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North Slope Iñupiat Leaders Support Congressional Joint Resolutions Nullifying the 2024 ANWR ROD Using The Congressional Review Act

Washington, D.C. – Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat (VOICE) and its members are pleased to see the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives pass joint resolutions condemning the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) 2024 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) using the Congressional Review Act.

The 2024 ANWR ROD was drafted without proper legal consultation with the tribes and Alaska Native corporations representing the North Slope Iñupiat. The North Slope Iñupiat have stewarded the region for more than 10,000 years and a strong majority of elected Iñupiaq leaders opposed BLM’s decision to finalize this deeply flawed policy. In 2017, VOICE’s Board of Directors — which represents the majority of elected officials in the region, including those from Kaktovik, the only community located within ANWR — unanimously passed a resolution supporting responsible exploration and development on ANWR’s Coastal Plain.

“These joint congressional resolutions are a positive sign that congressional decisionmakers support our Iñupiaq self-determination,” said **VOICE President & CEO Nagruk Harcharek**. “After enduring years of lopsided relations with both Congress and the federal government, our communities are cautiously optimistic for the people of Kaktovik following this vote – supported by our local and regional leaders – in our Indigenous homelands.”

Taxation on development infrastructure accounts for more than 95% of the region’s local tax base through the North Slope Borough. These funds strengthen North Slope Iñupiaq economic and cultural self-determination by providing essential community infrastructure and services including schools, health clinics, emergency services, modern sewer and water systems, and world-class wildlife management and research departments that support subsistence traditions. The proliferation of these services – and the economic opportunities they provide – is directly connected to significant increases in average Iñupiaq [life expectancy](#) from just 34 years in 1969 to 77 years today.

“The people of Kaktovik, the Kaktovikmiut, overwhelmingly support responsible development projects on our Coastal Plain homelands because they help our community provide for ourselves,” said **Kaktovik Mayor Nathan Gordon, Jr.** “Kaktovik is the only community within ANWR, but the federal government and Congress have disregarded our voices for generations. We are encouraged by this week’s votes in the House and Senate and urge elected officials in Washington to continue listening to our locally elected leaders and prioritizing policies that advance our self-determination.”

This announcement follows the Department of the Interior’s [decision](#) to revert to the 2020 Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program ROD, another action taken by Trump-Vance administration officials, which reflects meaningful engagement with North Slope Iñupiat elected leadership.

“I’m pleased that the current administration is making efforts to engage with the North Slope Iñupiat and prioritize our voices on all matters that impact our lands, communities, economy, and culture” said **whaling captain and Kaktovik Iñupiat Corporation President Charles “CC” Lampe**. “Moving forward, we are hopeful to continue this positive relationship built on mutual respect with both Congress and the executive branch.”

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About Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat (VOICE)

VOICE is a nonprofit organization established in 2015 by the region’s collective elected Iñupiat leadership and is dedicated to preserving and advancing North Slope Iñupiat cultural and economic self-determination. Its members include local governments, Alaska Native Corporations, federally recognized tribes, and tribal non-profits across the North Slope of Alaska.

In 2017, VOICE’s board passed a resolution in support of opening the 1002 Area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil and gas exploration and development.