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North Slope Iñupiat Leaders Applaud U.S. District Court ANWR Ruling

The Biden administration's decision to cancel ANWR leases was made without engaging local communities, violated the law, and rolled back decades of progress for the North Slope Iñupiat

Anchorage, AK – Yesterday's [ruling](#) by U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska Judge Sharon Gleason affirmed what Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat (VOICE) has argued for years — the Biden administration's unilateral decision to cancel seven oil and gas leases that had been issued for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) was unlawful.

"With a standing resolution from our Board to support the exploration and development of the 1002 area in ANWR, we are pleased to see Judge Gleason correct the Biden administration's overreach on the cancelled leases," said **VOICE President Nagruk Harcharek**. "This proves yet again that the only way to create stable, durable policy in the North Slope is by engaging in consistent, meaningful consultation with the North Slope Iñupiat."

Thankfully, initial [executive orders](#) by the Trump-Vance administration suggest a change in approach that recognizes the value of responsible resource development. As the new administration continues to move forward with these goals, it is imperative that it learns from the mistakes of its predecessor and centers the voices of the North Slope Iñupiat in the decision-making process.

"It is important that the Trump-Vance administration meaningfully engage with and respect Kaktovik—the only community within ANWR—when it comes to policies affecting our lands and people," said **Kaktovik Iñupiat Corporation President Charles Lampe**. "We look forward to working together to create lasting policy that benefits our community, the state of Alaska, and the nation."

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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.