



PRESS RELEASE

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907.771.3024
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AIDEA Advances Legal Challenge Against DOI in ANWR Lease Cancellation

May 3, 2024 (Anchorage, Alaska) – The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA), today advanced the legal challenge against the Department of Interior (DOI)'s unlawful cancellation of leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) Section 1002 area by filing its opening brief.

The submission of the opening brief demonstrates how the lease cancellations were illegal, arbitrary, and factually unsupported. The lawsuit and brief challenge the federal government's compliance with its own laws.

Governor Mike Dunleavy stated, "Submitting the opening brief in this case is a forceful assertion against federal overreach. It underscores our resolve to protect Alaskan rights and ensure federal actions are bound by the rule of law, not capricious political whims. We are standing up to the ongoing assault on Alaska, and this progress marks a crucial step in our continued fight against these injustices."

The legal challenge originated from the DOI's decision to cancel the leases, which were initially awarded under a congressionally mandated program established by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. AIDEA argues the lease cancellation was not supported by the facts, did not comply with the legal standards, and was influenced by prior political statements rather than an unbiased review of the lease compliance with environmental and regulatory standards.

This legal effort is part of an effort of AIDEA in partnership with the Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation (Kaktovik), Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), and the North Slope Borough (NSB) to compel DOI to carry out the Congressionally-mandated oil and gas development program, for the benefit of the North Slope, its people, and the whole state.

Charles Lampe, President of Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation emphasized, "Kaktovik is the only village within the project area. Our support for AIDEA is about protecting the rights and future of our people. The decisions made by the Department of Interior have significant implications for our community, and it's essential our voices are heard in this matter."

The case highlights a critical national discussion on responsible resource development, state rights, and abuse of the executive branch.

Treg Taylor, Alaska Department of Law, Attorney General said, "AIDEA's challenge reflects the commitment to defend Alaska's rights and ensure that all federal decisions impacting our state are made transparently, lawfully, and without bias. It's essential that the principles of fairness and legal integrity are maintained to protect our state's interests.

Randy Ruaro, AIDEA Executive Director, said, "This legal action represents our steadfast commitment to advocating for Alaska's economic interests. The cancellation of the ANWR oil and gas leases not only impedes economic development but also disregards the vital interests and rights of Alaskans. We are determined to pursue all available legal avenues to ensure that the potential of ANWR can be realized for the benefit of our state and its people"

AIDEA, Kaktovik, ASRC, and NSB remain united in their efforts to ensure the federal government complies with the law directing there be an oil and gas program in the ANWR coastal plain. They collectively seek a resolution that upholds the economic interests of Alaska and its communities.

For a copy of the opening brief filed, click [here](#). For information about AIDEA or any of AIDEA's projects, please visit www.aidea.org or contact AIDEA at communications@aidea.org.

About AIDEA:

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority is a public corporation of the State of Alaska. AIDEA's purpose is to promote, develop, and advance the general prosperity and economic welfare of the people of Alaska.

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