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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 24, 2017

Contact: Gwen Dobbs

Tel: 202-544-5205 or Email: gwen@alaskawild.org

Oil Lobbyist Confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Interior

WASHINGTON – The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee confirmed David Bernhardt as Deputy Interior Secretary today (53 yes, 43 no). Bernhardt is a controversial nominee for Deputy Interior Secretary and has a history of aggressive and underhanded attempts to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling and seismic activities. Under the Bush administration, he was one of the [administration's point people in the push to promote drilling from the Arctic to Wyoming](#). Bernhardt altered U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports to downplay the impacts of drilling in the Arctic Refuge before Congress, and in 2015, sued the federal government to allow seismic development in the Arctic Refuge.

Statement by Kristen Miller, Interim Executive Director, Alaska Wilderness League:

“We are deeply disappointed that Senate Energy and Natural Resources appointed David Bernhardt as the Deputy Interior Secretary. Bernhardt’s history with the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge has been controversial and riddled with deceptive practices. His past actions raise serious questions about his ability to act in the public interest and to protect iconic national treasures like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

President Trump and this Congress continue to show just how out of touch they are with the hearts and minds of the American public. Some places in our nation are simply too special, too sacred to drill – and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of them.”

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www.AlaskaWild.org

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