

Dear Senator Susan Collins,

The undersigned Maine businesses thank you for your decades of leadership protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. As you said in 2002, you “led the fight to block drilling in the Arctic - a hard issue but one that I felt so strongly about. We need to preserve those treasures for future generations.” Then in 2008, you said: “I don’t think the first place we should go drill is in a wildlife refuge.” And during the [budget resolution in 2017](#), you were the only Republican to vote for an amendment to stop drilling in the Refuge from ever being part of the tax reform bill and then [voted to strip it during floor consideration](#). We thank you for your strong support for protecting the Arctic Refuge and encourage you to continue to champion this special place, permanently, by legislative means through your co-sponsorship of [S. 282](#) - the Arctic Refuge Protection Act.

As Maine businesses, our long-term financial success and economic sustainability are important to us. We look for similar fiscal prudence in our country’s priorities and investments. Yet, as you know, the first Arctic Refuge oil and gas lease sale, the first of two that were mandated in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, was an abysmal failure. It only raised approximately \$6 million for the U.S. Treasury or, less than 1% of the \$1 billion in revenue promised to American taxpayers.

The initial lease sale in the refuge failed to receive interest from the oil and gas industry, and the state of Alaska placed nearly all of the winning bids - an entity that does not even have the ability to develop. The only others bidders were [two tiny companies that each picked up a single oil lease](#).

As we continue to experience the devastating impacts of climate change, and we pivot away from fossil fuels, it is no wonder companies are not interested in drilling in the Arctic Refuge. Drilling for oil on the fragile coastal plain will exacerbate the climate and ecological crisis in an area that is already ground zero for climate change. The Arctic is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world. As you so astutely said in 2004 in your testimony for the [Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee's "Global Climate Change: Arctic Climate Impact Assessment" hearing](#), after your trip to the Norwegian Arctic:

"Although the climate is changing most rapidly in the Arctic, the entire world will be affected. The Arctic is the canary in the mine that should serve as a warning to the rest of us. Warming in the Arctic is likely to have major implications for the entire planet. Western states could experience longer and more severe droughts. Coastal states could experience flooding and other problems as a result of global sea level rise. In Maine, the ski industry, agriculture, and fisheries could be particularly hard-hit."

For these reasons, and in defense of Indigenous human rights, protection of wildlife, and the health of future generations, please continue to stand with [70 percent of voters in the United States who oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge](#). Even the six largest U.S. banks and two dozen international banks have adopted policies to preclude financing for Arctic oil and gas development.

As you know, even though the first oil and gas lease sale was a complete financial failure, without congressional action, a second sale is mandated. We urge you to continue your long tenure of leading bi-partisan efforts to protect, as you said, “these treasures for future generations.” Please take action to prevent the destruction of this wildlife refuge by restoring protections now through legislative means and by encouraging your colleagues to join you. We are so thankful to you for continuing to support protections for the environment and wildlife and efforts to preserve our national parks, wildlife refuges, and national forests for enjoyment by the American people.

Thank you,

ArcticEarth, LLC

Camden, Maine

Arctic Lynx, LLC

Cape Elizabeth, Maine

Cairn Consulting Group

Bryant Pond, Maine

Chimani, Inc.

Yarmouth, Maine

Compass Light Productions, Inc

Camden, Maine

Confluence Collective

Cape Elizabeth, Maine

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