

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 26, 2018

The Honorable Ryan Zinke  
Secretary of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

We write to express our appreciation for the Department of the Interior's recently released Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas leasing for 2019-2024 and to offer our perspective on the Alaska-specific lease sales.

We commend you for taking an inclusive approach that allows for meaningful public input as you determine where responsible development should occur on our nation's Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). For far too long, arbitrary and unilateral executive actions have undermined the open process that Congress established through the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act. This has harmed states like Alaska, where tens of millions of acres of waters were previously closed without public input, consultation or support. We welcome your decision to include the broadest subset of OCS regions and program areas in the DPP, which will ensure a robust public debate and deliver the strongest possible final program.

As the DPP recognizes, the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas in Alaska contain the second and fourth largest estimated Undiscovered Technically Recoverable Oil and Gas Resources (UTRR) of all OCS planning areas. Both have historically generated significant leasing interest, which has in turn resulted in substantial revenues for the Treasury—even before commercial production begins.

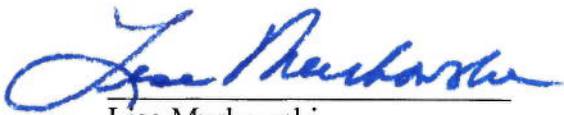
We strongly support the inclusion of the Chukchi and Beaufort planning areas in the DPP and encourage you to maintain three lease sales in each area over the 2019-2024 period. At the same time, given the diversity of stakeholders in this region, we urge you to commit your Department to meaningful consultation with local communities. In our view, properly supporting the leasing, exploration, and production of the resources in the Chukchi and the Beaufort Seas will require a concerted effort from participating federal agencies and all stakeholders in Alaska.

We ask that you maintain the two lease sales the DPP envisions in the Cook Inlet planning area. While a mature basin, this area continues to provide an important supply of affordable energy for communities throughout southcentral Alaska. New lease sales are key to new exploration and development that will bolster the supply and provide regional energy stability for the most heavily populated areas of Alaska, well into the future.

We believe the strongest near-term offshore program in Alaska is one that focuses on the Chukchi, Beaufort, and Cook Inlet. Such a program will maximize agency resources and reflect the areas with the broadest support for development among Alaskans. Accordingly, we ask that you remove potential sales in the Hope Basin, Norton Basin, St. Matthew-Hall, Navarin Basin, Aleutian Basin, Bowers Basin, Aleutian Arc, St. George Basin, Shumagin, Kodiak, and Gulf of Alaska from the DPP.

The DPP shows a genuine commitment to our nation's energy security and presents a great opportunity to continue reducing our foreign oil dependence while strengthening our economy. We commend you for including large portions of Alaska within it and look forward to working with you on a final program for 2019-2024.

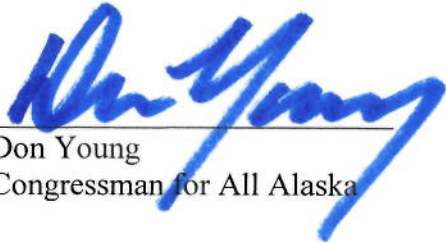
Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan  
United States Senator



Don Young  
Congressman for All Alaska