how to hunt when they
20 were 12 years old. And this is our culture, and this
21 is our way of life. It's not just our food source,
22 it's our Gwich'in way of life. And it doesn't matter

1 where my community resides, if it resides within the
2 refuge or not, we are on the boundaries of the Arctic
3 Refuge, and what matters is the protection of wildlife
4 within the refuge.

5 What I dream about is a healthy and safe
6 environment, clean environment, for my children and the
7 future generations. We need to ask ourselves, What are
8 we leaving behind for our kids? What are we doing to
9 make it safe and healthy for them? We need to do
10 better. We need to keep the land clean, pristine, and
11 untouched.

12 My family goes camping and hunting every fall. We
13 teach our youth how to hunt, how to gather plants and
14 berries, and there's no better feeling than to be out
15 on the land away from society. And it's like being in
16 paradise; that's how it feels when you're out there.
17 And this is what we're all talking about when we --
18 when we're speaking. And we're speaking from our heart
19 because this is our way of life, and we're not just
20 protesting drilling, you know, we're doing this because
21 -- to protect our culture and our people.

22 I also own land. I own 160 acres. It's a Native

1 allotment north of Arctic Village near the Arctic
2 Refuge. And I fully oppose any oil development in the
3 Arctic Refuge. And I'll restate what my Uncle Abraham
4 said: Tell me, why are you so interested in the Arctic
5 Refuge? Why don't you go drill somewhere else? Leave
6 the Arctic Refuge alone.

7 In my opinion, why destroy a beautiful wildlife
8 refuge for a few months of oil? It's not worth it.
9 This agenda of drill and destroy land is a joke and
10 driven by greed. You all say safe drilling. What
11 about no drilling?

12 (Applause and cheering.)

13 MS. MARJORIE GEMMILL: All this is a political
14 ploy to make Republicans look like they accomplished
15 something. What is the government going to do if there
16 is no more caribou? What are they going to do for us?
17 Nothing. Do you what lasts forever? Land. My elders
18 have taught me that the land is forever, and money is
19 short term. And I will continue to speak up against
20 oil drilling for my people and my children. And the
21 best thing that John Fritzson (ph) did for me and my
22 people is to secure 1.8 million acres of land for us

1 instead of money.

2 So mähsi' cho.

3 (Applause and cheering.)

4 MS. TONYA GARNETT: I guess it's my turn now.

5 (Speaking Alaska Native language.) My name is Tonya

6 Garnett. I'm from Arctic Village. I don't mean to be

7 (inaudible) my back, but you guys probably heard enough

8 from me. (Laughs.)

9 But I'm from Arctic Village. I grew up in Arctic
10 Village. I work for my Tribal government, the Native
11 Village of Venetie Tribal Government. We don't speak
12 for anybody else. We don't speak for anyone else. We
13 only speak for our Tribe.

14 I am a Tribal member of the Native Village of
15 Venetie Tribal Government. We are Neetsaii Gwich'in.
16 And as Gwich'in people, we stay united in protection of
17 the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to protect the
18 caribou. And we will always stand together and we will
19 always stand to protect the caribou because caribou is
20 our life. We have been saying since 1988 caribou is
21 our life, and it's because we've lived with them since
22 time immemorial. We've lived with them and we've

1 always been the stewards of our land, and this is what
2 we're doing now, is we've always managed our own game,
3 fish and game, our own resources traditionally, and
4 right now ours is being threatened.

5 And we might not be as close to the coastal plain
6 as other communities, but we are the second closest
7 village. And Arctic Village is the second closest
8 village to the calving grounds, to the birthing
9 grounds. And we have a direct correlation to the
10 caribou herd. And we've always respected the caribou,
11 the land, and we -- we hope to continue to do that for
12 thousands more years.

13 And we only speak on what we know and who we are.
14 We come to you as simple humble people, and we come to
15 tell you about who we are. We still live in a
16 community -- there's only -- you can only fly in and
17 out. There is no -- no road system. And we still live
18 a traditional Gwich'in life. We still go up to the
19 mountain.

20 I grew up in Arctic Village, and we go to the
21 mountain. We camp every fall and we hunt and we
22 harvest caribou to sustain our communities. And when

1 we get caribou, we share it with everybody. We share
2 it with everybody in our communities and we trade it
3 with the other communities. We share it with our
4 elders. We share it with -- we shared with BLM when
5 they came up. They probably came up four or five
6 times. They have ate caribou meat. They have danced
7 with us. We're hospitable. We're welcoming. And if
8 anybody comes up there, we will always welcome them and
9 invite them. We are respectful people, and we were
10 taught to always respect everybody.

11 In 1988, when the threat became real and we first
12 -- we -- or we gathered in Arctic Village, and we never
13 gathered in over 100 years, the whole Gwich'in Nation,
14 including Canada's side and Alaska's side. I was 9
15 years old at that first gathering. I grew up with
16 this. I know this. And this is our life.

17 Today we bring our Tribal leaders, we bring our
18 chiefs, we bring our councils, we bring our second
19 chief, we bring our elder, we bring youth, and we bring
20 -- we always -- we come here to fight, we come here to
21 educate, and even though we have to leave our families,
22 I left my 9-year-old son, we do it because it's

1 important to us. This is real to us. It's our
2 livelihood is at stake and our way of life.

3 And so even since -- since the passage of the TAPS
4 Act we've been through a lot. And we continue to fight
5 and we continue to show up no matter what. Like
6 Marjorie said, she lost -- since the passage of the
7 TAPS Act, we've really had to step up our game as a
8 Tribal government and fight. She has lost her husband.
9 Galen has lost his mother-in-law. I lost my son's --
10 son's father. We lost our cousin. We've had health
11 issues. Three months ago I had a stroke. But we're
12 still here today because this is important to us. This
13 is important to our people. And we stand here and we
14 tell you we -- we need -- we -- we are so grateful that
15 everybody gives help, but we stand here and we only
16 represent our Tribe. We don't represent anybody else.
17 We don't speak for anybody else.

18 We have our culture. We know who we are. We know
19 where we came from. And we want to continue to live
20 there for thousands -- a thousand more years.

21 And then we speak for those of us that came before
22 us, those that will come after, and those -- and those

1 that can't speak for themselves, the caribou. And we
2 come here and we speak for our youth, our kids, our
3 elders. And we hope you stand strong and protect our
4 way of life.

5 Màhsi' cho.

6 (Applause and cheering.)

7 MR. GEOFFREY HASKETT: Thank you. Hello, Greg,
8 Ted. Good to see you all, gentlemen. If it's okay
9 with you, I'm going to face this way.

10 So my name is Geoffrey Haskett, and I'm president
11 of the National Wildlife Refuge Association. We work
12 all over the country on wildlife refuges from Hawaii to
13 Florida to Alaska to Maine, but the Arctic National
14 Wildlife Refuge is particularly important to us. And
15 I'll make it real clear, I've heard lots of eloquent
16 speeches, and I hear some people call it ANWR, some
17 people call it Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We're
18 always very careful to call it the Arctic National
19 Wildlife Refuge because just calling it an acronym
20 makes it seem less important what's happening there.

21 Prior to working for the Refuge Association, I was
22 a regional director for the Fish and Wildlife Service

1 in Alaska. I've been to the refuge many, many times.
2 I can tell you from very personal experience, it's one
3 of the most magnificent and extraordinary places
4 anywhere in the world. The Arctic Refuge is an
5 untouched place. It is truly one of the very few
6 wildernesses left in the United States of America. The
7 Gwich'in people live in the refuge. They know the land
8 better than any of us here. Their footprint does not
9 impact the movement of wildlife or change the
10 topography, and movement of water and migration
11 patterns of animals. We need to listen to them.

12 There comes a point in our country when we have to
13 ask ourselves, When do we stop development and reserve
14 the few remaining wild places for our children and our
15 grandchildren? The Arctic Refuge, and particularly the
16 coastal plain, is home to polar bears and caribou and
17 gray wolves and Arctic foxes and walrus, ringed seals.
18 There are 200 species of birds you see on these rich
19 nesting grounds, and these birds then migrate to the
20 other 49 States. For many of these animals, the refuge
21 is a haven, it is their only home. They have nowhere
22 else to go.

1 If BLM sets up drilling operations in the coastal
2 plain, all of this will change. We will lose that rich
3 abundance of wildlife no matter how carefully you think
4 you can drill. The machinery required for drilling,
5 the trucks, the installation, the roads: all of them
6 will impact this area for generations to come. We
7 oppose the sale of leases in the Arctic Refuge, and we
8 will do everything in our power to stop it.

9 Thank you for being here today.

10 (Applause and cheering.)

11 MS. ANNA JANE JOYNER: Hi. Thank you for having
12 me today. And thank you to all the Gwich'in who have
13 come from so far away to share your stories. I am
14 honored and humbled to be here in your presence.

15 My name is Anna Jane Joyner, and I'm a climate
16 activist. I'm also the host of a podcast called "No
17 Place Like Home," a show that gets to the heart of
18 climate change. I'm here today to stand in solidarity
19 with the Gwich'in and to share my heartfelt opposition
20 to drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
21 I'm the daughter of an evangelical pastor, and my faith
22 has always been a driving force of my activism. These

1 days, I am blessed to share the Episcopal tradition
2 with many of my brothers and sisters who are Gwich'in.
3 You may not know it, but the first commandment in the
4 Bible is to steward the earth, Genesis 2:15: "The Lord
5 God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to
6 work and to keep it."

7 I believe that this life, this Earth, is a
8 miraculous gift from God that we were commanded to
9 serve and protect. It's God's masterpiece, God's
10 creation. The central tenets of Christianity are,
11 "Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all thy heart
12 and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is
13 the first and greatest commandment. And the second is
14 like unto it: Thou shalt love your neighbor as
15 yourself." It's hard to love the Creator if you're
16 harming God's masterpiece. And it's hard to love our
17 neighbors if we're destroying their sacred land,
18 community, and culture.

19 As we've heard today, the Gwich'in's lives are
20 integrally connected to and dependent upon the
21 Porcupine caribou and to that sacred birthplace of
22 life, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The

1 Gwich'in are already experiencing severe harm from
2 fossil fuels. As the ice melts due to climate change,
3 their ancestral way of life becomes far more dangerous
4 and more difficult.

5 I've never been to Alaska, though I'd love to go
6 one day, but I do have two very personal connections to
7 this fight. The first is that I, too, live on the
8 frontlines of climate change on the Gulf Coast of
9 Alabama, where my family has lived, loved, and thrived
10 on the water for six generations, over a century now.
11 Perdido Beach is a small town of 500 people that's
12 surrounded by the sea on three sides. We're already
13 experiencing unprecedented hot Gulf waters, nearly a
14 foot of sea level rise, and monster storms that
15 terrorize us more and more every hurricane season. We
16 have also seen the immense destruction caused by nearby
17 oil drilling thanks to the BP oil spill, a catastrophe
18 our wildlife and communities are still suffering and
19 recovering from to this day.

20 It's not unlikely we'll lose my family's beloved
21 homeplace within my lifetime. If I choose to have
22 children, it's almost certain that we'll lose it within

1 theirs. When I sit with this reality about loss, it's
2 a feeling beyond heartbreak; there are simply no words.
3 Our family has only been on our land for just over a
4 century. The Gwich'in have been on theirs for tens of
5 thousands of years. I truly cannot imagine the pain
6 and anger they must be feeling right now. Their
7 courage is one of the most profound and humbling things
8 I've ever witnessed.

9 The other reason I am here is my mentor, a legend
10 of a man named Lenny Kohm. Lenny was a photo
11 journalist until he did a story on the Arctic, and when
12 he saw the devastation that oil and gas drilling were
13 causing, and he saw the Arctic National Wildlife
14 Refuge, and he befriended the Gwich'in, he decided he
15 could no longer be a journalist, he could no longer be
16 unbiased, he had to become an activist, and he spent
17 decades of his life working with Gwich'in elders in
18 communities going all around this country talking to
19 one person or 1,000, sharing how beautiful and sacred
20 this place is and how we should protect it.

21 He would be here today, but he passed away a few
22 years ago. Before he passed, he taught us a life

1 mantra that he learned from the Gwich'in, and that's
2 simply to show up and to do it in a good way. So I
3 came here today, I showed up for Lenny and for one of
4 the places and people he loved most in the world.

5 A vast majority of the Arctic is already open to
6 drilling. Why destroy this sacred place, this beloved
7 culture and community, for short-term profit? You have
8 an amazing opportunity to save the sacred place and to
9 protect some of our most vulnerable neighbors.

10 As Christians and people of goodwill of any
11 religion or spirituality, we are called to show up and
12 do it in a good way, and we are called to say no to
13 drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I
14 hope and pray you will join me in doing so.

15 Thank you.

16 (Applause and cheering.)

17 MS. DESIREE SORENSON-GROVES: Thank you so much
18 for the opportunity to comment. My name is Desiree
19 Sorenson-Groves. I'm the Vice President of Government
20 Affairs for the National Wildlife Refuge Association,
21 the only national nonprofit organization focused solely
22 on protecting and enhancing the National Wildlife

1 Refuge System for the benefit of the American people.

2 For the record, I want to express that while I
3 appreciate the BLM and its role as a vital land
4 manager, I strongly disagree that they are leading this
5 effort. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should not
6 be simply a cooperating agent -- agency in something as
7 enormous as opening the largest national wildlife
8 refuge to the destruction of oil and gas drilling. I
9 appreciate that Regional Director Siekaniec is here,
10 but it leads me to wonder how the BLM has the expertise
11 to present to the American people about the importance
12 of the crown jewel of the refuge system.

13 Your children and grandchildren will know what you
14 did as part of opening America's last frontier to
15 development. They will know your role in protecting or
16 destroying the Gwich'in people's way of life, your role
17 in allowing destructive impacts on imperiled species,
18 such as the polar bear, and ultimately your
19 participation to permanently protect or alter forever
20 one of the greatest and most important untouched
21 ecosystems left on planet Earth.

22 Did you know that the refuge system is the largest

1 system of lands and waters set aside for wildlife in
2 the world? If it were a country, it would be the size
3 of India.

4 Did you know that every President, including
5 President Trump, since Theodore Roosevelt has set aside
6 units of the refuge system for Americans to enjoy?
7 President Dwight Eisenhower set aside the Arctic
8 National Wildlife Refuge on December 6, 1960. If
9 leasing sales go through, you will be part of the only
10 administration in history to weaken the integrity of
11 the National Wildlife Refuge System.

12 Did you know that the refuge system spans 13 time
13 zones and, thus, the sun never actually sets on the
14 refuge system? Did you know that the refuges in Alaska
15 encompass 80 percent of the terrestrial acres in the
16 system? And did you know that the Arctic National
17 Wildlife Refuge is the largest of all of the refuges in
18 the country at 19 million acres?

19 Did you know that the Alaska National Interest
20 Lands Conservation Act, and when it was passed, it was
21 a compromise, that drilling would occur in Prudhoe Bay
22 and not in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? Did

1 you know that between Arctic Refuge and the adjacent
2 Arctic Ocean there are 700 kinds of plants, 200 species
3 of birds, 47 mammals, and 42 fish species? No other
4 protected area in the entire circumpolar north has such
5 abundant and diverse wildlife.

6 Did you know that this refuge is so important to
7 wildlife conservation not only in the United States but
8 to all the world, that in 2014, President Obama
9 transmitted a wilderness recommendation to Congress to
10 designate the entire refuge as a wilderness, the first
11 such transmittal from an administration to Congress for
12 the refuge system since 1974? Did you know that in
13 1997, lawmakers led by Don Young and John Dingell
14 passed a law mandating that the refuge system be
15 managed as a system and not as separate units? Oil and
16 gas drilling in the refuge's coastal plain will impact
17 every species in the United States and six continents.
18 What happens in the Arctic Refuge doesn't stay in the
19 Arctic Refuge; it has impacts to the entire refuge
20 system, and, thus, violates the Refuge System
21 Improvement Act. May you all not be visited by John
22 Dingell's ghost should you drill in the Arctic Refuge.

1 We at the Refuge Association stand with the
2 Gwich'in Nation and are staunchly opposed to drilling
3 in America's last frontier. I leave with you -- I
4 leave with you a quote. If you don't know who it's
5 from, you owe it to the American people to find out.

6 "I hope that the United States of America is not
7 so rich that she can afford to let these wildernesses
8 pass by or so poor that she cannot afford to keep
9 them."

10 Thank you for your time.

11 (Applause and cheering.)

12 MR. CHUCK FEERICK: Well, good afternoon, and
13 thank you very much for the opportunity to be here
14 today. I know it's difficult for you to sit in one
15 spot and listen to all of us, but we appreciate that.

16 My name is Chuck Feerick. I live in Fairfax,
17 Virginia. I'm an environmental engineer. And I've
18 worked in the oil industry for over 40 years, and 35 of
19 those years for a major oil company. And my primary
20 focus during those 35 years was to reduce the
21 environmental impact of our operations across North
22 America and Europe, and I think I was fairly successful

1 with that. So I've been involved in projects from the
2 Gulf of Mexico up to the oil sands in Alberta, from the
3 shores of Sicily to the fiords of Norway. And I
4 apologize, I have not reviewed the Draft Environmental
5 Impact Statement, but from the presentation this
6 afternoon, my sense is it's very comprehensive and
7 thorough.

8 I will say, though, based on my experience, that
9 there is no technology, there is no methodology, there
10 is no approach, there is no way that you can go into a
11 pristine environment like the Arctic National Wildlife
12 Refuge and not cause irreparable damage and extensive
13 desecration of the area. It cannot be done.

14 (Applause and cheering.)

15 MR. CHUCK FEERICK: So the coastal plain, it's the
16 biological heart of the refuge, and it supports
17 millions of migratory birds, thousands -- hundreds of
18 thousands of caribou, wolves, grizzly bears, polar
19 bears, muskoxen, you know, et cetera. And we've heard
20 that this coastal plain is really a small percentage of
21 the overall refuge, but it's the heart of the refuge,
22 and if you drive a stake through the heart, the body

1 can't survive.

2 And I want to just mention, too, another
3 constituency that's very important to kind of the
4 economic -- the economics of this country, and it's
5 sort of a quiet constituency, you don't hear much from
6 it, but it's the millions of naturalists and
7 birdwatchers, of which I am one, and we spend billions
8 of dollars really every year, we're buying optical
9 equipment, photographic equipment, we're taking trips
10 from, you know, the East Coast to the West Coast, we've
11 rafted the Canning River, we've hiked in the Brooks
12 Mountains. I mean, there's billions of dollars that we
13 contribute, you know, to the economy, and the reason
14 we're doing this is because these beautiful birds that
15 nest and breed in the coastal plain, they come our way
16 during the spring and fall migration, they spend winter
17 with us. You know, it's the turnstones and the
18 phalaropes and dunlins and the loons and the ducks. I
19 mean, that's what we come to see, and when those
20 nesting areas are gone, those birds are gone, and
21 that's going to, you know, impact -- it's going to
22 impact the economy. And oftentimes that's discounted

1 and not really considered, but I think it's very
2 important.

3 So I'm just going to again close my brief remarks
4 to say at some point we have to look towards the future
5 and turn away from this philosophy of exploiting, you
6 know, for short-term profits the resources that belong
7 to all living beings for all time.

8 (Applause and cheering.)

9 MR. CHUCK FEERICK: And the world -- the world is
10 awash in cheap oil and gas, and at the same time, it's
11 in the middle of a -- of a mass extinction, and we
12 really don't need more oil production; what we need are
13 more national wildlife refuges.

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause and cheering.)

16 REVEREND LENNOX YEARWOOD, JR.: Thank you. My
17 name is Reverend Lennox Yearwood, Jr. I am the
18 president of the Hip Hop Caucus. I'm here representing
19 that entity, but I'm also here kind of just mostly as
20 an American. For many years, I served as an officer in
21 the Chaplain Corps of the United States Air Force
22 Reserve, and for many years, I worked with young

1 people, hence, the Hip Hop Caucus, which is a great
2 organization. But one of the things for me that kind
3 of brought me to being aware of what we're doing in our
4 transition from fossil fuels to clean energy really is
5 where I'm from, and that's I'm from the great State of
6 Louisiana.

7 And being from Louisiana, which is a -- if you
8 haven't been, I'm sure you have, great food and all of
9 those great things, but we had something also called
10 Hurricane Katrina. And in Hurricane Katrina, we had a
11 situation where over 1,800 people, and particularly
12 poor people and people of color, were not only left
13 behind, but were killed in a catastrophic hurricane.

14 So that kind of led me on this (inaudible) where I
15 began to connect with other people around our great
16 country, which brought me in contact and actually took
17 me to Alaska and let me get in contact with the
18 Gwich'in people and to see the amazing State, I mean,
19 the drop-dead beautiful State of Alaska. I mean, it
20 was going through from Anchorage to Hope to other
21 places I mean literally was stunning.

22 Now, there are great parts of Louisiana, but I was

1 just blown away at how beautiful and seeing things that
2 were there in the roadway, from the caribou to seeing
3 the wildlife and the birds. And the first thing that
4 came to me was this, it was that, How could we begin to
5 destroy this amazing land? How could we destroy this
6 land that the Gwich'in people have called home for
7 centuries, to literally continue on the archaic,
8 literally old dinosaur-ridden industry of fossil fuels
9 when we can transition to clean energy?

10 And then I began to think that when I would come
11 here to the Bureau of Land Management and have this
12 conversation, which was great, I've got to tell you
13 that from my community also I'm an African American,
14 and when I told I was coming to BLM, they said, "Oh,
15 you're going to Black Lives Matter." I said, "No, no,
16 no, it's the Bureau of Land --

17 MALE SPEAKER: (Off microphone.)

18 (Laughter.)

19 REVEREND LENNOX YEARWOOD, JR.: -- in that aspect,
20 have this conversation, the one thing that I realized
21 and why I am here today is this: as a person of color,
22 clearly, as you know by my record of serving as an

1 officer, I love my country. Many people would wonder,
2 how could a black man serve in a country that once
3 enslaved their ancestors? And this is why: because I
4 believe that in our country, when we know what to do is
5 right, we make right decisions. We can do what is
6 right.

7 Now, I understand that there are probably some
8 forces even in this room today who are literally trying
9 to make sure that you can't do what you need to do, but
10 I ask you to kind of rise above those forces, dig
11 within your internal spirit to do what's right, not
12 only for the Gwich'in people, not only for the
13 wildlife, but for future generations. I stand before
14 you as a person of color who in this city was once
15 enslaved.

16 So let me paint that picture. Imagine me, now you
17 can be in front, and think about ending something
18 catastrophic like slavery and having a slave man before
19 you while the slave owners are telling you not to end
20 slavery. Time would tell you that you were on the
21 right side of history if you stood with the slave and
22 didn't go with the slave owner. You are now at that

1 point in history when you are at a point where it's not
2 only about equality, but it's about existence. When
3 there are those forces who are telling you to do the
4 wrong thing and you are in this moment, when you will
5 be judged by history.

6 And so let me conclude by saying this: I am so
7 glad that in our country black folk, white folk, brown
8 folk, male, female, straight, gay, saw how terrible it
9 was for us to have something like slavery, and they
10 literally gave their lives to stop it. You are now at
11 a moment when you have to make a courageous stand, not
12 only for you, but for the next generation, in which
13 they will look back upon this moment, this time, your
14 decision, and they will say either those brave men and
15 women stood up to one of the most powerful forces in
16 the fossil fuel industry and said enough is enough, or
17 -- or --

18 (Applause and cheering.)

19 REVEREND LENNOX YEARWOOD, JR.: -- or they will
20 look back upon this moment and say they weren't brave
21 enough to stand up.

22 Let me just say this, in 2119, 100 years from now,

1 none of us, not me or you, will be here, none of us
2 will be here 100 years from now, but your decision will
3 be.

4 (Applause and cheering.)

5 REVEREND LENNOX YEARWOOD, JR.: That's the immense
6 moment you sit in. And so I'm a chaplain. I don't
7 envy at all. I don't play the game where Democrat or
8 Republican. I'm here for humanity. I don't envy your
9 decision or your bravery, what you may have to do, but
10 history, if you decide to leave the Arctic simply
11 alone, future generations will look upon your decision
12 and say, "Well done. Well done, my good and faithful
13 servant."

14 I wish you the best in your decision. Godspeed.

15 (Applause and cheering.)

16 MR. MICHAEL WALD: That's a little hard to follow
17 up. My name is Michael Wald. I know several of you.
18 I live in rural Alaska with my family, and I run a
19 wilderness guiding company in the Arctic Refuge. I'm
20 concerned that I'll be out of business if there is
21 development on the coastal plain. Honestly, that's the
22 least of my concerns about BLM's proposed actions. My

1 concern is for the land and for the people who have
2 depended on it for generations are infinitely greater
3 than my personal stake in the future of the refuge.

4 But to have no analysis of the damage to
5 commercial guiding, a thriving and sustainable part of
6 the economy in northern Alaska, highlights the
7 inadequacies of the document I'm here to comment on.
8 I've spent every summer of my adult life on the refuge.
9 I've paddled the lagoons, walked across the coastal
10 plain, navigated pretty much all the rivers, napped on
11 the tundra, spent countless days teaching people from
12 around the world about the ecology of the place.

13 Unfortunately, the authors of this EIS don't have
14 that knowledge and on-the-ground experience. I read
15 the entire EIS. I've never done that before. I will
16 also make written comments detailing the many
17 deficiencies, unfounded assumptions, and contradictory
18 statements at a later date. It references rivers which
19 do not exist. It omits important resources entirely.
20 The first half of the document looks like it was cut
21 and paste from an EIS from another part of Alaska.

22 The Arctic Refuge is unique. It has unique

1 hydrology, climate, and wildlife. Assumptions based on
2 the Colville delta do not hold true in the Arctic
3 Refuge. This process is insufficient if BLM does not
4 even bother to characterize the place they propose to
5 turn from a timeless wilderness into an industrial
6 complex.

7 It's 200 miles from the Achilik River to the
8 Colville delta. It's unacceptable to assume that the
9 conditions in the refuge are the same as they are on
10 the Colville. I have been to both places, and they are
11 not.

12 But even for a moment, if I look past the personal
13 harm the development will do to me, and even if I look
14 past the hurried work on the EIS, if I look past the
15 lack of current geophysical data and the litany of
16 absurd assumptions proffered in the EIS, we would still
17 be in a no-win situation.

18 For all the inadequacies -- excuse me, I'm nervous
19 -- for all the inadequacies of the EIS, the conclusions
20 of each section are still fairly clear. Over and over,
21 the EIS states that oil and gas development on the
22 coastal plain will do irreparable harm. BLM concedes

1 that leasing has the potential to impact the Porcupine
2 caribou herd on a population level. The development
3 has the potential to further impair polar bears of the
4 southern Beaufort Sea. Drilling will have significant
5 impacts on subsistence for residents of Kaktovik and
6 the Gwich'in Nations. Environmental justice will not
7 be served. International treaty obligations will not
8 be met. The ecology of the coastal plain will be
9 forever damaged. These are the conclusions of the EIS
10 written in black and white by BLM. And yet none of
11 these alternatives mitigate these impacts in any
12 meaningful way. D2 is quite a bit better, but it falls
13 way short.

14 So I want to go on record again in saying the
15 coastal plain is not an appropriate place for oil
16 development. The consequences are too great and the
17 rewards-benefit too few. Alaska and our nation need to
18 move beyond oil. There should be no leasing in the
19 Arctic Refuge.

20 Thank you for your time. I appreciate being here.

21 (Applause and cheering.)

22 MR. JEFF CHEN: Hello. My name is Jeff Chen for

1 the record. I live in Anchorage, Alaska, and I would
2 like to defer my time to Bernadette Demientieff, from
3 the Gwich'in Steering Committee.

4 MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: Thank you. Can I ask
5 everybody that wants protection for the Arctic National
6 Wildlife Refuge to please stand?

7 (Standing.)

8 MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: I'm a proud Gwich'in
9 from Fort Yukon, Alaska. I decided to come up here
10 again to talk to you because you are trying to ask us
11 to defend 40,000 years of history in less than 42 hours
12 of hearings. How can you think that's okay?

13 Caribou have up to 30- to 40,000 calves in a 2-
14 week period. They travel thousands of miles so that
15 they can go to this area that they have been going to
16 for over a million years. There is nowhere else for
17 them to go. You guys already have 95 percent of the
18 Arctic. It's already open. Leave this alone. This
19 place is sacred to the Gwich'in. The oil underneath
20 means nothing to us. We do not want the money. We
21 want healthy environment, we want healthy ecosystem, we
22 want our children to be able to survive.

1 (Applause and cheering.)

2 MS. BERNADETTE DEMIENTIEFF: With over 70 percent
3 of Americans oppose -- want protection for the Arctic
4 Refuge, and Alaska thawing twice the rate as the rest
5 of the world, we have 33 coastal communities falling
6 into the ocean, and you are still coming into our
7 sacred lands, you're still coming in, and you're still
8 taking more and more. We are concerned, we're scared,
9 and we're worried.

10 Our ancestors survived some of the coldest,
11 harshest winters so that we can -- so that we can be
12 here, and that's why we are all standing here, because
13 we own that -- we owe that same dedication and respect
14 to our future generations.

15 We will not be silenced and we will not be
16 dismissed, not when our way of life is being
17 threatened. This place -- this place is so special.
18 Look at how many people it has brought together, people
19 from all over the world. We would not have even
20 connected otherwise. You guys really need to
21 understand what you're doing is not good, it's not good
22 for -- we have a spiritual and cultural connection. I

1 personally -- I lost my identity after high school, and
2 it is a huge part of the Porcupine caribou herd. And
3 if you guys destroy their calving grounds, then you're
4 destroying us, as Gwich'in people.

5 So you need to stay out of the Arctic. Respect
6 our human rights.

7 (Applause and cheering.)

8 MS. AMANDA ROBINSON: Hi. That's kind of a hard
9 one to follow. My name is Amanda Robinson. I am here
10 on behalf of Creation Justice Ministries, which is a
11 Christian membership organization of orthodox mainline
12 Protestant historically black church, Peace Church, and
13 Baptist traditions. Through our members, we represent
14 roughly 100,000 churches and 40 million people. And I
15 am here today to stand in solidarity with the Gwich'in
16 Nation.

17 For decades, religious communities have advocated
18 to protect the coastal plain of the Arctic National
19 Wildlife Refuge from any extracted activity that could
20 disrupt the precious ecosystems therein. This
21 religious community advocacy priority originated
22 through the Episcopal Church, which has a deep and

1 special relationship with the Gwich'in Nation of
2 northeast Alaska and northwest Canada.

3 For more than 150 years ago, Anglican and,
4 subsequently, Episcopal missionaries traveled to Fort
5 Yukon, Alaska, to establish a mission there. Today,
6 more than 90 percent of the Gwich'in are Episcopalian.
7 Since 1991, the Episcopal Church has honored its
8 General Convention Resolution to oppose oil drilling in
9 the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Since the 1990s,
10 the cause to protect the refuge from drilling has
11 received long-term institutional support from the
12 Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the National Council
13 of Churches USA, and the Evangelical Environmental
14 Network, to name a few.

15 Through our relationship with the Episcopal
16 Church, many religious communities have come to
17 understand the ecological integrity of the coastal
18 plain as not only one of the last best intact examples
19 of the works of the Lord, but also as essential to the
20 religious liberty and land-based subsistence lifestyle
21 of the Gwich'in people. For daily sustenance, the
22 Gwich'in depend on the Porcupine caribou herd, whose

1 birthing patterns would be disrupted by oil exploration
2 in the refuge, ultimately threatening the survival of
3 both the caribou and the Gwich'in people.

4 We understand that the Porcupine caribou's
5 birthing ground, the coastal plain of the Arctic
6 Refuge, plays an important role in the Gwich'in
7 creation stories. They call the coastal plain "The
8 Sacred Place Where Life Begins," and any threat to the
9 animal is a threat to the Gwich'in. As one Gwich'in
10 woman put it to us, "It is our belief that the future
11 of the Gwich'in and the future of the caribou are the
12 same."

13 It is important to note that this land is
14 developed and it is in use to provide grazing and
15 birthing grounds for the caribou the Gwich'in Nation's
16 survival depends on.

17 While this kind of land does not -- land use does
18 not create economic benefit for corporations or the
19 State, it is the source of life for the Gwich'in and
20 has been for well over 10,000 years.

21 In the past 15 years, the United Methodist Church,
22 the Episcopal Church, the Mennonite Church USA, and

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

13 Recently in September 2017, over 120 Episcopal
14 bishops met in Alaska to learn more and reaffirm their
15 commitment to the church's opposition to drilling. In
16 addition, the National Religious Partnership for the
17 Environment organized a petition calling for the
18 strongest possible conservation protection for the
19 refuge, which received more than 100,000 signatures by
20 people of faith across the United States and was
21 submitted to Congress and the administration in 2017.

22 In 2018, another National Religious Partnership

1 for the Environment petition specifically requested the
2 Department of Interior to refrain from allowing gas and
3 oil leasing. It secured roughly 17,000 signatures to
4 date, most of which are from evangelical Christians.

5 Lastly, I appeal to those who are faced with
6 leasing decisions to consider carefully the full scope
7 of harm that can be done to the ecological integrity of
8 the coastal plain. This includes not only the actual
9 drilling activities, but also seismic testing, as well
10 as the broader imposition of oil and gas
11 infrastructure, such as roads and pipelines. Such harm
12 to this special part of God's creation has no moral
13 justification. The question posed today is whether or
14 not in 2019 the United States Government will make the
15 same grave errors it did in previous centuries towards
16 indigenous peoples. From Creation Justice Ministries,
17 the Episcopal Church, and the millions of people of
18 faith we represent, we urge you not to inflict such
19 horrors again.

20 Thank you.

21 (Applause and cheering.)

22 MR. ADAM KOLTON: I want to thank everybody for

1 being here. Especially I want to thank the indigenous
2 people from Alaska who are here speaking out so
3 eloquently and in such a moving way.

4 I'm Adam Kolton. I'm the Executive Director of
5 Alaska Wilderness League. We're the only national
6 organization devoted exclusively to the conservation of
7 Alaska's extraordinary national treasures. And
8 obviously we have a huge disagreement. You know, we --
9 we're here because this provision jammed in the tax
10 bill without a full fair and open debate as a way to
11 circumvent --

12 (Applause and cheering.)

13 MR. ADAM KOLTON: -- the vast majority of
14 Americans who know this, with any poll, don't want
15 drilling in the Arctic Refuge. It's well established.
16 Any poll, find any pollster, that's -- that's simply
17 the fact. This had no vote in the House of
18 Representatives. There was no fair process. It only
19 was jammed in a bill, and it was jammed in a bill in a
20 way that -- that is reprehensible and, frankly,
21 immoral.

22 But we're here. And you have a job to do, which

1 is this Environmental Impact Statement. So even if we
2 accept -- and we don't -- but even if you go to the
3 point that we have this huge disagreement on whether
4 drilling ought to occur, there were certain promises
5 made during the context of the tax bill debate and in
6 the legislation itself that had to be taken seriously.
7 The first is that the process itself, we heard the
8 Trump administration testify before the Congress that
9 -- that there would be a 4-to-5-year process before
10 there would be a lease sale. That was your acting
11 director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Well,
12 you're trying to do it in 2 years. That's not what you
13 testified to, and the tax bill actually gave you twice
14 the time. So right there it's just outrageous.

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. ADAM KOLTON: We heard the senior Senator from
17 Alaska say that the reason for this is that you want to
18 create facts on the ground. You want to get a lease
19 sale out there to make it harder to challenge. That's
20 not what we were promised. That's not a responsible
21 process by any definition.

22 Mr. Balash, the last time that we were here at

1 this hearing in D.C., we asked, requested, that we have
2 hearings around the country, and you ended the meeting
3 by saying that you would consider that. You implied
4 that we might do that. You have rejected any hearings
5 anywhere outside of Alaska and D.C., yet this is --
6 this is land that all Americans own and have a rightful
7 stewardship responsibility for. I think that's wrong.
8 There are no hearings anywhere else. This is not just
9 here in the Beltway, it's not just an issue for Alaska.
10 All Americans have a say.

11 (Appause and cheering.)

12 MR. ADAM KOLTON: I think with respect to the EIS,
13 I thought one thing that was extraordinary, and after
14 listening, it's really just profound after listening to
15 so many Gwich'in speak, is that your EIS absolutely
16 disregards the responsibilities under the Alaska
17 National Interest Lands Conservation Act to consult in
18 a formal subsistence way with these Gwich'in villages.
19 And it's extraordinary because you do that after
20 acknowledging there are going to be impacts to the
21 Porcupine caribou herd. So that's really unfortunate.
22 And there was a specific promise made in the tax bill

1 debate about adequate consultation with the indigenous
2 communities.

3 The tax bill requires that you follow a process
4 that's similar to the National Petroleum Reserve Act.
5 You're doing nothing like that. There are regulations
6 adopted by BLM that govern how leasing programs go
7 forward in the National Petroleum Reserve. You ought
8 to be doing that first in the Arctic National Wildlife
9 Refuge before you go ahead with this process. That's
10 just simply you're not following the law.

11 One of the most outrageous components of the EIS
12 is how you handle the 2,000 acres. I mean, frankly, we
13 always thought the 2,000 acres was a ruse to begin
14 with, this idea that there would be this small
15 footprint, when 2,000 acres is -- the Mall of America
16 is less than 2,000 surface acres, the New Jersey
17 Turnpike in my home State is less than 2,000 acres, so
18 just to give you an idea. That's just if you take the
19 acres. But that somehow wasn't good enough for you.
20 You wanted to create a bunch of loopholes and
21 exemptions so that to render this meaningless by any
22 standard over any period of time.

1 As an example, gravel mines are exempt from 2,000
2 acres. Ice roads are exempt from the 2,000 acre
3 requirement. And just to give you an idea, the seismic
4 testing, 90,000-pound trucks that come in, the impact
5 they make are exempt. Oh, and if that's not enough, on
6 top of that, you have a -- you say, well, if we disturb
7 one area, but then we're done with it, and we go to --
8 and we kind of take stuff down and move to another area
9 later, that doesn't count, that doesn't count in the
10 2,000 acres. That's just wrong. You've made this
11 meaningless if you believe that your responsibility is
12 what was said in the tax bill debate, is to do this in
13 a way that has some environmental meaning, which is not
14 what the EIS does.

15 I'll make another point. This was done in the tax
16 bill and there was this argument -- this -- by the way,
17 this was the only offset in the entire tax bill to pay
18 for, what, a billion less, \$700 million, of the \$1.5
19 trillion tax cuts? Well, how are you going to get that
20 money? We're not hearing anything from BLM about
21 minimum lease sale bids. Clearly, you must not want to
22 just give this stuff away. I mean, some of the lease

1 sales we're seeing on the North Slope, \$5.00 an acre,
2 \$25 at most. In order to hit the numbers, by our
3 calculations, I'd be interested to see yours, you're
4 going to have to be upwards of \$2,700 an acre minimum
5 bid. You're going to do that? I mean, there's no
6 analysis of that. Look, this should be -- this -- this
7 -- this was a promise, to generate a certain amount of
8 revenue. If you're not going to hit that, don't do it.
9 There should be a minimum bid, a minimum bid, in the
10 program.

11 (Applause and cheering.)

12 MR. ADAM KOLTON: Finally, I mean, let's not kid
13 ourselves. You have a lot of nice flowery language in
14 the EIS, but you have all this -- the mitigation that
15 you have, almost all of it is optional. It's you can
16 waive it if you choose to. Very little of it is
17 mandatory. And so, again, obviously we believe at
18 Alaska Wilderness League, we stand with the Gwich'in,
19 we stand with the majority of Americans who don't want
20 to see drilling in the Arctic Refuge, but if you
21 believe that you are trying to keep the promises and
22 the legal requirements of the tax act, a lot of work to

1 do. We suggest that you scrap the EIS, start over, do
2 a better job.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause and cheering.)

5 MS. SALLY ANDERSEN: Good afternoon. My name is
6 Sally Andersen. I have traveled to Washington, D.C.,
7 from Alaska with my family to be here today. I am not
8 sponsored by anyone. I'm not really a greenie. I'm
9 here on my own dime because I just couldn't live with
10 myself if I didn't take the opportunity to come and
11 speak out against oil drilling and development in the
12 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

13 My husband and I own a small wilderness guiding
14 company, taking people camping in the Arctic. About
15 half of our business occurs in the Arctic Refuge and is
16 a result of the wilderness that is there. I have also
17 worked in the oilfields both at Alpine and Prudhoe Bay,
18 and have firsthand experience with what an oilfield
19 looks and feels like.

20 Most people will never get to see what an oilfield
21 is because once an area is developed, it becomes off
22 limits to the public: no camping, no boating, no

1 hunting, no birdwatching. BP or Conoco or whoever is
2 drilling forces ordinary Americans off of public land.
3 Corporations win, citizens lose.

4 I was born and raised in Alaska, and I'm raising
5 my family there now. I want my children to continue to
6 visit the refuge throughout their lives, and when
7 they're adults, to take their own children there. If
8 the land is taken by oil companies, they will be
9 excluded, as will everyone else.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. LENA MOFFITT: Thank you so much. My name is
13 Lena Moffitt, and I am the Senior Campaign Director of
14 the Sierra Club's "Our Wild America" Campaign. And I'm
15 here today on behalf of our 3.5 million members and
16 supporters across the country to encourage you, as many
17 of my colleagues have urged you before today, to scrap
18 this rushed and flawed Draft Environmental Impact
19 Statement, start over again, listen to the American
20 public, and not move forward with this dangerous
21 proposal to drill in the Arctic Refuge.

22 The facts are clear. We think they are

1 demonstrable, that this DEIS is wholly inadequate and
2 that drilling in the Arctic Refuge is not in the public
3 interest.

4 I will say personally I am a climate activist. I
5 come to this work because I care about the devastating
6 impacts that climate change and the looming climate
7 crisis is having on our planet. I have seen those
8 impacts on my home State of New Mexico. I've seen it
9 in Alaska with our colleagues whose villages are facing
10 relocation because they are literally falling into the
11 sea. The United States faced damages of over \$300
12 billion in 2017 from the climate crisis. The time to
13 act is now. We need to be weaning ourselves off of all
14 fossil fuels. The rest of the world sees this writing
15 on the wall, and, frankly, it is embarrassing that the
16 United States is so far behind.

17 (Applause and cheering.)

18 MS. LENA MOFFITT: And the fact of the matter is,
19 is that this is no longer a technological question. We
20 do not need this oil. This is a matter of myopic
21 political shortsightedness, it is not one of
22 technological feasibility.

1 The solutions are out there. Electric vehicle
2 sales soared 54 percent in 2017. People around the
3 world are committing to getting off of oil. China, one
4 of our big competitors, but now a leader in the world,
5 committed to banning internal combustion engine sales
6 by 2040 altogether.

7 The United States is falling behind, and this
8 proposal would put us even further behind, and it would
9 exacerbate the climate crisis.

10 Our analysts at the Sierra Club have crunched the
11 numbers on this in looking at the impacts that drilling
12 and burning all of the oil in the refuge would have
13 would be adding 776 million internal combustion engines
14 to the road if we did this, and that is exactly the
15 kind -- exactly the opposite kind of direction that we
16 need to be going in, exactly the opposite kind of
17 investment that our country needs to be making, and it
18 is unnecessary. That alone should be enough for this
19 administration to look at the writing on the wall and
20 listen to the American public, see the crisis that is
21 coming at us. The wildfires in California alone last
22 year, entire communities are burning, people are

1 burning to death in their cars while they are trying to
2 escape. This is no longer a future crisis, it is one
3 that is here today, and we need to take action.

4 That alone should be enough to stop us, but the
5 impacts that my colleagues have mentioned, the impacts
6 to the wildlife in this special, special place, one of
7 the last truly wild and pristine ecosystems on the
8 planet, would be devastating, and your DEIS fails to
9 analyze those impacts.

10 I will say at the Sierra Club we, along with our
11 partners, are really heartened that it sounds like
12 dangerous seismic testing isn't going to happen this
13 winter. And I just want to say on the record that the
14 companies that are looking at going into this place and
15 impacting the wildlife up there and impacting the
16 people that depend on those wildlife, the American
17 public is watching. The American public is very much
18 against this proposal, and companies that go up there,
19 those who are represented here today, should know that
20 this is an extremely controversial and unpopular gamut,
21 and the people are watching, and you are going to hear
22 from us.

1 (Applause.)

2 MS. LENA MOFFITT: We were really excited to
3 deliver 200,000 comments to SA Exploration last month
4 at their headquarters in Houston, legally letting them
5 know that the American public is against this. That is
6 just a tiny little snippet of what will come for any
7 company that goes into this sacred place.

8 (Applause and cheering.)

9 MS. LENA MOFFITT: Then finally I just again want
10 to thank all the Gwich'in who have traveled so far.

11 My colleague and dear friend, Bernadette
12 Demientieff, thank you for your incredible words.

13 The Sierra Club stands with the Gwich'in as they
14 have clearly outlined the impacts to the caribou would
15 be real. Past studies, more in-depth studies, have
16 shown that the impact could be as much as 50 percent to
17 the Porcupine caribou herd decline from oil and gas
18 production. The caribou are so central to the
19 Gwich'in. What happens to the caribou happens to the
20 Gwich'in. This is a human rights issue. This is not
21 just an environmental issue. The Sierra Club is here
22 to stand with the Gwich'in, we're here to stand with

1 the American public, and we hope that you won't go
2 forward with this dangerous proposal.

3 Thank you.

4 (Applause and cheering.)

5 MS. MARY ANNE HITT: Good evening. My name is
6 Mary Anne Hitt. I am also with the Sierra Club, where
7 I serve as Senior Director of the "Beyond Coal"
8 campaign. And I've traveled here from my home in West
9 Virginia to be with you today on behalf of the Sierra
10 Club, but also because I have a very personal
11 connection to this issue and to this place.

12 The DEIS, as currently written, will enable oil
13 drilling on the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge,
14 which we are firmly opposed to at the Sierra Club, and
15 I am firmly opposed to myself, having visited the
16 refuge and floated 300 miles of the Porcupine River
17 from Old Crow to Fort Yukon.

18 I can say from personal experience that it is a
19 national treasure. Like blowing up mountains for coal,
20 which we are doing in West Virginia, once we break this
21 place, we may not be able to put it back together
22 again. This is a permanent loss that this part of the

1 world and the Gwich'in people are facing.

2 My dear friend Lenny Kohm was mentioned once
3 before by my friend Anna Jane Joyner, who was up here,
4 who I host a podcast with called "No Place Like Home,"
5 and he passed away a few years ago. He's the person
6 who brought me to the Arctic Refuge. And he traveled
7 this nation enlisting people in helping to protect and
8 defend the Arctic Refuge, always with Gwich'in members
9 with him. And he always said that if everyone could
10 just visit the Arctic Refuge for themselves, if
11 everyone just could meet the incredible Gwich'in
12 leaders that you all have heard from tonight, that no
13 one in America would condone drilling for oil in the
14 Arctic Refuge. And this is land that belongs to all
15 Americans.

16 So he did the next best thing, he tried to bring
17 the Arctic Refuge to Americans, to people in Iowa and
18 Nebraska and Kentucky and Kansas and Florida. You name
19 it, if there was a church basement, he would show up
20 with his slide show, often with a Gwich'in partner with
21 him, and they would tell the story of what was at
22 stake. He personally spoke to over 20,000 people, and

1 that is just one slice of the people all across this
2 country that care about this issue. It matters to
3 Alaskans, it matters to the Gwich'in, but it matters to
4 all of us. It matters to me, and I live in West
5 Virginia.

6 And unlike most of those 20,000 people who saw
7 this presentation and had a connection because of that
8 little window that they had into the Arctic, I actually
9 got to go there myself. I actually got to spend time
10 with the Gwich'in. I got to travel the Porcupine
11 River, and it changed my life. And I came back firmly
12 confident that this is one of our nation's greatest
13 treasures, and that drilling for oil would irreparably
14 harm it, and I believe it would, as a person of faith,
15 be an unforgivable sin against the Gwich'in people and
16 against this creation that we've been given.

17 (Applause and cheering.)

18 MS. MARY ANNE HITT: And so as you've heard from
19 my colleague Lena, at the Sierra Club, we feel that the
20 Draft EIS in no way provides an accurate or adequate
21 assessment of the negative impacts of oil and gas
22 drilling on wildlife, on ecosystems, on the indigenous

1 communities, and we urge you, and I urge you, on behalf
2 of the Sierra Club and as a mom and as an American, to
3 reject the DEIS, to go back to the drawing board and
4 take every measure you can to protect this sacred place
5 because my children and grandchildren and the children
6 and grandchildren of everyone in this room are
7 watching.

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause and cheering.)

10 MR. RICHARD RANGER: Good evening. My name is
11 Richard Ranger, and I am a senior policy advisor for
12 API, the American Petroleum Institute. I have worked
13 in the oil and gas industry for over 40 years,
14 including almost 13 years in Alaska. In Alaska, I
15 worked on or commissioned environmental work for site
16 characterization and oil spill contingency planning for
17 drilling projects in Cook Inlet, for marine operations
18 in Prince William Sound, for exploration work in the
19 Upper Yukon Valley, and for production operations on
20 the Alaska North Slope.

21 I am offering the following brief comments on
22 behalf of API and its members. We will be submitting

1 detailed written comment in collaboration with the
2 Alaska Oil and Gas Association at the close of the
3 public comment period.

4 Safe and environmentally responsible operations
5 are the core focus of our industry as we develop oil
6 and gas resources throughout the Arctic region, and
7 specifically in the U.S. Arctic and the proposal to
8 develop the coastal plain of the Arctic National
9 Wildlife Refuge. Our over 40 years of work on Alaska's
10 North Slope demonstrate this capability. It is a
11 statement of capability and commitment that not only
12 comes from two trade associations that represent
13 Alaska's oil and gas industry in Alaska and throughout
14 the U.S., and not just from the companies that are the
15 members of API and AOGA; most important, it is a
16 statement that reflects the effort and care undertaken
17 by the men and women who work on the North Slope. I
18 know this because I've worked alongside them.

19 In the 40-plus years of production, the North
20 Slope has produced, and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline
21 System has delivered, over 17 billion barrels of oil.
22 This production has provided unparalleled economic and

1 social benefits to the State of Alaska, Alaska Native
2 organizations, municipalities and villages, and all of
3 Alaska's citizens. To this day, the oil and gas
4 industry remains the backbone of Alaska's economy.
5 Alaskan oil production has provided jobs on the Slope,
6 in Fairbanks, in greater Anchorage, and throughout
7 Alaska. The industry's operations have contributed
8 over \$150 billion, not adjusted for inflation, to the
9 State of Alaska through royalties and taxes, and
10 provide the largest cash contribution to the Alaska
11 Permanent Fund, on which so many Alaskans rely. Those
12 revenues have supported school facilities and teachers'
13 salaries in Alaska's cities and its villages along with
14 health care services and infrastructure for
15 transportation and communications that were unknown
16 before oil development.

17 The oil and natural gas industry's record of
18 development of the North Slope presents documentation
19 of environmental stewardship and innovation. The
20 original fields, like Prudhoe Bay and Kuparuk, and the
21 newer fields, like Alpine and Point Thomson, are
22 located in areas with wildlife populations and

1 biodiversity similar to those found on the coastal
2 plain of the refuge. And over the history of
3 operations on the Slope, Arctic wildlife populations in
4 the vicinity of the operations that exist now have not
5 only coexisted, but thrived. I have sat on a truck on
6 the North Slope's Spine Road, engine idling, watching
7 several thousand caribou from the Central Arctic herd
8 cross the road because one of the operating rules on
9 the Slope is caribou have the right of way.

10 Environmental professionals from industry and the
11 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service jointly develop
12 procedures, training, and best practices for managing
13 human and polar bear interactions that set a standard
14 for human-bear interactions and have been repeatedly
15 recognized as a success.

16 The "North Slope Environmental Field Handbook"
17 documents best environmental practices and standardized
18 measures for compliance with environmental regulations
19 that reflect years of experience in a closely watched,
20 closely regulated work environment.

21 This standardization ensures that employees and
22 contractors implement a consistent set of safe and

1 responsible practices and procedures that are observed
2 and owned by the men and women who work on the Slope.

3 Innovations in drilling technology have
4 substantially reduced the geographical footprint of oil
5 development while increasing the amount of resources
6 that can be reached from a single site. New
7 technologies currently in use on the North Slope have
8 increased the reach, depth, and precision of drilling.
9 Multilateral wells or sidetrack wells minimize surface
10 facilities and well footprints. Extended-reach rigs
11 can drill horizontal wells in an 88-square-mile area or
12 larger from a single pad.

13 Recently, ConocoPhillips Alaska set a North
14 American drilling landmark by completing a 4-mile
15 horizontal lateral at the CD5 drill site in the
16 Colville River unit in NPRA. Hilcorp's light module
17 rig in the Milne Point unit has drilled tightly spaced
18 wells to the depths of 3 miles.

19 As a result of these technological advances,
20 drills -- drill pad size has shrunk from 65 acres,
21 which was the standard in 1970, to as little as 12
22 acres today. These advances demonstrate that oil and

1 gas can be produced efficiently in Arctic Alaska with a
2 minimal geographic footprint and, consequently, with
3 minimal environmental impact. This impact will only
4 continue to lessen as the industry continues to
5 innovate.

6 Finally, oil and gas development in Arctic Alaska
7 has produced significant scientific benefits,
8 especially research and long-term monitoring of Arctic
9 wildlife in the natural environment. Often the product
10 of collaboration between industry, government,
11 academia, and local knowledge, this work has produced
12 hundreds of publications addressing a wide range of
13 topics and species, including nearshore fish, tundra-
14 nesting birds, caribou populations and movement,
15 predator populations, permafrost monitoring, polar
16 bears, spectacled eiders, brown bears, lighting
17 mitigation systems for birds, coastal erosion,
18 hydrology, anadromous fish, and numerous vegetation and
19 wetlands studies.

20 I'm going to skip -- there's a -- I have a section
21 you've already heard about forecasts by the U.S. Energy
22 Information Administration on our energy use. There

1 are a lot of people who have traveled great distances
2 to be here today. We don't agree, but they're entitled
3 to be heard. So I'm going to skip that and just come
4 to my conclusion, that BLM's Draft Environmental Impact
5 Statement for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing
6 Program is an important first step to preparing both
7 industry and government to ensure that the need, the
8 mitigation, the tasks ahead are realized if leasing and
9 work proceed on the coastal plain. It is a well-
10 organized document that provides an analysis of
11 reasonably foreseeable impacts of the leasing program
12 on the coastal plain.

13 API and AOGA will be submitting detailed written
14 comments. We support leasing and the opportunity to
15 explore for and produce the oil and gas resources
16 believed to lie under the coastal plain because our
17 industry's record shows that the development of value
18 energy resources and the protection of Arctic species
19 and the environment can occur together.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. BETSY LOYLESS: My name is Betsy Loyless. I
22 live in Bethesda, Maryland. I'm here today to stand in

1 the way of this caricature of a public process. I'm
2 here today to raise my voice against the unprecedented
3 threats posed to this iconic landscape, the Arctic
4 National Wildlife Refuge, its wildlife, and to the
5 Gwich'in people, whose heritage and way of life is
6 gravely threatened.

7 The process that has brought us to this public
8 meeting today has been fatally flawed, and it's been
9 fatally flawed from the start of the process, as
10 previously mentioned, first, by attaching the
11 corruption of this iconic landscape to an unrelated tax
12 reconciliation bill; second, by utterly failing to
13 consider the over 700,000 public comments received that
14 could not have been possibly considered in a realistic
15 way given the timeframe; third, by curtailing the
16 public's voice in these public hearings with only one,
17 one, hearing outside of Alaska even though this is
18 America's, our country's, greatest, greatest, national
19 wildlife refuge; and, fourth, by relying on outdated
20 and incomplete science for decision making, and your
21 own, your own, alternatives demonstrate that; and,
22 fifth, by offering alternatives that fail miserably to

1 genuinely take into account the following issues.

2 The alternatives fail miserably in protecting
3 polar bears' critical habitat, in fact, throwing in the
4 greenhouse gas emissions resulting from drilling. They
5 fail miserably in the near certain significant impacts
6 to the Porcupine caribou herd, especially during
7 calving season; and by understating significantly the
8 risk of oil spills; and by ignoring certain damage to
9 the fragile tundra landscape for generations from these
10 human activities. And they fail miserably by taking --
11 by failing to take into account the impact of the
12 significant water withdrawals required for construction
13 and drilling. And these are only a few examples of how
14 environmental laws and processes are undercut and
15 corrupted for political expediency in these
16 alternatives.

17 Now, I, too, was one of the people who first
18 learned of the Arctic Refuge from Lenny Kohm, and so
19 that's been many, many years ago, and I stand here on
20 Lenny's shoulder and on the shoulder of many others
21 that come before me and that aren't present today but
22 that care deeply about this iconic landscape.

1 I've had the honor and privilege to journey to the
2 Arctic Refuge. I've witnessed the majesty of an
3 unparalleled landscape and wildlife untouched by
4 exploitation. And I will continue to raise my voice to
5 stand in the way, literally if necessary, of this
6 shameful land grab.

7 (Applause and cheering.)

8 MR. LEO WALD: My name is Leo Wald. I live in
9 Alaska. I learned to walk on the gravel bars of the
10 National Arctic Refuge. I love snow. I love cold
11 winters. And I can't see why we would trash the Arctic
12 just for more oil and worse climate change. Oil is not
13 the future. Please do not drill in the refuge.

14 (Applause and cheering.)

15 MR. NOAH WALD: Hi. My name is Noah Wald. I live
16 in Alaska, and I visited the Arctic Refuge several
17 times. I love caribou and (inaudible) burgers or
18 tacos. First of all, I love the life on the tundra. I
19 can't imagine oil drills in the Arctic. If you had
20 been there, I don't think you would either. The refuge
21 is a perfect place the way it is. Please leave it
22 alone.

1 (Applause and cheering.)

2 MR. ARIAN RUBIO: Hello. My name is Arian Rubio,
3 and I am with the League of Conservation Voters. We
4 stand opposed to drilling in the Arctic National
5 Wildlife Refuge.

6 (Applause and cheering.)

7 MR. ARIAN RUBIO: After drilling in the Arctic
8 Refuge was shamefully slipped into the tax package, we
9 remain opposed. We stand with the Gwich'in people and
10 the public in our opposition.

11 From incredible wildlife to wild iconic
12 landscapes, it's clear that some places are too special
13 to drill, and this is absolutely one of them. We
14 should channel our energies into transitioning into a
15 clean energy future and combating climate change rather
16 than drilling for fossil fuels in one of the places
17 that is most hard hit by climate change. Destroying
18 this pristine wildlife refuge would keep us on the
19 wrong path and would hurt those who rely on this
20 incredible place.

21 Rushing through the necessary environmental review
22 to drill as quickly as possible, cutting corners

1 wherever possible, does not give the public the input
2 they deserve in drilling in this place that belongs to
3 all of us.

4 (Applause and cheering.)

5 MR. ARIAN RUBIO: This place and its wildlife,
6 including the Porcupine caribou herd, migratory birds,
7 muskoxen and more, this place has special importance to
8 the Gwich'in people. This place has long sustained the
9 Gwich'in people, who are here today, who have called
10 this place "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins," and we
11 stand with them in their efforts to oppose transferring
12 this place to oil and gas interests. And we stand with
13 them in opposing the destruction of their way of life.

14 Protecting the Arctic Refuge is not only the right
15 thing to do, however; it's also what people across the
16 country want and demand that this administration do.

17 Poll after poll of people across the country, of
18 communities across the country, shows that the public
19 is opposed to drilling in the Arctic Refuge, and people
20 want this place protected.

21 Data has shown that the majority of people in
22 every State and the majority of people in every

1 congressional district across the country, in all of
2 those places, more people oppose drilling in the Arctic
3 Refuge than supporting. It's not just the right thing
4 to do, it's the thing that the people want us to do.

5 So, again, we stand here in support of protecting
6 the Arctic Refuge. To echo what Bernadette said
7 earlier, stay out of the Arctic Refuge, respect human
8 rights. And as Reverend Yearwood said earlier, none of
9 us will be here in 100 years, but the decisions we make
10 today will.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause and cheering.)

13 MR. CHAD RICKLEFS: Thank you. We're going to
14 take a short break here for a minute or two to allow
15 Nicole to make her way up to the stage.

16 (Break.)

17 MS. WENDY HALL: Good evening. My name is Wendy
18 Hall. And myself and my son, Alex Hall, who I can't
19 find, are the founders of the Adirondack Wildlife
20 Refuge in the beautiful Adirondack Mountains of New
21 York State. The park is our gym. And I have been a
22 wildlife rehabilitator for 47 years, and I have been

1 very inspired by the speeches that I've heard, one in
2 particular where the young chief said that the health
3 of the environment affects the health of the children
4 and everyone there. And in that vein, I have brought
5 pictures of what I call my project. The face of
6 climate change and the animals that I've dealt with in
7 47 years, the last two decades have been devastating
8 for me to see. The last time I was here, I was here
9 three times, the first time for the Environmental
10 Protection Act, marine mammal, the migratory bird, the
11 farm bill. That was my first time. And the last two
12 had to do with lobbying for the protection of the
13 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

14 At the Adirondack Wildlife Refuge, we are wildlife
15 rehabilitators. Several of the species that migrate,
16 we have, for instance, the snowy owl, the gyrfalcon,
17 the short-eared owl, and we actually brought with us a
18 peregrine falcon, and the reason we did was as an
19 indicator species, he has some of the worst diseases.
20 Through the toxicity that this animal carries as a
21 juvenile peregrine falcon, the young man that brought
22 him to me was able to pick him up and put him in his

1 lap. Now, we're talking about one of the fastest
2 animals in the world. The young man called him
3 "Icarus" because the falling from the sky, this
4 magnificent creature.

5 At any rate, these are indicator species. There
6 is no argument here. Climate change is real; it is a
7 factor; it is an absolute factor. I brought some
8 pictures of -- I always bring pictures. Remember last
9 time? Last time I brought pictures of four gray fox,
10 and they all had five different types of ticks. Now,
11 the Adirondack Mountains has not -- for 25 years ago,
12 that was never an issue for us. Now ticks are being
13 seen throughout the winter in wildlife.

14 So this time, surprise, no ticks, but I've got
15 sarcoptic mange, and that's -- that's the biggie. So
16 this little bear, of which I now have four, this is a
17 yearling cub, a yearling cub, which is supposed to
18 weigh 50 or 60 pounds, weighing in at 15 pounds with
19 the worst case of mange. Another name for that is
20 scabies, as we know it. Starving.

21 All right. There's one. This is one of the most
22 tragic pictures, is this sick eagle who has just about

1 every positive test there is, including West Nile. The
2 sibling died, and we're still trying to keep this one
3 alive.

4 Another mangy fox. And it goes on and on.

5 Emergencies are random, and we basically, as
6 wildlife rehabilitators, cannot really plan our day
7 because we have had so many emergencies with wildlife
8 in every species. Here's another fox that wasn't so
9 lucky as the one I showed you before. Okay. I think
10 I'm done with those. Okay.

11 So basically -- and I also have, if anyone is
12 interested and understands anatomy and physiology and
13 testing of the avian species, which is very
14 complicated. So many of these tests, as you know, as a
15 human, if you have a lot of positive tests, that's not
16 good. Every single one of these tests were positive on
17 this peregrine falcon that we still have because we
18 provided him with the right antifungal meds, antifungal
19 medicines, antibiotics. These are all human medicines.
20 We're not supposed to have to do this with wildlife.
21 They're indicator species.

22 And, quite frankly, I would think that all the

1 people that realize climate change is real, and what is
2 the saddest irony is if there weren't climate change,
3 then the ice flows wouldn't be melting and we wouldn't
4 be able to drill in the Arctic. So that's -- that's a
5 factor right there that should really make people think
6 about protecting the environment, protecting the Arctic
7 National Wildlife Refuge, because the park that I come
8 from is protected, and all of these animals that I just
9 showed you are within the boundaries of the park.

10 We have had acid rain in the Adirondacks. We have
11 had to bring in trout because of the rivers. So when
12 is enough? When are we going to stop? We are we going
13 to stop devaluing the environment, which is our planet?
14 The word "planet," if you take apart the syllables, you
15 have "plan." What's the plan? What's the plan after
16 we've drilled in the Arctic and we have the residual
17 damage to go with it and the indigenous peoples that
18 will suffer? What's the plan?

19 Thank you.

20 (Applause and cheering.)

21 DR. CHARLENE FISHER: (Speaking Alaska Native
22 language.) Very nice to see you all again. I have

1 commented several times, but I am going to begin again.

2 (Speaking Alaska Native language.)

3 My name is Charlene Fisher, Dr. Charlene Fisher.

4 I am from the Village of Beaver, Alaska. I'm the

5 Council of Athabaskan Tribal Government's Executive

6 Director. And I shared with you previously our

7 standing resolution that has been reapproved by our

8 chiefs of the 10 villages that are member Tribes to

9 CETG. They start at Rampart and go about up to the

10 border and include both Gwich'in people and Upper

11 Koyukon memberships.

12 I do like what Congressman Holland is saying about

13 I'm a 35th generation indigenous person of Alaska. I

14 think I'm going to start using that. I want to speak

15 to you about the many issues that the Alaska Native

16 people are facing. Alaska, itself, as a State, is

17 having a financial crisis. There are a number of

18 issues that our chiefs of our local communities face,

19 including public safety, education, transportation, you

20 know, food security. All of these things wrap up and

21 contribute towards the health of our people, both

22 behavioral health and mental health and physical

1 health. Food security helps our people stay fit
2 through the diet, the quality of the diet, and being
3 out on the land also helps them very much with regards
4 to having that good peace of mind, having those
5 resiliency factors that keep sobriety, keep hope, keep
6 love of culture, family, sharing, allow them to express
7 all of those important values for one another.

8 This process and this act really contribute to the
9 dividing our people. All of the indigenous people of
10 Alaska have very similar values, very similar world
11 views, are tied to the land, take care of our elders,
12 take care of our traditions, you know, have belief
13 structures that are very connected to resources, such
14 as water and air and timber, the land itself, the
15 animals that occupy it, and are just all woven together
16 so that practices in our villages really are not things
17 you can take apart.

18 "Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit," is a sacred
19 place for us. CETG has participated in many research
20 grants, and that allows us to build our own database of
21 different kinds of things, traditional use areas,
22 sacred places in our Gwich'in language, so place names,

1 and these place names go all the way up to the Sacred
2 Place, and then there is one large name, and that is
3 "Iizhik Gwats'an Gwandaii Goodlit." And it's part of
4 the culture that we don't go there, it's a sacred
5 place. We don't desecrate it in any way. So that
6 spiritual connection is very just engrained in all of
7 the people.

8 The indigenous people of our region, the Gwich'in
9 people, are stewards of this land, and as you -- as all
10 of the immigrants arrived here, the water was clean,
11 the air was clean, the animals were healthy. They are
12 stewards. They have ancestral knowledge that ties them
13 to this place, and that is largely being ignored.

14 ANILCA A10 requires, Federal law requires, that --
15 that impact be properly done in evaluation, you know,
16 through different processes, your own processes, that
17 are inadequately done. I -- I suggest that, as so many
18 have, that this document be redone to fully consider
19 the impacts to the Gwich'in people and to have proper
20 hearings and proper Tribal consultation. Several of
21 our member Tribes have requested Tribal consultation
22 and have been excluded from this process to date except

1 for Fort Yukon, and those include some of the smaller
2 villages. Our villages are all interconnected. Our
3 people have married, have relatives. We all benefit
4 from the use of the subsistence, whether it's fish on
5 the Yukon, salmon on the Yukon, Porcupine caribou herd,
6 and from the Arctic. We are sharing people, and we all
7 are impacted.

8 I -- I think BLM should have public meetings to
9 include these Tribes that have requested Tribal
10 consultation before you move forward.

11 I -- the attacks on indigenous people through a
12 divide-and-conquer strategy has been used again and
13 again to compel the least fortunate to make decisions
14 based on a response to colonial constructed poverty in
15 acts of self-preservation.

16 The Gwich'in people stand united in their resolve
17 to defend the Sacred Place. And the treatment of the
18 Gwich'in and the indigenous people violates human
19 rights. And this BLM EIS does not explain how or if
20 BLM is considering recommendations for the 1987
21 Porcupine caribou herd conservation agreement,
22 completely ignores the oversight of the International

1 Porcupine Board and the input of Canada, including the
2 First Nations people. The BLM developed Draft EIS A10
3 section is irresponsible by concluding that oil and gas
4 activities will not significantly impact subsistence by
5 the Gwich'in people, and, furthermore, ignoring and
6 denying the traditional use patterns is -- defies
7 Federal responsibilities defined in ANILCA.

8 Gwich'in people are stewards of this place and
9 have much ancestral knowledge. They're willing to
10 share with you. You need to have proper hearings and
11 proper consultation. At every instance,, when you
12 travel to our territory, we're happy to host you, to
13 feed you, to share with you, to teach you about the
14 culture, to drive you around in an old squeaky truck,
15 and share what we can with you in this community.

16 We -- with -- I -- you know, it's -- the
17 recommendations on the EIS to include waivers that
18 dismiss any options to protect the Porcupine caribou
19 herd makes the entire set of protections null and void.
20 This is unacceptable. Ignoring the Gwich'in people's
21 traditional ecological knowledge and marginalizing them
22 is also unacceptable. The entire CETG council has

1 reaffirmed their commitment to protect the sacred
2 birthplace. And we suggest you start again.

3 This development is irresponsible. And, you know,
4 I -- I pray for you in your journey. It's very
5 difficult for you, for us, for the American public, to
6 think of this place as being defiled in such a manner.
7 It doesn't make any sense, the arguments that somehow
8 going to save the American economy by developing the
9 last 5 percent of this area.

10 Climate change is a very critical piece of
11 everything. I mean, climate change and the government
12 shutdown pushed your window back and led to this whole
13 seismic testing thing and the efforts to blast forward.
14 I mean, it's -- when I left my home in Beaver, it was
15 35 below. I did stop in Fort Yukon for a couple of
16 days. Then I had to come here. But it's 15 above
17 today.

18 Climate change is very real, and how -- how are
19 you going to address that? None of us can address
20 that. Seasoned hunters can't address that. People who
21 have lived on the lands, everything is very
22 unpredictable and not considered in this EIS properly.

1 Màhsi' cho (speaking Alaska Native language), and
2 to the people, to the Gwich'in people, and for guiding
3 us in these efforts to protect the Sacred Place.

4 Màhsi' cho. Thank you very much.

5 (Applause and cheering.)

6 INTERPRETER: Hi. I am going to be vocalizing
7 Gabriel's testimony. And I urge you to think just in
8 the future about how you make these public meetings
9 more accessible for those that might have different
10 abilities. So please think about that for the future.

11 (Applause.)

12 INTERPRETER: So this is Gabriel Arellano. He is
13 the founder of STEMS, and he lives in Washington, D.C.
14 STEMS is an acronym. He'll submit it, yeah.

15 So in this Earth, we all belong to -- sorry, this
16 is a new skill for me.

17 In this Earth, we belong to -- we all human
18 Gwich'in, Inupiaq, Alaska Native, and all of you
19 breathe, hear, see, taste, and feel in the same way as
20 all living creatures: caribou, Arctic fox, polar bear,
21 wolves, and others who habitat in this beautiful planet
22 that we belong to.

1 Drilling into our mother planet is like drilling
2 into your teeth. Do you like this experience? No.
3 Today we are here in the 21st century. We are
4 fortunate to live in this sophisticated lifestyle.
5 However, we need to know that our mother planet lived
6 for over a million years, and yet it got a bad prune,
7 short-lived immediately, when drilling occurred.

8 Oil and gas are outdated to our need in the 21st
9 century, like expired milk. Do you like to drink
10 expired milk? No. Every day in this 21st century, our
11 children study geology as part of science, technology,
12 engineering, and mathematics. So that's STEM, the
13 acronym. Our children understand the danger of oil
14 that harm marine life, plants, animals, algae, and many
15 other small microbes. All children do not like the
16 sight of marine life covered with oil. Their nightmare
17 from acknowledging that oil and gas are toxic to us,
18 marine life, and humans. However, children will read
19 our history and will be happy to know that BLM
20 cooperated to stop oil drilling.

21 Thank you. Oh, wait. Yes. Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

1 DR. JEFFREY STODDARD: Thank you. Thank you very
2 much. My name is Dr. Jeffrey Stoddard. I'm from
3 Clarksburg, Maryland. And I am very appreciative of
4 the opportunity to testify before the Bureau of Land
5 Management today.

6 As it happens, I am a private citizen, but I'm
7 also here representing the Defenders of Wildlife. I've
8 been a lifelong member of the Defenders of Wildlife,
9 and I speak on behalf of wild creatures today.

10 I might also mention that I have more than a
11 passing interest in the work that you all do and a
12 great respect for the work that you all do. My father
13 was Charles H. Stoddard, the Director of the Bureau of
14 Land Management, appointed under President Kennedy, and
15 served under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. The
16 symbol, the logo, that you show on your slide was
17 actually drawn up under my father's direction. The
18 painting on which he based that logo hangs in my home
19 today.

20 So I have a great and abiding appreciation for the
21 BLM and the work that you do. And I understand now the
22 very serious weight that rests on your shoulders. What

1 we're talking about is a very precious national
2 wildlife refuge. Let's just remember it is core.
3 That's what we're talking about. Yes, it's very large.
4 Yes, it has tremendous reserves. Yes, it's a sacred
5 place to many indigenous peoples.

6 All of those things are important, but at its
7 core, our government and our people of this nation have
8 declared over many years that this is a national
9 wildlife refuge. We're -- it's on our shoulders. It's
10 on our generation's shoulders and on each successive
11 generation to make sure that we protect it. That's
12 been done by the American people for many years now.
13 We've set this land aside. We've said that it's there
14 for the polar bears, for the Arctic foxes, for the gray
15 wolves, for the caribou. At its core, as a country, we
16 have to be able to stand by our iconic national
17 wildlife refuges and protect them as such.

18 Now, the Bureau of Land Management has written a
19 Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and I beseech you
20 today to relook at it and look at it with the
21 understanding and through the eyes that you're
22 required. You have a legislative mandate at the bureau

1 to do these -- to undertake these EISs with due
2 diligence. It needs -- respectfully, it needs a do-
3 over. The Draft EIS respectfully needs a do-over.
4 I've looked at it carefully. It does not adequately
5 assess the risks on the coastal plain to the wildlife
6 that exist there.

7 I can tell you, I'm not just an armchair
8 environmentalist, I've actually visited the region.
9 I've gone fly-fishing for Arctic grayling. There's
10 nothing I love more than to fly-fish for Arctic
11 grayling on the coastal plain. Trust me, I use
12 barbless hooks, and I'm really there not so much for
13 the fishing, but to appreciate the wildlife. And what
14 I would say to you is that each one of us, in positions
15 like yours, has a rare opportunity to truly be a hero.
16 You have that opportunity now.

17 And I want to mention one more thing about the
18 bureau's logo. When my dad came into the BLM, the logo
19 that existed before the landscape that you see was a
20 picture of five exploiters. There was a logger, there
21 was a miner, there was a rancher, and behind them was a
22 devastated landscape. We moved ahead. The BLM changed

1 its mission under Stewart Udall, under Secretary Udall.
2 The BLM now has an opportunity to be environmental
3 heroes. You have that opportunity. Don't turn back
4 the clock. Don't be those people in that -- in that
5 1950s image of exploitation and greed and environmental
6 devastation. Please be environmental heroes. You have
7 that -- you have that authority. You have that
8 capability. That's my request.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 DR. CHARLENE STERN: My name is Charlene Stern,
12 and I'm here as a Tribal member of the Native Village
13 of Venetie Tribal Government. I was born and raised
14 into the community of Arctic Village and the larger
15 Gwich'in Nation as a whole.

16 For countless generations, our people have
17 harvested and stewarded the Porcupine caribou herd, and
18 it's been a central part of our culture, our food
19 security, and a cornerstone of who we are as a people.
20 Many of you have visited our communities. You have
21 witnessed firsthand how we live, how we prepare caribou
22 for sharing with our community and our guests. You

1 have eaten at our tables. You have heard our people
2 and how afraid and concerned they are with the EIS
3 process itself and the ultimate goal of selling leases
4 within the coastal plain, which we recognize as a
5 sacred place.

6 Again and again our people have been put in
7 defensive position to protect the caribou, their
8 birthing and calving grounds, as well as our way of
9 life that depends upon it. Again and again we have
10 stood before BLM and raised concerns with this rushed
11 EIS process, and still we feel unheard. No alternative
12 that seeks to open leasing in the coastal plain is
13 acceptable to us.

14 Our Tribal governments and our chiefs are here yet
15 again today, as they have been at other hearings,
16 stating and restating our position. We do this because
17 we have a responsibility to speak for our grandparents
18 and their grandparents, who depended on the land and
19 caribou for survival. We speak for our people today
20 that are continuing that way of life, and we're
21 harvesting caribou just as of last week to make sure
22 that families are provided for. And we have the

1 responsibility to speak for our own children and our
2 children's children that are yet to be born who are
3 going to inherit the outcomes of the decisions made by
4 BLM in this process.

5 So we urge you to do a good process. Do a good
6 process. Address the issues that have been missed
7 along the way, and consult with us on the range of
8 issues that we are entitled to participate in.

9 Thank you.

10 (Applause and cheering.)

11 MS. JENNIE GOSCHE: Good evening. My name is
12 Jennie Gosche. I live in Kensington, Maryland, and I
13 have brought a photograph with me that I took in the
14 Arctic Refuge of a mother polar bear and her cubs, and
15 I would like you to look at it.

16 I strongly urge the Bureau of Land Management not
17 to allow any seismic testing and oil and gas leasing in
18 the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife
19 Refuge. This hearing is an opportunity to give
20 testimony about the potential environmental and
21 wildlife impact of gas and oil extraction in the
22 coastal plain, also known as the 1002. Although there

1 will be no 3D seismic exploration in the Arctic Refuge
2 this winter, BLM still plans to hold the lease sales in
3 the coastal plain of the refuge this year.

4 Many Americans will never visit the Arctic
5 National Wildlife Refuge. I was fortunate to visit
6 Kaktovik, Alaska, which is within the Arctic Refuge, in
7 2016 to photograph the Beaufort Sea polar bears. I
8 travel the Arctic, and this year will go to Greenland,
9 my fifth country to photograph the polar bears
10 throughout the Arctic. So far, Kaktovik has been my
11 favorite trip.

12 The U.S. is one of five nations around the Arctic
13 where polar bears live, but the Beaufort Sea and
14 Chukchi Sea polar bear groups are two of the smallest
15 among the 19 in the Arctic. Because the Arctic sea ice
16 is retreating farther and farther from land due to our
17 warming climate, many polar bears den on land in the
18 coastal plain of the refuge. Any and all seismic
19 testing would certainly harm and potentially kill polar
20 bears in the birthing dens. The dens are difficult to
21 locate, and 90,000-pound trucks thumping the ground
22 every 600 feet would certainly impact the denning

1 mothers and their cubs. Every cub is important, as
2 those groups struggle to survive in the Arctic, which
3 is warming at twice the rate as the rest of the planet.

4 The infrastructure necessary to pump oil and gas
5 within the refuge would also negatively impact the
6 hundreds of bird species who nest in the refuge every
7 year, as well as the Porcupine caribou, which we have
8 heard very emotionally from the Gwich'in this evening,
9 who come from Canada every spring to have their calves
10 in the coastal plain.

11 Today, the Washington Post reported the U.S.
12 Energy Information Administration said, and I quote, it
13 expects the United States to pump 12.4 million barrels
14 of crude a day in 2019, and 13.2 barrels a day in 2020.
15 This is an increase from 2018, with most of it coming
16 from Texas and New Mexico. All of this oil, without
17 one drop from the coastal plain of the Arctic National
18 Wildlife Refuge. Many oil and gas leases are bought
19 but never used. What a crime it would be if we allow
20 oil and gas exploration in the Arctic Refuge when we
21 don't even need the oil, risking oil spills, damage to
22 extremely sensitive tundra from huge trucks and large

1 work crews, while spoiling pristine wildlife habitat.

2 The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the jewel
3 and the crown of Alaska, and one of the last pristine
4 habitats in the United States. Please keep the coastal
5 plain pristine and free from oil and gas drilling.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. RHONDA ANDERSON: (Speaking Alaska Native
9 language.) I am Inupiaq Athabaskan. I happen to live
10 in Massachusetts now. Before I continue, one of the
11 things that I've learned outside is I want to recognize
12 this land that we're standing on, this land that we are
13 all benefiting from at this moment in time was known
14 for thousands of years, and forgive me (speaking
15 foreign language), an Algonquian word meaning "a town
16 of traitors." This land was lovingly inhabited by the
17 Nikoshtank (ph), Piscataway, Pamunkey, and Rappahannock
18 people. These indigenous people are still living
19 today.

20 This recognition is an important protocol, and it
21 gives voice and presence to indigenous people. We are
22 the invisible population. We are 1 percent of the

1 population in the United States. And arguably, the
2 population in Alaska is even more invisible to
3 mainstream America.

4 My enrollment village is Kaktovik, where my akka
5 (ph), my grandmother, Olive Alupe (ph) Gordon Anderson,
6 was born, and countless generations from millennia
7 before her. I have a very large family, and I have
8 family speaking here tonight. And it's fair to say,
9 even with some of my family that was speaking here
10 tonight there are proponents, that the indigenous
11 people of the North Slope, Kaktovik included, are
12 overwhelmingly against drilling on both the land and
13 sea, as they depend on subsistence hunting, fishing,
14 and whaling for food. The very lives, cultures, and
15 well-being of indigenous peoples of the North Slope are
16 threatened by this proposed drilling.

17 My heart hurts me today to witness this lateral
18 violence, and it's a painful divide that extractive
19 industry has pitted on our people and our neighbors,
20 our relations.

21 I wanted to address a couple things that are
22 probably not necessarily in an EIS or a BLM statement,

1 but they are very important things to consider with
2 extractive industry. Alaska is well known
3 statistically as the rape capital of the U.S., with
4 rape and sexual assaults three times the national
5 average, and child assault coming in at six times.
6 According to the 2010 Alaska Victimization Survey, the
7 most comprehensive data to date, 59 percent of Alaskan
8 women -- and I'm betting it's more -- have been victims
9 of a sexual assault, partner violence, or both.

10 The causes of the violence are complex and
11 entrenched. Government officials, law enforcement
12 personnel, victim advocates, they all note that the
13 factors come from an abundance of male-dominated
14 industries, like oil drilling and the military, to the
15 State's vast geography, and the many communities that
16 have no roads and little law enforcement. There are so
17 many factors that tip the scale for Alaska, says Linda
18 Chamberlain. She is the Executive Director for Alaska
19 Family Violence Prevention Project. Adding man camps
20 to our vulnerable population will see a rise in rape,
21 sexual assaults, drug and crime, in our already
22 vulnerable communities.

1 Another thing is subsistence food makes up nearly
2 90 percent of diets on the North Slope. Purchasing
3 food from local stores or having them shipped in is
4 expensive and loses nutrition from lack of freshness.
5 How in-depth is the accounting in the IES of what
6 construction will do to caribou herds, migrating birds,
7 fish, mammals, endangered polar bears and their denning
8 habitat?

9 There is little consideration for the irreparable
10 damage that will happen from the contamination of
11 precious fresh water, land, and air. Human health will
12 plummet with the rising cases of asthma, cancers, and
13 diabetes. There will be and there will be expected to
14 be contamination as long as there is a detailed --
15 there's a long and detailed history of what happens
16 with extractive resources.

17 There today is still equipment, debris, trash,
18 from the exploration of oil drilling decades ago,
19 contaminating soil, water, on the North Slope today.
20 The Environmental Impact Statement must be transparent
21 and aware of the dangers that are known from the
22 fracking industry to the land, water, and the rise in

1 the earthquakes on the North Slope. This is going to
2 be aggravated as climate change is happening at a
3 faster rate and felt most harshly in the Arctic
4 regions.

5 I would like to refer to the "Free, Prior, and
6 Informed Consent Manual" for project practitioners. As
7 I fear, some of these public hearings have been in
8 violation of international laws through United Nations
9 declarations of rights and indigenous people and the
10 Free, Prior, and Informed Consent laws. The last
11 public hearing in Alaska was not adequately promoted to
12 all shareholders, and, in fact, it was not offered
13 transparently, objectively, nor free from bias nor
14 manipulation. And I'm bringing this up because I have
15 quite a few family members on the North Slope in
16 Kaktovik that had no idea that there was a meeting on
17 Monday in Anchorage.

18 So I'm going to just quickly go over what Free,
19 Prior, and Informed Consent. The United Nations
20 Economic and Social Council estimates there are around
21 400 million indigenous people, or 5 percent of the
22 total world population, spread over 90 countries. They

1 have been present for thousands of years, preserving
2 their language, traditions, culture, and livelihoods,
3 many times barely surviving by living in isolated and
4 remote areas. They face critical challenges for their
5 survival and the preservation of their cultures. They
6 typically have higher rates of poverty, food
7 insecurity, and malnutrition from non-indigenous
8 populations.

9 Public attention is increasingly focused on
10 indigenous people's issues for a variety of reasons.
11 On one hand, their rights, territories, and livelihoods
12 are seriously threatened by the world's demographic
13 pressure compounded by extractive industries' appetite
14 for their resources. A widespread lack of respect of
15 their cultures and rights has resulted in many
16 communities being decimated and dispossessed of their
17 lands or forcibly relocated.

18 On the other hand, scientists have increasingly
19 recognized what indigenous people have been voicing for
20 decades. While holding much of the world's diversity
21 in terms of culture, language, and spirituality,
22 indigenous people are also the stewards of natural

1 resources and guardians of biodiversity. This has
2 brought an increased interest in indigenous peoples in
3 the aftermath of the climate change negotiations in
4 Paris of 2015, that indigenous people hold so much of
5 today's answers to tomorrow's challenges.

6 In 2007, the UN General Assembly adopted the
7 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous
8 People, recognizing their rights and making specific
9 mention of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent as a
10 prerequisite for any activity that affects their
11 ancestral lands, territories, or natural resources.
12 This process -- the how, when, with, and by whom -- is
13 as important as what is being proposed. For an FPIC
14 process to be effective, the result in consent or lack
15 of it, the way in which the process is conducted is
16 paramount.

17 The time allocated for discussions among
18 indigenous people, the cultural appropriateness of the
19 way the information is conveyed, and the involvement of
20 the whole community, including key groups like women,
21 elderly, and youth in the process are all essential. A
22 thorough and well-carried FPIC process helps guarantee

1 everyone's right to self-determination and allowing
2 them to participate in decisions that affect their
3 lives.

4 Negative impact on the life and natural resources
5 of indigenous people is evident. Equally, it is clear
6 that once resources are exhausted, there has been no
7 thought to the state of land in the aftermath of any of
8 these interventions. Manmade land degradation caused
9 by extraction projects impacts the whole society at a
10 national and global level. In fact, the pursuit of
11 Free, Prior, and Informed Consent from indigenous
12 people is the means of how democracy can evolve to
13 better decision-making stages rooted in the respect for
14 human rights.

15 In this sense, indigenous people can contribute
16 again to the betterment of human relationships. It is
17 also a serious global call to rethink the ethics and
18 the creation of wealth. With this current path of
19 entrepreneurship and resource management, the world is
20 headed toward self-destruction.

21 To make sure that you have Free, Prior, and
22 Informed Consent, the "Free," the information is

1 offered transparently and objectively at the request of
2 the right shareholders. The process is free from
3 coercion, bias, conditions, bribery, or rewards. The
4 meetings and decisions take place at locations and
5 times and in languages and formats determined by the
6 right holders, and all community members are free to
7 participate.

8 Prior, among other things, is making the decision
9 -- making timeline established by the rights holders
10 must be respected, as it reflects the time needed to
11 understand, analyze, and evaluate activities under
12 consideration in accordance with their own customs.

13 Informed, among other things, it means delivered
14 in a local language and in a culturally appropriate
15 format. Traditional local media, videographics,
16 documentaries, photos, oral presentations, or new
17 media. Objective, covering both positive and negative
18 potentials. Making it accessible to the most remote,
19 rural communities, and making sure that included youth,
20 women, and elderly, persons with disabilities, who are
21 sometimes neglected and invisible.

22 Consent, among a lot of things, is the expression

1 of rights to self-determination, land, resources, and
2 territories, culture, and it can be given or withheld
3 in phases over specific periods of time in distinct
4 stages or phases of project activities. It's not a
5 one-off process.

6 So in conclusion, one of the things that was
7 conveyed to me by my relatives in Kaktovik was that
8 they wish to be heard. Since they had one meeting in
9 Kaktovik, and they didn't feel that it was a safe place
10 to speak, there's a lot of contention that's happening
11 between families that agree and disagree, and it's very
12 hard to speak up.

13 I saw my uncles here tonight, and they asked me
14 who I was, how was I a shareholder, and when I told
15 them who my "opa" was, I got a hug. You know, that's
16 how it should be. We should be looking out for each
17 other, but their voices should not be silenced, and
18 they should not feel like they cannot be speaking their
19 mind. We need to be looking out for the next seven
20 generations, but we're being silenced in the second.

21 So I want to lift their voices. And I'm not
22 giving their names because I know that they're afraid.

1 "Don't complain when there is lots of traffic and
2 things messing up our hunts. When the choppers and
3 planes are flying all the time to set up everything,
4 they scare the tutu away." Tutu is caribou.

5 "Folks who don't see or feel impacts read about
6 the other side of development. If you live around the
7 impacts and see the changes, as we have in Nuiqsut,
8 it's real. They don't stop to study how much this or
9 that infrastructure impacts the surroundings. We've
10 had land lost to our nikiapiak (ph), our traditional
11 foods, with a drill site a mile from here where we camp
12 for fishing and tutus. For years now, it's lost to
13 development. And it's not just that, it defers
14 migration and brings sickness to our nikiapiak, our
15 traditional foods. When your elder are telling you --
16 are being told not to consume more than six of
17 something a year, it's concerning to us. So understand
18 that those who feel firsthand impacts to development,
19 we are the ones."

20 "I am sure if it was by your gardens, your
21 statements would differ."

22 "Many flights of all kinds of choppers this summer

1 disrupting our harvest, and it's frustrating, I tell
2 you. As we feel it and see it, we value our
3 subsistence, our land, our resources, and we're
4 starting to see more fish like this caught in the fall,
5 all 16 of them." And she sent a picture, and all the
6 fish had different types of wounds on them. They were
7 basically falling apart. They were not healthy fish.

8 "My auntie says this is not true. We do not
9 support oil and gas development in the Arctic National
10 Wildlife Refuge. Anchorage, please don't support this
11 ad." And she's referring to an ad that was made for
12 the last -- the last hearing, very biased. "Don't
13 support this. Help save us, our hunting grounds. This
14 is our refuge. God bless Kaktovik."

15 "I'm a resident of Anchorage and past resident of
16 Kaktovik, and we knew nothing of this as well." And
17 that's again referencing to Monday's -- the last
18 meeting in Alaska.

19 "I will be forever against ANWR." Probably --
20 probably the fact that it's in Bureau of Land Trust
21 Management and probably for the drilling I'm guessing.
22 I'm putting those words in there so you can understand

1 that maybe.

2 "Not all residents in Kaktovik want drilling in
3 ANWR. And the ASRC and NSB," which is North Slope
4 Borough, "do not speak for all of us."

5 I am standing here today, and my daughter wished
6 she could be here with me, but I tell her school is too
7 important, but although I choose to live in
8 Massachusetts, we go home often and see 80 million
9 relatives, family, and we are not without our culture
10 and our nikiptak, our foods. My daughter can sniff out
11 a cooler from an auntie and get a big Ziploc of muktuk
12 so fast. She likes to stand at WEO (ph) and watch the
13 seals being skinned, and she'll stand there and wait
14 patiently and hopefully maybe one of the aunties will
15 give her a Ziploc bag. All of these things, all of
16 these things that she loves and adores about who she is
17 will be gone.

18 So (speaking Alaska Native language).

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. ROBERT VESSELS: Hey, thanks. Thanks,
21 everybody, for sticking around past the deterrent
22 presentation. And thank you to the Gwich'in for making

1 the trip all the way to D.C. from Alaska.

2 Yeah, I'll hold it closer. So, hey, I'm Rob
3 Vessels, and I am here today, I'm the Senior Campaign
4 Representative for the Sierra Club's "Military
5 Outdoors" program. So I'm here representing the 3.4
6 million supporters of the Sierra Club as well as the
7 65,000 servicemembers and veterans we've gotten
8 outdoors on trips in the last 6 years.

9 I was going to wing it, and then it got late, so I
10 typed up some notes. I'll be brief.

11 So I'm proud to -- proud to stand before you today
12 in solidarity with the Gwich'in people to express my
13 deep -- my deepest opposition to drilling in the Arctic
14 National Wildlife Refuge. I'm lucky enough to have
15 visited the Arctic Refuge two summers ago. I took a
16 group of 10 veterans to pack canoe the Canning River.
17 We went over 100 miles from the Brooks Range to the
18 Beaufort Sea.

19 On our way in, I was lucky enough to actually fly
20 over the Porcupine caribou herd. I have -- I have -- I
21 have testified a few times and lobbied a lot on this
22 issue, and I always struggle the find the words to

1 describe how powerful that moment was. I've never seen
2 that many creatures in one place. It -- it made the
3 Brooks Range look like an anthill that was swarming
4 with ants, but the ants were caribou. It was an
5 unbelievable experience to connect to the land in that
6 way.

7 So I spent much of my -- spent much of my early
8 twenties in conflict overseas. I'm an Army veteran. I
9 was an infantryman in the 10th Mountain. At the time,
10 I believed I was making the world a better place by
11 fighting for democracy and human rights. Whether
12 that's true or not is something I -- I truly struggle
13 with on a daily basis. But the way I've come to see it
14 is the Arctic Refuge and other public lands are a
15 physical representation of that democracy and freedom
16 that I thought I was fighting to protect.

17 The struggle for human rights and a fair
18 democratic process is actually here at home. The
19 Gwich'in's sustenance and livelihood depends on the
20 Porcupine caribou herd. The Arctic Refuge is pristine
21 to this day because of their generations of
22 environmental stewardship and respect for the land and

1 its inhabitants.

2 I stand here today in solidarity with the Gwich'in
3 people to oppose drilling in the Arctic National
4 Wildlife Refuge. Indigenous rights are human rights,
5 and Gwich'in rights are human rights. Thank you.

6 (Applause.)

7 BRADLEY: Hi. My name is Bradley. I fortuitously
8 met the father and younger brother, Sebastian, of a
9 pretty remarkable young woman, 11 years old, who
10 couldn't be here tonight because she had a 100 -- like
11 over 100 degree fever. But background on her. She
12 started a nonprofit at 5-1/2 called Epic Animals.
13 Every person initiates change, which links kids in the
14 city to kids that are at the epicenter of climate
15 change and poaching and deforestation, and just creates
16 conversations in those spaces.

17 She most recently just got back from meeting with
18 the Pope about rewriting "Laudato si'," which is a
19 document about the environment. And she read it and
20 decided that it wasn't approachable for children, and
21 just recently got approval by the Cardinal to rewrite
22 it. So she wrote this for you all, and I'm going to

1 read it.

2 "Hi --," it's Astrid Tuuli Grace Determan. Astrid
3 Tuuli Grace Determan. So here we go.

4 "Hi, my name is Astrid Tuuli Grace Determan. I
5 love animals. I always have. That's what drove me to
6 become a vegetarian and to create my nonprofit at age
7 6. Very early on, I decided to lobby for the polar
8 bears and caribou and against oil drilling in the
9 Arctic because it seemed the most dire situation.
10 While meeting with Congress and then on the Hill I met
11 Bernadette, a Gwich'in leader, and heard for the first
12 time in detail about the caribou breeding grounds, the
13 "Sacred Place Where Life Begins," and what this means
14 for her people.

15 "Bernadette was the first Gwich'in I had ever met,
16 and I could tell she understood my passion for animals
17 in a way most people don't. Soon after, Bernadette and
18 a village elder invited me to speak at their gathering
19 in Arctic Village. I was hugely honored.

20 "Arctic Village is 120 miles above the Arctic
21 Circle, so it took a bit of planning. First we flew
22 into Fairbanks and eventually to Arctic Village. When

1 we landed, we met up with Bernadette. She gave us each
2 a huge hug and welcomed us into the gathering. I made
3 so many friends, including Jazzelin (ph), Natalie, and
4 Lexine (ph), and felt the lively music and culture of
5 the Gwich'in. Caribou was always the chef's special.
6 My friends at caribou every day while I was there. I
7 feasted on mac and cheese and hot dog buns. Seriously,
8 though, it was a funny place to find a vegetarian city
9 girl.

10 "I spoke in front of the entire gathering and used
11 that time to encourage young Gwich'in children to take
12 the lead on this issue because they are the most
13 authentic voice, much more than I am. It was an
14 amazing experience.

15 "The following afternoon in Arctic Village was an
16 especially beautiful one, and we set off in a small
17 8-wheel vehicle owned by the lead hunter, Charlie. I
18 was completely amazed by the beauty of the mountain and
19 the fact that what seemed like an adventure to me was
20 just another day in the lives of my friends.

21 "We arrived at the hunters' camp just before the
22 mountains crest. Charlie sat with us for a long time

1 and talked about the relationship that the hunters had
2 with the caribou. He explained that after hunting,
3 they would always thank the animal for giving them its
4 life. In my ignorance, I had wondered how people can
5 have a deep relationship with the animal they hunt, but
6 after speaking to Charlie and many Gwich'in, I began to
7 see the error in my thinking. The Gwich'in protect the
8 caribou herd as a whole, and, in turn, the caribou
9 helps sustain the Gwich'in.

10 "A few days later in Arctic Village I finally got
11 to meet Gilbert, the revered Tribal chief and spiritual
12 leader at his Episcopal Church, where he ministers. He
13 was such a beautiful person, and it was truly unlike
14 any service I ever attended. Gilbert was calling out
15 individuals -- individual villagers from the pulpit.
16 "Remember when," he would say, and then tell stories of
17 their interactions with the animals all the while
18 incorporating morals of the Bible. Most stories were
19 about the Porcupine caribou and their
20 interconnectedness with the people, how the lead
21 caribou presented itself to the lead hunter, and even
22 the Gwich'in's attempts to save the caribou from oil

1 drilling. And you would think that at a church there
2 would be a cross behind the preacher, but there wasn't.
3 Instead, there was only a giant window looking off into
4 the wilderness. It was as if nature itself was a thing
5 that proved and reaffirmed their belief, just like it
6 was for St. Francis of Assisi, and it is for me.

7 "When I went to Arctic Village, I expected to be
8 overwhelmed by the natural beauty, but what really got
9 me was the inexplicable spiritual connection between
10 the caribou and the Gwich'in. They really depend on
11 each other. That is why it is so important that we
12 stop oil drilling. If we drilled for oil, we would be
13 destroying the incredible bond between man and animal.
14 I understood for the first time that what threatens the
15 caribou threatens the Gwich'in and in many ways
16 threatens us all.

17 "We spent our last night in Fairbanks, having
18 dinner with Bernadette, and for the first time of the
19 whole trip, she actually did ask me why I was
20 vegetarian. I told her about my experience with
21 Charlie and with the elder from the church and how they
22 explained to me the spiritual connection that the

1 Gwich'in had to the Porcupine caribou, one that does
2 not exist between Washingtonians and the animals we
3 eat. By the time the meat reaches our plates, the poor
4 animal has suffered tremendously and is nameless to us.
5 Maybe if I lived in Arctic Village and I had a chance
6 to express my gratitude to the animal and to the herd,
7 I would not be a vegetarian, just as Bernadette, if she
8 lived in D.C., might not be a meat eater.

9 "I love animals. That's what brought me to
10 testify here today even though I have a fever. I have
11 devoted a lot of my time to this issue already, but now
12 know why it is more important than ever to devote my
13 energy to protecting the wild flow of the caribou and
14 the ancestral and spiritual rights of the Gwich'in."

15 And because I can't help myself and I spent the
16 summer hiking the John Muir Trail and have spent my
17 life in the outdoors, a Thoreau quote that I think is
18 pretty relevant.

19 "We need the tonic of wildness, to wade sometimes
20 in marshes where the bittern and the meadow-hen lurk,
21 and hear the booming of the snipe; to smell the
22 whispering sedge where only some wilder and more

1 solitary fowl will build her nest, and the mink crawls
2 with its belly close to the ground. At the same time
3 that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we
4 require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable,
5 that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed, and
6 unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never
7 have enough of nature. We must be refreshed by the
8 sight of inexhaustible vigor, vast and titanic
9 features, the seacoast with its wrecks, the wilderness
10 with its living and its decaying trees, the
11 thundercloud, and the rain which lasts 3 weeks and
12 produces freshets. We need to witness our own limits
13 transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we
14 never wander. These natural spaces are where we can
15 always find hope, where we can be moved by a beauty
16 that simultaneously reminds us of our fragility while
17 making us feel most alive."

18 Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. GREG SINGLETON: Hi. My name is Greg
21 Singleton. I'm from Springfield, Virginia. And I want
22 to thank you folks for taking these comments from the

1 public on the Draft EIS for drilling in the coastal
2 region of ANWR. And thanks for staying here so late
3 tonight because I know it's kind of a pain. But, you
4 know, I just -- I don't have any real prepared remarks,
5 but just -- I'm just an American. I'm one of 330
6 million people that you won't get to hear from but
7 except for the fact that I happen to live close to
8 where you're holding this -- this session, this public
9 hearing.

10 So because I love the environment, and I grew up
11 in the outdoors, spent 26 years in the Army, retired,
12 defending our freedoms and democracy. And one of the
13 things that I felt like I was defending was this great
14 country of ours that not only has all these freedoms
15 that we enjoy, but also the most wonderful natural
16 resources of any country in the world. And Alaska is
17 one of those places, one of the last places, that's
18 still pristine.

19 And, you know, when looking at the overall scheme
20 of things in the world, you guys did a Draft EIS on
21 drilling in ANWR, in the coastal region. So I would
22 like to talk to you a little bit about a little bit

1 broader EIS that was done for the globe, and it was
2 called the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
3 So the IPCC said, You know what we told you before?
4 It's worse, and it's getting worse faster.

5 So then the NOAA came out with a report back in
6 November right around Thanksgiving, it was released on
7 the Friday of Thanksgiving week if you remember, and it
8 said, You know what? The climate is getting bad, and
9 it's getting bad faster than we thought before. We
10 really have to do something by 2030, the same thing the
11 IPCC said.

12 And then just recently, I think last week maybe, a
13 report came out and said, Guess what, we found a hole
14 under the Antarctic ice sheet half the size of
15 Manhattan, which is causing the ice to melt faster.

16 And by the way, NASA says that the Arctic ice
17 sheet is melting at a rate of 12.8 percent per decade.
18 And guess what? That rate is getting faster over time.

19 So what do you guys think is causing all the ice
20 to melt and causing the globe to warm? It's because
21 humans are burning too many fossil fuels. Okay, we're
22 burning too many fossil fuels, so we could do something

1 about that. We could start by, how about let's have
2 the United States back off on burning and harvesting so
3 many fossil fuels? We need to completely get off of
4 them, but as a start point, why don't we start by not
5 drilling for more fossil fuels and doing it in the one
6 place left on the Earth where these Porcupine caribou
7 and polar bears and ducks and geese and all these other
8 birds use as a breeding ground? It's the last place
9 where they all come together to do all their -- you
10 know, their nursery. And it's just such a wonderful
11 place.

12 So I stand before you today to express my deepest
13 opposition to drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife
14 Refuge. BLM's Draft Environmental Impact Statement in
15 no way provides an accurate or adequate assessment of
16 the negative impacts for oil and gas drilling that will
17 have -- will have on resident and migratory wildlife
18 ecosystems and indigenous communities.

19 So I just wanted to say that obligatory part, but
20 really if you think about what we're doing as a human
21 species, we are destroying the planet. We're causing
22 all this ice to melt. Now, we're talking about -- the

1 ironic part of this is one of the things that's
2 contributing significantly to global warming is the
3 fact that the Arctic ice sheets -- North Pole, South
4 Pole, Greenland -- the ice sheets are part of what keep
5 the Earth cool over time by reflecting the sunlight.

6 So we're going to go up to the Arctic, where we
7 want there to be more ice, and we're going to drill for
8 oil and bring it back and burn it, causing the climate
9 to warm more, causing more of these very ice sheets to
10 melt, which are the things that reflect the sunlight
11 back into the atmosphere and keep the globe cool. I
12 mean, think about what we're doing here. It's -- it's
13 crazy.

14 So all I'm asking you to do is please give some
15 careful consideration in this -- I guess it's the Draft
16 EIS now, and I didn't honestly look at the timing of
17 when it's going to become the Final EIS, but give some
18 thought to how the burning of fossil fuels is going to
19 impact the warming of the planet, which impacts, you
20 know, sea level rise and the changing of the climate.

21 You know, another thing that you all obviously
22 know because you're smart people, you know that the

1 planet's five warmest years on record were which years?
2 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, and 2014. Those are the five
3 warmest years on record.

4 So we have the evidence before us, it's staring us
5 right in the face, that we are warming the planet
6 because of burning fossil fuels. And this EIS is about
7 harvesting more fossil fuels in a country where our
8 President just told us last week that we are the number
9 one exporter of fossil fuels in the world. Why do we
10 need to drill for more oil in the Alaskan -- the Arctic
11 National Wildlife Refuge? It just doesn't make sense
12 when you look at it from a larger scheme of things.

13 So please take these thoughts into consideration
14 as you go forward throughout the process.

15 Thank you very much.

16 (Applause.)

17 DR. JEAN BUZBY: My name is Dr. Jean C. Buzby.
18 I'm a U.S. citizen. And I'm an agriculture economist
19 residing in Gainesville, Virginia, by the way, on Lake
20 Manassas. Two years ago, I counted 84 swans, last
21 year, only 14.

22 But my message here today is that I strongly

1 oppose the Department of Interior's efforts to pursue
2 an oil and gas leasing program in the Arctic National
3 Wildlife Refuge, and that's for three reasons.

4 First of all, if you look into the history of the
5 refuge, the purpose on the FWS website is to preserve
6 unique wildlife, wilderness, and recreational value for
7 all Americans. Oil and gas extraction don't fall into
8 that category. They're not the purpose.

9 Second, I feel strongly that there should be
10 places in the United States that we, as a nation, leave
11 undeveloped, and the Arctic Refuge is unfortunately one
12 of the very last wild and untouched landscapes left in
13 our nation.

14 Right now, it is a fully intact Arctic ecosystem
15 that is a breeding grounds for millions of migratory
16 birds, such as the tundra swans, and the home of
17 wildlife that I care about, such as the caribou, which
18 use the refuge to calve and raise their young. But
19 this could all be changed irreparably, damaged by oil
20 and gas leasing. And we've heard tonight from oil
21 people that the damage can be irreparable.

22 Migratory birds already face increasing pressures

1 from human development affecting their population's
2 survival, and they don't need the added challenge of
3 reduced or damaged critical breeding grounds. The
4 refuge should remain a place where America's Arctic
5 birds and wildlife seeking refuge from the pressures of
6 climate change and widespread development. And we
7 should leave the refuge permanently protected for the
8 people live there and all of Americans, children, and
9 future generations.

10 Third, I am very concerned that the Draft
11 Environmental Impact Statement significantly
12 underestimates the impacts that oil and gas activities
13 will have on all the bird and animal life that depend
14 on the refuge. A broader range of negative
15 externalities should be included. There can often be
16 unintended, unforeseen consequences.

17 And just as a quick aside, one example of an
18 unintended consequence is in Siberia they were building
19 a road for forests -- through the forest. And then the
20 sun was able to hit that road, and it -- it melted the
21 permafrost by exposing the land to sunlight. It's
22 called the Batagaika crater in Siberia. And this --

1 and every summer, the sun keeps hitting that crater,
2 and it's like a big mining site, it's like a volcano.
3 You can see it from space it's so big. That's just one
4 example of an unintended consequence of human actions.

5 And I've studied the map showing the probability
6 of what's called near-surface permafrost, and the
7 refuge is a region with some of the highest probability
8 of that in Alaska.

9 My point is that the land in the Arctic Refuge is
10 fragile and could face unexpected consequences from oil
11 and gas leasing. These negative consequences need to
12 be incorporated in your analysis, and quantified.
13 Added pressure on wildlife could also lead ultimately
14 to permanent very real consequences, such as even the
15 extinction of species.

16 Oil and gas development and the accompanying
17 seismic equipment and testing and numerous inevitable
18 industrial oil spills are likely to cause permanent
19 harm to the Arctic Refuge's fragile environment and the
20 wildlife that depend on it.

21 As a related concern, this Department's rushed
22 timeline for oil and gas development and the inadequate

1 Environmental Impact Statement is puzzling to me. Why
2 the rush? This rush will not allow for the full
3 analysis required by law. A full analysis is necessary
4 to meet our obligations to responsibly manage the
5 National Wildlife Refuge System.

6 In summary, I strongly oppose the Department of
7 the Interior's efforts to pursue an oil and gas leasing
8 program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for
9 three reasons. One, it's not part of the refuge
10 agreed-upon purpose to preserve unique wildlife,
11 wilderness, and recreational value for all Americans.
12 Second, the U.S. needs untouched safe harbors for birds
13 and wildlife, and this refuge serves as one of the last
14 great wilderness landscapes. And most importantly, the
15 inadequate Environmental Impact Statement needs to be
16 more thoughtfully and comprehensively developed without
17 artificial deadlines jeopardizing the integrity of the
18 study.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.
20 I hope that you will look into my concerns and the
21 other concerns expressed here today and take the time
22 to do a more thorough and comprehensive analysis.

1 Thank you for your time.

2 (Applause.)

3 MS. KARLA BRIGHT: Thank you. Hi. My name is
4 Karla Bright, and I really appreciate the opportunity
5 to speak today. I live in Virginia now, but I live in
6 -- lived and taught school in Fairbanks for over 25
7 years. I raised my family there. My husband worked
8 for the Fish and Wildlife Service there. But my 25
9 years is nothing compared to the Gwich'in, who have
10 lived in the land for countless time. Their voices
11 should count for 10 times any of us, especially AOGA
12 and API.

13 I support Alternative A, no action. I realize
14 that this does not comply with the law, but that tax
15 law was a huge sellout, and a sellout of the Arctic
16 National Wildlife Refuge.

17 I understand that the Alaska delegation and the
18 majority of Alaskans support drilling in the coastal
19 plain, but they are the ones with the old bumper
20 sticker on their cars, and excuse the wording, but the
21 bumper sticker said, "Please, God, give us another
22 Prudhoe Bay. We promise not to piss it away this

1 time." Well, it was pissed away. So let's not
2 sacrifice the pristine coastal plain for the same
3 greed. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge should
4 remain a refuge for caribou, polar bear, resident and
5 migrating birds, and wilderness. Once the wilderness
6 is gone, we'll never get it back. And as Thoreau said,
7 "In wildness is the preservation of the Earth."

8 Thank you.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. AIMEE DELACH: Hello. Thank you for being
11 here tonight. My name is Aimee Delach. I'm with
12 Defenders of Wildlife. I'm here to register my
13 opposition to the oil and gas exploration leasing and
14 drilling on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. And I
15 want to talk tonight mainly about climate change, an
16 actual national emergency as well as a global
17 emergency.

18 Climate change is not a distant future. It's not
19 a distant threat in time or place. It is affecting us
20 now. It is affecting us all over the country and all
21 over the world: in Puerto Rico, Florida, Texas,
22 Louisiana, North Carolina, even where I live in Athens,

1 Ohio, where our local river hit flood stage three times
2 in one week this week for the first time ever. But
3 nowhere is climate change impacting more severely than
4 in northern Alaska.

5 According to the 2018 National Climate Assessment,
6 which the Trump administration tried to release quietly
7 the day after Thanksgiving but did not try to
8 sugarcoat, the temperatures on the North Slope of
9 Alaska are already 3 degrees Fahrenheit higher than the
10 mid-20th century average, and could rise by another 2
11 to 5 degrees just by the middle of this century, much
12 higher by late this century. The consequences for both
13 wildlife and the human communities in the North Slope
14 area are potentially catastrophic. Loss of sea ice
15 devastates not just polar bear denning and hunting
16 habitat but also exposes coastal communities to extreme
17 erosion, and you're seeing some communities actually
18 needing to retreat from -- from the coast of Alaska.

19 Melting permafrost is radically altering aquatic
20 habitat and collapsing the very ground on which we
21 walk. Warmer temperatures and changing precipitation
22 patterns are dramatically rewriting the entire

1 landscape, and everything from changes to food sources,
2 more difficulty in finding food, and increased insect
3 harassment is affecting mammals like the caribou, polar
4 bear denning issues, and a whole host of other problems
5 for muskoxen, walrus, almost the entire mammalian
6 community in the Arctic Refuge, as well as the bird
7 community, which includes, of course, over 200 species,
8 many of which migrate to all the rest of the States,
9 and birdwatchers like me look for tundra swans that
10 migrate from the refuge.

11 Amid the upheaval of climate change to the
12 Nation's most pristine ecosystem, the current EIS
13 really tries to shortcut the situation. Instead of it
14 taking the hard look required under NEPA at the affects
15 of climate change, the EIS says the effects will be a
16 little bit like Mooses Tooth 1 and 2, which were two
17 much smaller oil developments far away in the NPRA, and
18 rely on science that's now 8 to 10 years old. Those --
19 the Mooses Tooth 1 came out in 2012 and references
20 material that's older than that.

21 And the Cumulative Impacts Assessment is also
22 completely inadequate. It never at all addresses the

1 cumulative effects of the climate change impacts
2 layered on by turning the North Slope into a major
3 industrial development. And, of course, the greatest
4 irony of that is that it's in the service of making
5 climate change worse by drilling for oil and gas and
6 eventually burning those fossil fuels.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. MARK SALVO: Thank you for staying late for us
10 tonight. We appreciate it.

11 Is it on? Get closer. Eat the microphone, as
12 they say.

13 My name is Mark Salvo. I represent Defenders of
14 Wildlife here in Washington, D.C., this evening.

15 The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a global
16 treasure, a haven for wildlife on a planet contending
17 with increasing habitat loss and, as my colleague just
18 stated, climate change.

19 As a lawyer, it is incumbent on me to remind us of
20 the legal requirements of this planning process. The
21 administration is bound by law, Federal regulation, and
22 committed to agency guidance to analyze, assess, and

1 accommodate the following in establishing an oil and
2 gas program in the coastal plain of the Arctic National
3 Wildlife Refuge. It must manage and continue to manage
4 the Arctic Refuge to conserve the exceptional
5 ecological values for which it was established to
6 protect more than half a century ago. The refuge laws
7 were not waived in this process, including in the tax
8 bill that authorized this shenanigan. The Department
9 of Interior must conserve and recover imperiled species
10 protected under the Endangered Species Act. The ESA
11 still applies.

12 An oil and gas program in the coastal plain must
13 accord with the Marine Mammal Protection Act, which
14 includes clear requirements for protecting marine
15 mammals from potentially harmful activities.

16 The Department must uphold international treaty
17 obligations for migratory birds, polar bears, the
18 Porcupine caribou herd, and other resources.

19 The planning process must especially evaluate and
20 disclose the extensive impacts of oil and gas
21 activities it will have on imperiled polar bears and
22 their designated critical habitat in the refuge.

1 The Department must fully consider the extensive
2 impacts of oil and gas development on nearly 100 bird
3 species that nest, feed, and breed on the coastal
4 plain.

5 The planning process must assess and disclose the
6 harmful impacts of oil and gas activities on a host of
7 wildlife species: brown bears, wolves, muskoxen, among
8 others.

9 And, finally, the planning process must analyze
10 and reveal how oil and gas activities would worsen
11 climate change, both in the refuge's environment and
12 around the world.

13 The Draft Environmental Impact Statement issued
14 immediately prior to the longest government shutdown in
15 history failed to adequately analyze and assess the
16 impacts in accordance with these legal requirements.

17 The Final Environmental Impact Statement must do
18 so, but will almost certainly fall short due to the
19 artificial requirements and timing of resources that
20 have been provided to this effort.

21 Defenders of Wildlife and our partners will sue,
22 not because we're overly litigious or disagreeable, but

1 because we are charged with upholding the law. The
2 Trump administration, because of the nature of this
3 process, will lose.

4 So let's save us all some time and the taxpayers
5 some expense, and as so many people here this evening
6 have so eloquently stated, start over. And this time
7 properly consider the impacts of an oil and gas leasing
8 program in the Arctic Refuge on polar bears, ice seals,
9 native peoples, our climate, and future generations.

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 FEMALE SPEAKER: Hi. I'm reading on behalf of
13 Jill LaRue, who couldn't be here tonight.

14 "I have traveled through the Arctic National
15 Wildlife Refuge and coastal plain twice. I have
16 observed incredible bird diversity, seen wolverines
17 traversing flows of (inaudible) ice. I saw a polar
18 bear sunning on dunes near the Beaufort Sea, and
19 grizzly bears fishing on gravel bars in the river. I
20 watched wolves travel down the valley from our
21 viewpoint across the Canning River. I have been
22 privileged to have caribou walk through my camp. I

1 watched tiny weasels hunting along the banks of the
2 river. I have talked with members of the Gwich'in
3 Tribe, who continue to depend on the Porcupine caribou
4 herd for their livelihood.

5 "I believe it is a travesty that there will only
6 be one official public hearing offered in the lower 48
7 States, as if this issue does not affect us."

8 Jill lives in Cashmere, Washington.

9 "There will be no chance for me to present my
10 statement in person because traveling to Washington,
11 D.C., from central Washington State is prohibitive this
12 time of year with unprecedented snowstorms.

13 "I believe it is irresponsible of the U.S.
14 Interior Department to consider allowing oil drilling
15 in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It has
16 carelessly released a Draft Environmental Impact
17 Statement that downplays and underestimates the damage
18 that would result from drilling in this area. This
19 damage includes the likely risk of oil spills,
20 increased carbon pollution and surface disturbance, use
21 of water unavailable in a desert environment. I am
22 concerned about the destruction of polar bear habitat

1 and sensitive caribou calving grounds used by the
2 Porcupine caribou herd during the longest mammal
3 migration on Earth for time immemorial.

4 "Fueled by greed, oil drilling must not be allowed
5 in the Arctic coastal plain. We do not need this oil.
6 I believe the "no action" alternative is the only
7 opportunity to avoid irreversible destruction and to
8 protect this precious habitat and the animals and
9 humans who live there."

10 Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. PHIL LU: Hi. My name is Phil Lu, and I
13 represent Defenders of wildlife. As you can see here,
14 we appear in packs.

15 Given the urgency of the climate change, it is
16 irresponsible to open up the coastal plain to oil and
17 gas exploration and drilling. Fossil fuel extraction
18 on public lands already produces one-quarter of all
19 U.S. carbon emissions. We cannot delay climate change
20 any longer -- action any longer. According to the 2018
21 IPCC report, we only have 12 years to dramatically
22 reduce our climate emissions to stay within 1.5 degree

1 Celsius, the amount scientists predict to avert major
2 disruptions in our way of life.

3 Please consider the consequences of sea level
4 rise, an increase in infectious disease, and a sixth
5 mass extinction.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. SARAH BETHEL: Hi. My name is Sarah Bethel,
8 and I am reading the testimony of Michelle Harmon, from
9 Alberta, Alabama, who is also the founder of the
10 organization Alabama Coast United.

11 "I'm writing to you today to ask that you stop
12 your plan to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife
13 Refuge. I grew up on the Gulf Coast and have witnessed
14 firsthand the destruction of the coastal environments
15 by the oil and gas industry here in the Gulf of Mexico.
16 I watched as millions of gallons of oil and dispersant
17 spewed into the Gulf after BP carelessly allowed
18 Deepwater Horizon to explode, killing 11 men, countless
19 wildlife, and injuring the people of the Gulf Coast for
20 decades to come.

21 "The tax bill of 2017 gave approval to open the
22 Arctic Refuge to oil and gas exploration and

1 environmental destruction, two things this wildlife
2 refuge was created to protect the wildlife and habitat
3 from. Have we learned nothing from oil disasters like
4 Exxon Valdez and Deepwater Horizon? Exxon Valdez
5 happened over 30 years ago, and the impacts are still
6 very real. Oil still lies just under the surface rocks
7 on the shorelines. Orca and salmon populations still
8 haven't recovered. And 10 years after the BP disaster,
9 the Gulf of Mexico is still recovering.

10 "The Trump administration doesn't listen to sound
11 science, which has told us time and time again that
12 drilling in the Arctic Village is a disastrous idea.
13 We know climate change is already on the fast track.
14 Ice is melting at unprecedented rates, and polar bears
15 are dying from starvation due to the impacts of human-
16 accelerated climate change.

17 "We all know that it isn't a matter of if an oil
18 disaster within the Arctic Refuge will occur, it is
19 merely a matter of when. The Arctic Refuge is such a
20 remote and harsh environment, cleanup of such a
21 disaster would be nearly impossible.

22 "I urge every one of you sitting here today

1 listening to the testimony of myself and others and
2 join us in placing the environment, wildlife, and
3 people over greedy corporate profiteers. There is no
4 money to be made on a dead planet."

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. KATIE TAYLOR: Hi. My name is Katie Taylor.
7 And I have with me a polar bear representative who will
8 be joining us. I am going to be reading testimony on
9 behalf of Sally Magaziner, of Malvern, Pennsylvania.

10 "Greed equals a limited number of people who stand
11 to win huge at the expense of the people and living
12 creatures who often lose completely. It makes me so
13 angry that opening the Arctic Refuge for oil extraction
14 is real. The Trump administration wants to turn this
15 magnificent ecosystem into an oil field. Remember the
16 anthem "This land is your land, this land is my land"?
17 What happened to that standard? As a taxpaying
18 citizen, I thought the refuge was ours, belonging to
19 you and me. I say this now because once it's stripped
20 and punctured and ravaged, it's gone forever. Its
21 pristine beauty and natural inhabitants will exist only
22 in history books for future generations.

1 "After the equipment and greedy people have
2 desolated the Arctic coastal plain, after resident and
3 migratory wildlife have watching their birthing grounds
4 violently ripped apart and destroyed, after once again
5 indigenous communities have been chased off their
6 homeland, after the land is sucked dry of whatever oil
7 lies beneath and stands ruined and abandoned, and after
8 the human race still is faced with the long-term
9 problem of finding another energy source, what then?

10 "Flash forward to 100 years from now. The Arctic
11 coastal plain has been decimated for nearly a century.
12 Your great-great-grandchild is school and learns of
13 what was once called the great Arctic Refuge, with its
14 diverse and unique wildlife and indigenous people that
15 flourished off the land. Your great-great-grandchild
16 sees photographs of the polar bear, Arctic fox,
17 Porcupine caribou herd, and other wildlife, and she's
18 saddened greatly. She inquires, 'What became of those
19 beautiful animals, the people, and that pretty land?'
20 The answer, she learns, is because of the narrow,
21 short-term thinking of the then greedy people in power.
22 They stole this land from her and her children who will

1 follow. The answer is not more dirty fossil fuels; the
2 answer is long-term renewable energy.

3 "I'd like to mention my own grandfather, Herman
4 Baney (ph), once an electrical engineer at GE and
5 inventor with nearly 100 patents. Forever coming up
6 with new thoughts and ideas, he was one of the original
7 pioneers of the wind turbine, wind energy, back in the
8 1940s.

9 "If we turn our focus to innovative and clean
10 energy solutions, we could preserve the Arctic Refuge
11 forever and have an unlimited source of clean energy to
12 keep the modern world moving forward. The Arctic
13 Refuge is not there to fuel our tanks."

14 (Applause.)

15 MS. KRISTEN MILLER: Since I'm the last, I'm going
16 to talk as long as possible.

17 My name is Kristen Miller. I'm the Conservation
18 Director with Alaska Wilderness League. I'm honored to
19 be here to testify. I'm honored to be in this room
20 with so many indigenous voices. And as a member of the
21 Alaska Wilderness League, I'm honored to stand with the
22 Gwich'in in this fight to stop development in the

1 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

2 I'm actually going to read a testimony from
3 somebody else like a few people before me, but I just
4 want to put a little context to it. I might be the
5 last one to read proxy testimony, but it's not the only
6 proxy testimony that we have. As you know, we
7 requested for this public comment period to be longer.
8 We requested for there to be more public hearings
9 outside of Washington, D.C., and outside of Alaska.

10 Since I have been working in Alaska Wilderness
11 League and since we were founded, there have been
12 millions of Americans from across the country that have
13 engaged in this fight, and it's never ceased to amaze
14 me the passion that you see from people from all over
15 the country that weigh in on this issue and that care
16 so passionately about these public lands, care so
17 passionately about the Gwich'in people. Those people
18 are not going to get the opportunity to come and speak
19 directly to decision makers, which is why we decided to
20 come here today and give them the opportunity to have
21 their testimony read into the record.

22 So on their behalf, I'm speaking for Dan Roseman,

1 who lives in Salt Lake City. He has been to the
2 refuge, and his testimony is about that experience.
3 Many of these people that we have worked with
4 throughout the years have never been to the refuge, and
5 their passion is equal, and these are the people, these
6 are the majority of Americans that you're going to hear
7 from in public comments, and these are the people
8 across the country that want to see this place
9 protected. And so we all want to speak on their behalf
10 and recognize that we have membership bases and people
11 from all across the country that care about this issue,
12 and they have the opportunity.

13 I ask you, you know, you still have the
14 opportunity to provide more public comment timeframe
15 and more public comment opportunities, in-person
16 opportunities like this.

17 So let me just take a moment to speak on Dan's
18 behalf. I'm going to speak in his voice.

19 "My name is Dan Roseman. I live in Salt Lake
20 City, Utah. This past summer I spent 2 weeks
21 traversing the refuge on foot and by pack raft,
22 including the western section of the 1002 between the

1 Sadlerochit Mountains and Kaktovik. In the EIS, this
2 is the zone with the most energy development potential
3 and also the zone that politicians would lead you to
4 believe is a barren wasteland. I can tell you nothing
5 is farther from the truth.

6 "As we walked from the Sadlerochit east to the
7 Hula Hula, we caught our first glimpse of the famous
8 Porcupine caribou herd. I literally spent an entire
9 night awake on the banks of the Hula Hula watching
10 hundreds of thousands of caribou move across the
11 coastal plain. It was one of the most amazing
12 wilderness experiences I've ever had. A large group of
13 animals eventually swam across the Hula Hula 100 yards
14 away, and there were so many animals that the current
15 would strip their hair and deposit it in footwide piles
16 along the banks of the river that literally stretched
17 as far as I could see.

18 "But it's just not all caribou. The following
19 days we encountered dozens of varieties of waterfowl,
20 nests full of hatchlings, snowy owls, and a grizzly sow
21 with her two cubs just a half a mile from the Arctic
22 Ocean. Where else in America do we have the

1 opportunity to see an entire ecosystem from the
2 Continental Divide all the way to the ocean, completely
3 intact, and free of almost all human development? It's
4 a scale of wilderness experience that simply does not
5 exist anywhere else. This is as close to understanding
6 the awe of the frontier that existed all across the
7 American West just 200 years ago, and to needlessly
8 fragment these ecosystems would steal that experience
9 permanently from the coming generations.

10 "After reviewing the EIS and experiencing these
11 lands personally, I can say definitely the only
12 satisfactory option is Alternative A, no action.

13 "Thank you for the opportunity."

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. CHAD RICKLEFS: Thank you. Unfortunately, we
16 have come to 8:00. This will be the end of the
17 conclusion for the public testimony.

18 (Whereupon, at 8:01 p.m., the meeting was
19 adjourned.)

20

21

22