



February 4, 2021

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary Nominee
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Nominee Haaland,

The ANCSA Regional Association (ARA) represents the twelve Regional Corporations created under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) which was approved by Congress and signed into law by President Nixon in 1971. The Alaska Native Village Corporation Association (ANVCA) represents 177 village and urban corporations created by ANCSA. Together these organizations represent over 150,000 Alaska Native shareholders.

We write today to urge the Department of Interior not to delay the ConocoPhillips Alaska Willow Project given the exhaustive and thorough review process it has already undergone, and the urgent need for vetted, economic opportunities for safe development in Alaska.

ARA and ANVCA strongly support responsible resource development in Alaska and are concerned about reports that the DOI intends to, once again, review the EIS Record of Decision (ROD) for Willow, which could delay or defer the project's progress.

There is no basis for further review of the ROD, given the extensive record of public hearings, documented BLM efforts to address all issues raised through public comment, completion of an in-depth environmental analysis, and the over 270 stipulations and best management practices the project will be required to follow. The Willow EIS was performed under the rigorous process in place during the Obama Administration, and was not expedited or granted any special consideration. The EIS took more than two years to complete and the report itself totals more than 2,600 pages of in-depth analysis. Given the extensive nature of the process used to perform the Willow EIS, we request that the Department of Interior not delay the Willow project for further unnecessary analysis, or political rhetoric.

The State of Alaska has been in recession for over five years, well before the COVID pandemic hit, which then caused further negative impacts in every industry important to our state. The federal government should be looking at opportunities to help Alaska respond to these impacts rather than exacerbating them. Delaying a project like Willow, which has already passed a rigorous EIS process, will cause ripple effects throughout the Alaskan economy. This project will support over 2,000 construction jobs and hundreds of long-term jobs, while providing over \$2 billion in revenues to the State of Alaska and \$7.6

billion in federal royalties. For context, \$2 billion is roughly the size of the current budget deficit faced by our state. Revenues received by this project allows our rural communities to receive continued support to schools, health clinics and basic public services like water and sewer treatments.

The Willow Project has passed every environmental and community test put before it and would provide a much-needed economic boost to Alaska. Delaying it any further will only bring more harm to our state. It also harms the economy and budget of the North Slope Borough, the local government most closely impacted by the federal government's decision for review.

Best Regards,



Kim Reitmeier, Executive Director
ARA



Hallie Bissett, Executive Director
ANVCA