



June 16, 2016

Ms. Abigail Ross Hopper, Director
Bureau of Ocean Management (BOEM)
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Hopper,

We are a very broad coalition with diverse interests and objectives, and while our fifteen organizations rarely agree on issues, we unequivocally support the continued development of our nation's oil and gas resources.

In that vein, it is paramount that the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management (BOEM) retain all Arctic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) acreage included in the 2017-2022 Five-Year Proposed Leasing Program. As an Alaskan coalition that represents tens of thousands of jobs for our state's citizens, we cannot overstate how important it is to have consistent lease sales which provide the first step in gaining access to the Arctic OCS for responsible development.

The path to statehood for Alaska was predicated on the development of our natural resources. Over 50 years ago, many politicians in Washington, D.C. expressed doubts as to whether this vast expanse of northern territory could effectively build an economy and contribute to the union. Alaskans joined together to convince Congress that development of Alaska's vast resources could establish and sustain a strong private sector economy. Following the commercial discovery of oil, Washington responded by adding a 49th star to the American flag. Alaska was allowed to join the union because of the expectation that the development of our natural resources would sustain our economy.

Alaskans have built upon that first commercial discovery to create an essential element of Alaska's economy that persists in a modern age. Today, more than one-third of Alaskan jobs are tied to the oil and gas industry, which supports 110,000 jobs and \$6 billion in public and private sector wages. The

positive impacts of Alaska's oil and gas industry in terms of energy production and job creation extend well beyond our borders, as access to these resources benefits the broader economy and energy consumers throughout the nation.

A strong Alaskan economy is not simply effected by the development of the Arctic OCS—it is dependent upon it. Our state's oil fields have matured over the years, and it is vital that new arenas and development opportunities are realized for the future economic security of our state. According to a study conducted by the University of Alaska Anchorage, an annual average of 54,700 new jobs would be created from OCS development, and sustained through the year 2057 by its development, with 68,600 during production and 91,500 at peak employment.

Alaska's Arctic OCS constitutes one-third of the nation's reserves and one of the world's largest untapped resources, potentially reaching as high as 26 billion barrels of oil and 132 tcf of natural gas. It would constitute the eighth largest oil resource in the world, ahead of Nigeria, Libya, Russia and Norway. To deny our state and our nation these resources would further increase reliance on foreign sources of oil and gas in a geopolitically volatile environment. There may be no greater tangible benefit to Arctic OCS development than energy independence.

We, as well as 72% of Alaskans, support responsible and safe offshore development, and, through innovations and evolving technologies, we are confident in our collective ability to do so. Without the opportunities afforded by the oil and gas industry, our citizens will lack sufficient opportunities and the Alaskan economy will be substantially compromised.

We all agree with Alaska Governor Bill Walker when he stated to you in a letter dated March 2015, *"BOEM's maintenance of regularly scheduled lease sales for the Alaskan Beaufort and Chukchi planning areas is critical for the Nation to benefit from the recognized high oil potential and new oil production of these Alaska regions."*

Please help Alaskans, and the nation, by maintaining the proposed 5-year plan, which will be imperative in developing the Arctic OCS.

Respectfully,

Vince Beltrami, Alaska AFL-CIO

Curtis Thayer, Alaska Chamber

Joey Merrick, Alaska Laborers District Council

Deantha Crockett, Alaska Miners Association

Kara Moriarty, Alaska Oil and Gas Association

Joey Merrick, Alaska Petroleum Joint Crafts Council



Rebecca Logan, Alaska Support Industry Alliance



Bill Popp, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation



Kim Reitmeier, ANCSA Regional Association



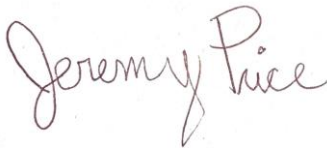
Tara Sweeney, Arctic Slope Native Corp.



Anne Seneca, Consumer Energy Alliance



Karen Matthias, Council of Alaska Producers



Jeremy Price, Americans for Prosperity



Marleanna Hall, Resource Development Council



Rick Boyles, Teamsters Local 959

Cc: Secretary Sally Jewell, U.S. Department of Interior
Governor Bill Walker, State of Alaska
Honorable Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senate
Honorable Dan Sullivan, U.S. Senate
Honorable Don Young, U.S. House of Representatives