



February 2, 2021

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary Nominee
The Department of Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Nominee Haaland,

As the leading business organizations in the state of Alaska representing over 1,500 companies with approximately 100,000 employees, we are concerned about reports following President Biden's Executive Orders in his first week of office that the Department of Interior intends to review currently issued Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Record of Decisions (ROD) across the country, including the potential to review the ROD for the Willow Project in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR-A).

The Willow project was designed to meet requirements of the 2013 NPR-A Integrated Activity Plan (IAP), issued by the Obama-Biden Administration, and signed by Secretary Salazar, with stringent requirements for environmental protection. In fact, there are currently roughly 270 mitigation measures and best practices already in place for NPR-A development through the 2013 IAP, which the Willow Project was designed to comply with.

After the Willow Project discovery, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was requested to begin the EIS process in May 2018, and the Notice of Intent from DOI was issued in August 2018. The entire EIS process took over two years to complete, with the Record of Decision issued on October 26, 2020. Yesterday, U.S. District Court Judge Sharon Gleason denied in full preliminary injunction motions filed by environmental advocacy organizations in two separate cases challenging the Record of Decision. It is interesting to note that Mayor Harry Brower of the North Slope Borough provided a declaration in support to allow the Willow Project to proceed.

The current EIS ROD for Willow was not an expedited process. Over the course of 26 months, more than

100 public meetings with North Slope stakeholders were held, over 140 days of public comment, with in-person, virtual public meetings, and local radio broadcasts. The final EIS document is over 2,600 pages of detailed analysis.

Based on this thorough public review, and in-depth environmental review, we do not understand the rationale for this potential review of the ROD analysis for Willow. The BLM efforts over the last 2+ years address the issues raised through the public comment process, and the hundreds of stipulations and best management practices the project will be required to follow.

It is our respectful request that the Department of Interior not delay the Willow Project, and not require any additional analysis given the extensive and exhaustive nature of the process used to perform the approved Willow EIS.

The Willow project is very important to the state of Alaska. Alaska's economy has been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic and there are very few projects, if any in our state, that have the potential to bring over 2,000 construction jobs, with roughly 75% of the installation manhours union labor, and hundreds of long-term jobs. Oil and gas drives over 20% of the Alaskan economy. Many of the companies and their employees represented by the organizations signing this letter depend on the direct, indirect, and induced jobs the oil industry provides, and will suffer economic harm if the Willow project is deferred or cancelled. The project is also slated to bring in significant revenue to federal, state, and local governments which is critical in Alaska's efforts to recover from the pandemic.

Importantly, the Willow Project will also benefit the entire indigenous population of the North Slope region. The BLM estimates the project will generate over \$1.2 billion in property tax to the North Slope Borough alone over the life of the project, and \$2.6 billion for the NPR-A Impact Mitigation Grant Program, under which North Slope communities have the highest priority for use of the funds. These revenues benefit all the communities in the region, supporting schools, emergency response, health clinics, drinking water, wastewater, roads, utilities, and solid waste.

We urge your support for the current ROD and allow the Willow project to proceed as planned and approved.

Respectfully,



Kara Moriarty, President/CEO
Alaska Oil & Gas Association



Kati Capozzi, President & CEO
Alaska Chamber



Deantha Skibinski, Executive Director
Alaska Miners Association



Joe Michel, Executive Director
Alaska Trucking Association



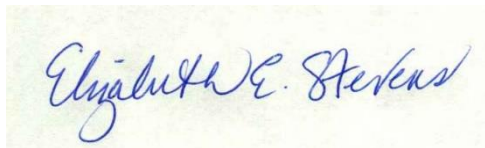
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CC:

Scott de la Vega, Acting Secretary, Department of Interior
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Senator Dan Sullivan
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