

**STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE**

2009

Source
CSHJR 18(RES)

**Legislative
Resolve No.**
26



Urging the United States Congress to refrain from passing legislation that designates land in Area 1002 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS Area 1002 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is considered the most promising onshore oil and gas prospect in the United States; and

WHEREAS the United States Department of the Interior estimates that there may be 10,400,000,000 recoverable barrels of oil and significant quantities of natural gas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS the potentially enormous oil and gas prospects are located in Area 1002 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and Area 1002 comprises only eight percent of the total area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS the United States Congress, in 16 U.S.C. 3121 (sec. 1002, Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act), authorized oil and gas exploratory activity within the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and reserved the right to enact future laws to allow for entry into and development of oil and gas resources in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS Area 1002 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was excluded from wilderness designation in 1980 as a result of a compromise in the negotiations that led to the conversion of the Alaska Wildlife Range into the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, with the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge encompassing an area that is approximately double the size of the Alaska Wildlife Range; and

WHEREAS 16 U.S.C. 3101(d) (sec. 101(d), Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act) expresses the belief of the United States Congress that the need for future legislation designating new conservation system units, new national conservation areas, or new national recreation areas in Alaska has been obviated by the enactment of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act; and

WHEREAS development of the oil reserves in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would reduce the dependence of the United States on unstable sources of foreign oil and would make the economy of the United States stronger and more stable; and

WHEREAS the economy of the United States would suffer further if the large natural gas resources in Area 1002 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge are not available for transportation in the proposed Alaska natural gas pipeline; and

WHEREAS clean-burning natural gas delivered by way of the proposed Alaska natural gas pipeline could be used as an environmentally friendly energy source for homes and businesses in the lower 48 states for decades to come; and

WHEREAS new technology and environmental practices used by the oil and gas industry provide for efficient production and environmental protection; and

WHEREAS 8,900,000 acres of the 19,000,000 acres in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge are already designated as wilderness areas; and

WHEREAS, assuming development of major oil and gas prospects and full leasing, oil and gas operations will have a footprint on only 2,000 acres out of a total of 1,500,000 acres in Area 1002 of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, approximately 0.13 percent of the area;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States Congress to preserve its right to enact a law providing for the environmentally responsible exploration and development of oil and gas resources in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge by not passing any legislation that designates land in Area 1002 of the Arctic National

Wildlife Refuge as wilderness.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Ken Salazar, United States Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable John Boehner, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the 111th United States Congress.