



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **AIDEA Sues President Biden for Violation of ANWR Section 1002 Leases, Abuse of Executive Order**

(Anchorage) – Today, the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) filed a lawsuit against President Joe Biden, Secretary of the Department of the Interior Deb Haaland, and other members of the Biden Administration. The lawsuit is in direct response to unlawful actions to obstruct and delay the development of valid oil and gas leases in the non-wilderness Coastal Plain (Section 1002 Area) of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

For more than 40 years, Alaskans —led by our native communities on the North Slope— have urged Congress to open the Section 1002 Area for resource exploration. With the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in 2017, Congress authorized the Department of the Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to establish and administer a competitive oil and gas program in the Coastal Plain, which occurred in December 2020. AIDEA was the primary bidder and secured seven tracts totaling 365,775 acres for 10-year lease agreements with the BLM, effective January 1, 2021.

“Responsibly developing oil and gas in this area specifically set aside for development is supported by the majority of Alaskans, over 20 Alaska Native entities located in and around the 1002 Area, Alaska’s governor, Alaska’s congressional delegation, and the Alaska State Legislature,” **said AIDEA Board Chair Dana Pruhs.** “It was passed by US Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and was officially signed into law by a sitting US president. Then, on his first day in office, President Biden issued a moratorium on the whole thing through an executive order. I don’t like the idea of turning our nation’s energy security over to Russia, Iran, and Venezuela.”

AIDEA has filed civil action against the following individuals in his or her official capacity:

- **Joe Biden Jr.**, President of the United States,
- **Deb Haaland**, Secretary of the Department of the Interior,
- **Laura Daniel-Davis**, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management,
- **Tracy Stone-Manning**, Director of the Bureau of Land Management, and
- **Thomas Heinlein**, Director of the Bureau of Land Management Alaska Office.

Seven violations of AIDEA’s valid and enforceable leases acquired during the BLM’s 2020 lease sale are specifically identified in the lawsuit. These include Executive Order 13990, Secretarial Order 3401, and the subsequent actions of DOI to obstruct and delay Congress’s mandate to facilitate development of the Coastal Plain’s oil and gas resources.

The non-wilderness Section 1002 Area of ANWR contains an estimated 7.6 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Much of the economic development and jobs supported across Alaska’s indigenous and rural North Slope communities is the result of responsible development of oil and gas resources. Public funding from taxes on oil and gas infrastructure has significantly contributed to economic security within these communities and provided revenue to fund local services, schools, health clinics, housing, emergency response, water and wastewater, heat and electric utilities, and

countless essential services. Additionally, House Joint Resolution 12 (HJR 12) highlighted that exploration, development, and production is predicted to generate 1,430 direct jobs and 6,350 indirect jobs annually and 2,480 direct jobs and 10,100 indirect jobs at peak employment within Alaska.

At statehood, Alaska was promised the opportunity to realize revenues from the development of oil and gas resources on federal lands maintained in Alaska (the 90/10 split). That promise was routinely broken through the late-1970s as then-President Jimmy Carter and his Department of the Interior moved huge swaths of federal lands into conservation units, essentially placing them off limits to development. Senator Ted Stevens vigorously challenged the Carter Administration's anti-development land grab in the context of the debate over ANILCA. Senator Stevens' efforts resulted in a compromise whereby the Carter Administration was given the authority to move more than 100 million acres of federal lands into conservation units. In exchange, Congress renewed its promise to allow Alaska the opportunity to realize revenues from remaining federal lands in Alaska, including the specially designated non-wilderness Section 1002 Area.

"Alaska has been promised the legal right to responsibly determine development of its natural resources. The continued delay and obstruction of these leases impacts Alaska's economic future for generations," said **AIDEA Executive Director Alan Weitzner**. "Alaska is at stake—our resource-based economy, good-paying jobs for Alaskan families, local and state tax revenue for public services, and sustained throughput into the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. AIDEA, Alaska, and Alaskans are due the full potential benefit of those leases and we will fight the federal government in court to keep its promises."

"The Biden Administration's brazen attempt to try to strip away valid and legally-acquired oil and gas exploration leases in ANWR is just one more example of an administration with little to no regard for the rule of law, or any understanding of how the nation's energy infrastructure actually works," said **Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy**. "The 1002 Area was specifically set aside by the United States Congress for exploration and development. The benefits of environmentally safe development will be family-supporting jobs and a secure supply of domestically produced energy. AIDEA is well within its rights to take the President and his staff to court over their unlawful actions."

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority is a public corporation of the state. AIDEA's purpose is to promote, develop and advance the general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of Alaska. Since 1967, AIDEA has been responsible for directing more than \$3.5 billion in economic development in Alaska and has declared \$439.7 million in dividends to Alaska since 1997.

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