

November 28th, 2017

Dear Senator:

As fellow Republicans who share a commitment to sound fiscal policy, we support advancing long-overdue and sensible tax reform. We are writing, however, because we object to the effort to include a provision mandating drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the budget reconciliation bill.

Republican President Theodore Roosevelt established our National Wildlife Refuge System and it was another Republican, President Dwight Eisenhower, who originally set aside the Northeast corner of Alaska in 1960. In the more than half century since, bipartisan efforts have strengthened and maintained protections for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It is truly the wildest place left in America, safeguarding hundreds of thousands of calving caribou, denning polar bears and millions of migratory birds.

The United States has, in recent years, become the world's leading producer of oil and natural gas, increasingly exporting crude and refined petroleum products overseas. The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska provides ample opportunity for North Slope oil and gas exploration and development. There is simply no need to reverse protections for the only area of America's entire Arctic coastline legally off-limits to oil exploration, especially given our urgent need to address impacts from a changing climate and to diversify our energy resources.

Decisions regarding oil and gas exploration should be made in the context of a bi-partisan, broadly supported national energy policy that takes account of the need to reliably fuel economic prosperity while addressing environmental and national security challenges.

Moreover, including Arctic Refuge drilling in budget reconciliation is fiscally irresponsible. Revenue assumptions from leasing, bonus bid and royalty revenues are highly speculative. To meet the budget assumption of \$1 billion, oil companies would need to bid more than 40 times more than what average onshore North Slope lease sales have generated for almost two decades. With low oil prices and less costly options for investment closer to existing infrastructure, oil companies are showing little interest in exploiting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Finally, advancing drilling in this manner will complicate passage of important and vitally needed tax reform. Once again, we urge you to exclude this highly controversial provision from efforts to overhaul our nation's tax code and to instead take up and advance truly bipartisan energy legislation in the months ahead.

Thank you for your consideration.

William D. Ruckelshaus
Former Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency under Presidents Nixon and Reagan

Lynn Scarlett
Former Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior, under President George W. Bush

William K. Reilly
Former Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency under President George H.W. Bush

Ted Roosevelt IV
Barclays Capital Corporation

Nathaniel Reed
Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks under President Richard Nixon

The Honorable Tom Evans (R-DE), Member of Congress from 1977 to 1983

Thomas H. Kean
Former Governor of New Jersey (1982-1990) and Chairman, 911 Commission