



*Your Land.
Your Voice.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 3, 2009

Contact: Emilie Surrusco, 202-544-5205
emilie@alaskawild.org

Sen. Begich brings much-needed spotlight to America's Arctic
Freshman senator introduces bills to address Arctic climate change in first floor speech

Statement from Kristen Miller, Government Affairs Director:

“With the introduction of a package of bills that aims to address the impacts of climate change in a region that is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world, we are glad Senator Mark Begich (D-AK) is taking a leadership role in addressing the dire problems faced by the people, wildlife and environment of America's Arctic. Sen. Begich also acknowledges the extensive risks associated with oil development - including oil spills, human health impacts and gaps in scientific knowledge - that would only compound the problems caused by climate change in America's Arctic.

Sen. Begich's actions today are a good first step. However, these Arctic policies must be considered in the context of the massive plans for development already moving forward in the Arctic offshore environment. Without taking time to carefully reexamine the inadequate processes that put these plans in place, we could lose too much of the Arctic before any meaningful change can be made.

If we are serious about protecting America's Arctic, we must all work together to come up with a new plan for development and conservation that incorporates the important issues that Sen. Begich is seeking to address and provides the framework for a thriving Arctic ecosystem for years to come. We look forward to working with Sen. Begich on these important issues.”

About Alaska Wilderness League:

Alaska Wilderness League is the only organization dedicated solely to the preservation of Alaska's wilderness in the nation's capital. Go to www.alaskawild.org to find out more.

###

###

www.AlaskaWild.org

122 C St NW, Ste 240, Washington, DC 20001 * Tel: 202-544-5205 * Fax: 202-544-5197