

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

November 15, 2011

The Honorable Ken Salazar  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

We write in support of a wilderness designation for the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as part of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Refuge that was released in August. We, the undersigned Members of the United States Congress, urge you to choose Alternative C and to recommend Wilderness designation for the iconic, unparalleled Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge.

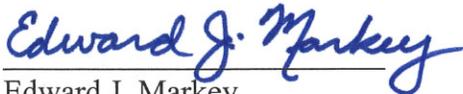
The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was set aside fifty years ago for its “unique wildlife, wilderness, and recreational values.” This unparalleled landscape, and particularly its Coastal Plain, is truly one of America’s greatest wild places. It is home to polar bears, grizzly bears, muskoxen, more than one hundred thousand caribou, and hundreds of thousands of birds that gather each year from around the globe. Every year, birds that begin their lives on the Coastal Plain migrate to all 50 states and across six continents before heading back to the Arctic.

The Gwich’in people who have lived in this region for thousands of years rely on the Porcupine caribou herd, whose calving and nursery grounds are in the Arctic Refuge’s Coastal Plain. More than 1,000 scientists wrote to Congress a few years ago to affirm that oil development would threaten this herd. In their letter, they wrote “Simply put, development of the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge would likely have significant detrimental effects on this international herd. These findings were supported in the National Academies of Science in their 2003 report, *‘The Cumulative Environmental Effects of Oil And Gas Activities on Alaska’s North Slope.’*” Oil and gas leasing, exploration, development, and production, including seismic activity, support infrastructure or any geological surveys are entirely incompatible with the purposes of the Refuge, and would permanently harm the values for which the Arctic Refuge was established.

The Coastal Plain is the biological heart of the Refuge. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service calls the coastal plain the “center for wildlife activity” in the Refuge. Allowing drilling in the Arctic Refuge would irreparably disrupt this important ecosystem and forever destroy one of our last great wild places.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a pristine landscape with values unlike any other public lands in our nation. Its wilderness, ecological integrity, wildlife, recreational opportunities, and Alaska Native cultural and subsistence values are unmatched. Therefore, we urge to you to adopt Alternative C in the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and to recommend designating the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge as Wilderness.

Sincerely,



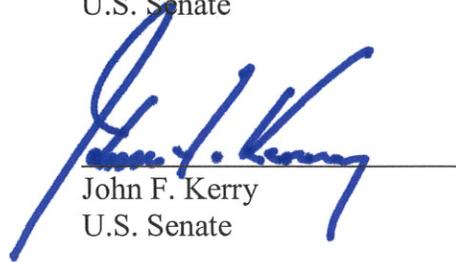
Edward J. Markey  
U.S. House of Representatives



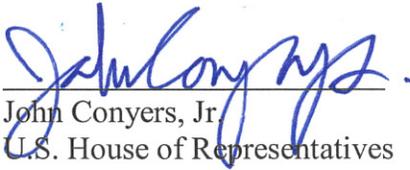
Joseph I. Lieberman  
U.S. Senate



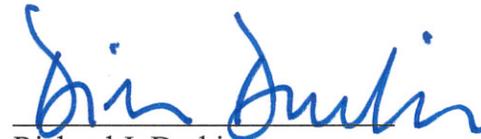
Christopher Van Hollen  
U.S. House of Representatives



John F. Kerry  
U.S. Senate



John Conyers, Jr.  
U.S. House of Representatives



Richard J. Durbin  
U.S. Senate



Rosa L. DeLauro  
U.S. House of Representatives



Tom Harkin  
U.S. Senate



George Miller  
U.S. House of Representatives



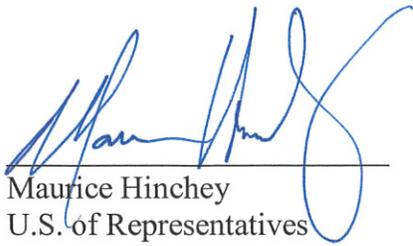
Sheldon Whitehouse  
U.S. Senate

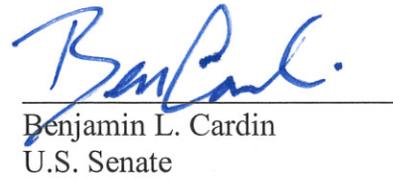


Lois Capps  
U.S. House of Representatives



Ron Wyden  
U.S. Senate

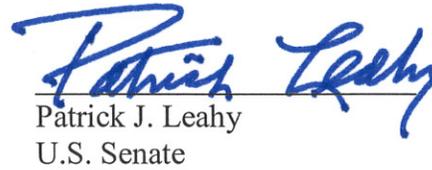
  
Maurice Hinchey  
U.S. of Representatives

  
Benjamin L. Cardin  
U.S. Senate

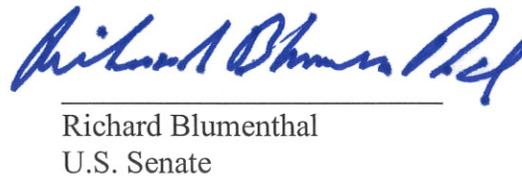
  
Raul M. Grijalva  
U.S. House of Representatives

  
Barbara Boxer  
U.S. Senate

  
Louise Slaughter  
U.S. House of Representatives

  
Patrick J. Leahy  
U.S. Senate

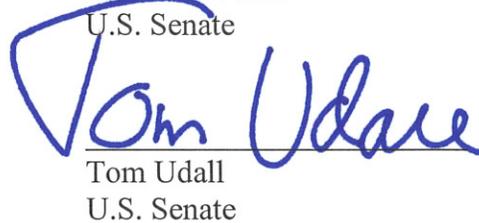
  
Gerald E. "Gerry" Connolly  
U.S. House of Representatives

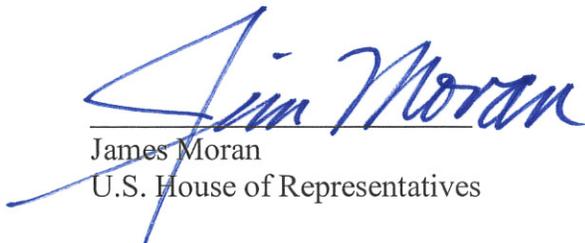
  
Richard Blumenthal  
U.S. Senate

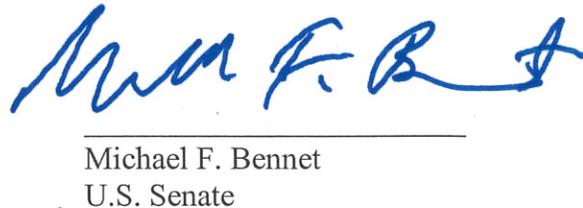
  
Betty McCollum  
U.S. House of Representatives

  
Maria Cantwell  
U.S. Senate

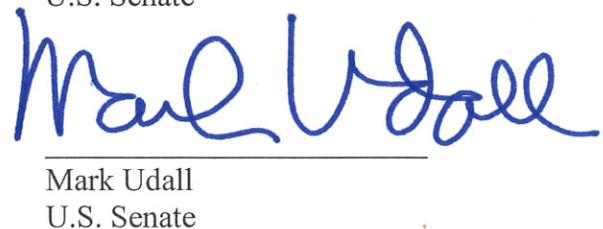
  
Steve Israel  
U.S. House of Representatives

  
Tom Udall  
U.S. Senate

  
James Moran  
U.S. House of Representatives

  
Michael F. Bennet  
U.S. Senate

  
Kathy Castor  
U.S. House of Representatives

  
Mark Udall  
U.S. Senate



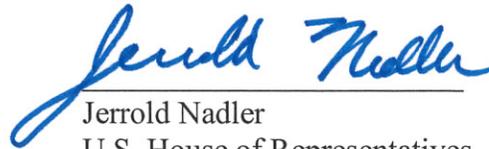
Robert E. Andrews  
U.S. House of Representatives



Sam Farr  
U.S. House of Representatives



John Olver  
U.S. House of Representatives



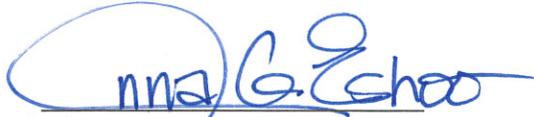
Jerrold Nadler  
U.S. House of Representatives



Earl Blumenauer  
U.S. House of Representatives



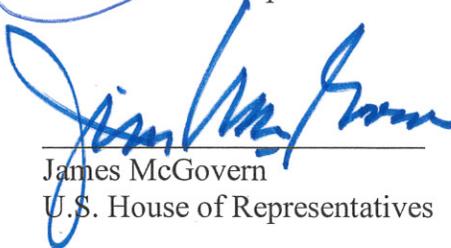
José E. Serrano  
U.S. House of Representatives



Anna G. Eshoo  
U.S. House of Representatives



Dennis J. Kucinich  
U.S. House of Representatives



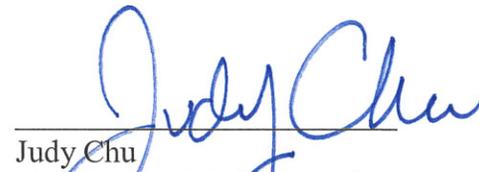
James McGovern  
U.S. House of Representatives



Linda Sanchez  
U.S. House of Representatives



Laura Richardson  
U.S. House of Representatives



Judy Chu  
U.S. House of Representatives



Niki Tsongas  
U.S. House of Representatives



Martin T. Heinrich  
U.S. House of Representatives



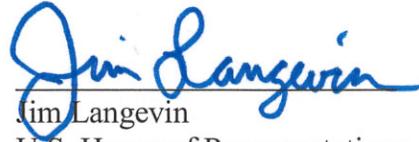
Carolyn Maloney  
U.S. House of Representatives



Rush D. Holt  
U.S. House of Representatives



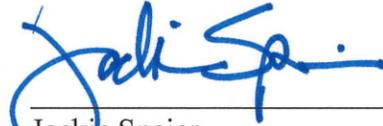
Maxine Waters  
U.S. House of Representatives



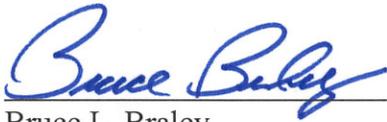
Jim Langevin  
U.S. House of Representatives



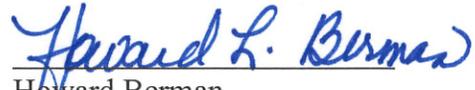
Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.  
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Jackie Speier  
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Bruce L. Braley  
U.S. House of Representatives



Howard Berman  
U.S. House of Representatives



Mazie K. Hirono  
U.S. House of Representatives



Mike Honda  
U.S. House of Representatives



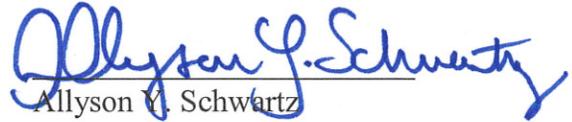
Mike Quigley  
U.S. House of Representatives



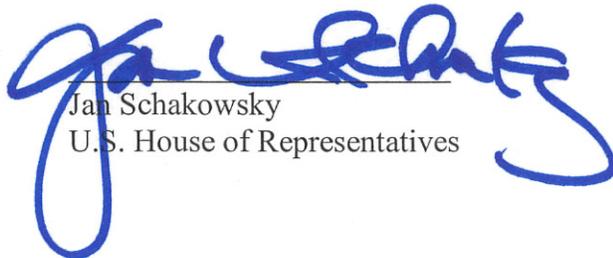
Chellie Pingree  
U.S. House of Representatives



Adam Schiff  
U.S. House of Representatives



Allyson V. Schwartz  
U.S. House of Representatives



Jan Schakowsky  
U.S. House of Representatives



Keith Ellison  
U.S. House of Representatives



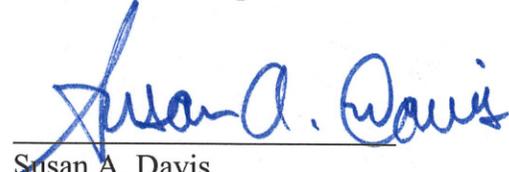
Steven Rothman  
U.S. House of Representatives



Barbara Lee  
U.S. House of Representatives



Alcee L. Hastings  
U.S. House of Representatives



Susan A. Davis  
U.S. House of Representatives



Jared Polis  
U.S. House of Representatives



Pete Fortney Stark  
U.S. House of Representatives



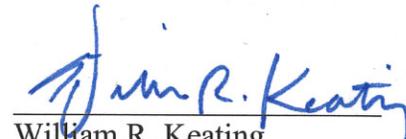
Ted Deutch  
U.S. House of Representatives



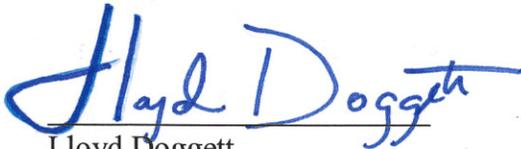
David Price  
U.S. House of Representatives



Dale E. Kildee  
U.S. House of Representatives



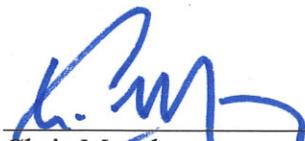
William R. Keating  
U.S. House of Representatives



Lloyd Doggett  
U.S. House of Representatives



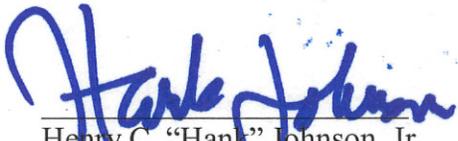
Frederica Wilson  
U.S. House of Representatives



Chris Murphy  
U.S. House of Representatives



Jim McDermott  
U.S. House of Representatives



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
U.S. House of Representatives