

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 7**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Introduced: 2/10/23

Referred: Resources

**A RESOLUTION**

1 **Supporting oil and gas leasing and development within the National Petroleum Reserve**  
2 **in Alaska; and urging President Biden and the United States Department of the Interior**  
3 **to approve the Willow Master Development Plan.**

4 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1923, President Warren G. Harding issued an Executive Order  
6 establishing Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 on the North Slope region to provide a potential  
7 supply of oil for the United States Navy; and

8 **WHEREAS** 42 U.S.C. 6501 (Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act of 1976)  
9 redesignated Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4 as the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska  
10 and transferred responsibility for its administration to the Secretary of the Interior; and

11 **WHEREAS** the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska encompasses 23,500,000  
12 acres, with boundaries extending south from Icy Cape to the drainage divide of the Brooks  
13 Range, then following the divide eastward to 156 degrees west longitude, then north to the  
14 Colville River, and following the Colville River downstream to its mouth; and

15 **WHEREAS** the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska falls entirely within the

1 boundary of the North Slope Borough and includes the communities of Anaktuvuk Pass,  
2 Atqasuk, Nuiqsut, Utqiagvik, and Wainwright; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in 2017, the United States Geological Survey estimated there to be  
4 8,700,000,000 barrels of recoverable oil and 25,000,000,000,000 cubic feet of recoverable gas  
5 reserves in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska; and

6 **WHEREAS** the 2020 National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Integrated Activity Plan  
7 and Environmental Impact Statement estimates potential annual government revenue,  
8 including local, state, and federal taxes and royalties, of \$730,000,000 to \$4,750,000,000 from  
9 oil and gas development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska; and

10 **WHEREAS** the 2020 National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Integrated Activity Plan  
11 and Environmental Impact Statement estimates that the exploration, development, and  
12 production of oil and gas in the reserve could generate 3,600 direct jobs and 2,750 indirect  
13 jobs annually over a period of 30 years; and

14 **WHEREAS** the Willow oil and gas prospect, known as the Willow project, is located  
15 in the Bear Tooth Unit of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and would be the  
16 farthest-west producing field on the North Slope; and

17 **WHEREAS** the Willow project would tap into reserves of an estimated 600,000,000  
18 barrels of oil and, at peak production, produce 180,000 barrels a day; and

19 **WHEREAS** the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Willow  
20 Master Development Plan was developed over multiple years through a rigorous process with  
21 significant involvement by and support from local communities and Alaska Native entities  
22 and was specifically designed to protect surface values and the Inupiat way of life; and

23 **WHEREAS**, on February 1, 2023, the United States Department of the Interior  
24 released its Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Willow project,  
25 which demonstrates that the project is legally sufficient and environmentally sound; and

26 **WHEREAS** the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, the Inupiat Community of the  
27 Arctic Slope, the North Slope Borough, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Alaska Native  
28 Village Corporation Association, the ANCSA Regional Association, the City of Utqiagvik,  
29 the City of Wainwright, the City of Atqasuk, and the Kuukpik Corporation are all united in  
30 support of the Willow project; and

31 **WHEREAS** the Willow project has received the support of labor unions and trade

1 groups, including the Alaska Petroleum Joint Crafts Council, the Alaska Support Industry  
2 Alliance, the Alaska AFL-CIO, the International Union of Operating Engineers, the Laborers'  
3 International Union of North America, the National Association of Manufacturers, the North  
4 America's Building Trades Unions, and the Alaska Chamber of Commerce; and

5 **WHEREAS** Representative Mary Peltola, Senator Lisa Murkowski, and Senator Dan  
6 Sullivan, the Alaska delegation in Congress, unanimously support approval of the Willow  
7 project; and

8 **WHEREAS** state royalties from oil and gas development in the National Petroleum  
9 Reserve in Alaska are allocated to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska Impact  
10 Mitigation Fund, which is used to provide the local communities of Anaktuvuk Pass, Atkasuk,  
11 Nuiqsut, Wainwright, Utqiagvik, and the North Slope Borough with grants to mitigate  
12 impacts related to oil and gas development; and

13 **WHEREAS** oil and gas development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska  
14 would strengthen national security and provide long-lasting benefits to the national economy  
15 by creating thousands of jobs nationwide, generating billions of dollars in government  
16 revenue, providing affordable energy to American consumers, and decreasing dependence on  
17 foreign energy; and

18 **WHEREAS** resource development in the state has benefited rural communities by  
19 bringing family-supporting jobs and wages, increased educational opportunities, safe water  
20 and wastewater facilities, and expanded health care services to those communities; and

21 **WHEREAS**, because of resource development, compared with the national average,  
22 rural areas of the state experienced greater increases in life expectancy between 1980 and  
23 2014 in locations where resource development activities, including oil and gas development,  
24 mining, and fisheries operations, have occurred; and

25 **WHEREAS** safe and responsible oil and gas exploration, development, and  
26 production has been demonstrated by over 50 years of activity on the North Slope region  
27 without adverse effects on the environment or wildlife populations;

28 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States  
29 Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, to maximize the area available for  
30 oil and gas leasing and development within the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska while  
31 conserving and protecting valued fish, wildlife, subsistence, and cultural resources; and be it

1           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges President Biden and  
2 the United States Department of the Interior to move forward with final approval of the  
3 Willow project by selecting the preferred Alternative E plan, which allows three drill sites, the  
4 minimum for the project to remain economically viable; and be it

5           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that a further delay in approval or construction of the  
6 Willow project undermines the values and benefits of the project to the state and its residents  
7 and is not in the public interest; and be it

8           **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States  
9 Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, when considering management  
10 activities related to the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, to take into account the long  
11 history of safe and responsible oil and gas development on the North Slope region and the  
12 enormous benefits that development of oil and gas resources in the National Petroleum  
13 Reserve in Alaska would bring to local communities, tribal governments, the state, and the  
14 nation.

15           **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President  
16 of the United States; the Honorable Kamala D. Harris, Vice President of the United States and  
17 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Deb Haaland, United States Secretary of the  
18 Interior; the Honorable Tracy Stone-Manning, Director, Bureau of Land Management, U.S.  
19 Department of the Interior; Steve Cohn, Alaska State Director, Bureau of Land Management,  
20 U.S. Department of the Interior; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Dan  
21 Sullivan, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Mary Peltola, U.S. Representative, members of  
22 the Alaska delegation in Congress.