

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 1, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Efforts to advance America's energy security have been repeatedly frustrated in the United States Congress. As Americans increasingly make their simple plea through polls and petitions for more energy exploration, the Majority has responded almost entirely with dilatory tactics and obstruction. The energy crisis now borders on an emergency.

On July 14, you took a major step towards freeing up American oil and gas reserves by lifting the Executive moratorium on OCS development. This exercise of Presidential authority represents direct and efficient progress towards exploring America's vast and valuable reserves.

We now request you issue an Executive Order based on national security considerations to mandate the United States Geological Survey to conduct an immediate, state-of-the-art seismic survey of the hydrocarbon resources within the 1.5 million acre 1002 area of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This would be purely informational and environmentally non-intrusive.

The last seismic survey of the area is 25 years old (winter of 1983-84), and the United States government is operating with outdated information of America's energy inventory. In times of fragile national security and economy, an accurate assessment of American energy resources is fundamental to the national interest.

Section 1003 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (PL 96-487) prohibits any "exploration leading to development" without an act of Congress. However, the Congressional intent of this prohibition does not cover seismic testing. The prohibition is directed at exploratory drilling which, unlike seismic, typically leads to development whenever hydrocarbons are discovered. Modern seismic testing, on the other hand, is roughly equivalent to photography in terms of its environmental impact on land.


As Congress continues to debate the various issues surrounding energy resources, your Administration's support in providing the Legislative branch with this essential information is critical. Our current energy crisis highlights the need for the specific data 3D seismic will provide. Using your Executive power to inventory national energy resources will assure our Nation has accurate, correct data to reassess the potential of the 1002 area.

Very Respectfully,


Senator Ted Stevens


Senator Lisa Murkowski


Senator Pete Domenici


Senator Jim Inhofe



