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November 17, 2025

The Honorable Nicholas J. Begich III
U.S. House of Representatives
153 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Begich:

On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business, I write in support of H.J. Res. 131, which would repeal the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)'s 2024 Coastal Plain Oil & Gas Leasing Program Record of Decision (ROD) that restricted oil and gas leasing on over 1.15 million acres of land in northeast Alaska. This land was specifically set aside by Congress in the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act for oil and gas leasing. Unlocking the 7.7 billion barrels of discoverable oil in this region by repealing this rule is an important step to lowering energy costs for small business owners across the whole country.

NFIB represents approximately 300,000 small and independent businesses across the United States, including more than 1,000 in the state of Alaska. In NFIB's most recent *Problems and Priorities* survey, small businesses ranked the cost of natural gas, propane, gasoline, diesel, and fuel oil as their 6th most pressing issue.[1] Job creators depend on affordable, reliable, American energy so they can own, operate, and grow their small businesses.

In the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Congress directed at least two lease sales in the "1002 Area" by 2024. Nine tracts were leased out in 2021, but these contracts were promptly frozen on the first day on the Biden administration and cancelled shortly thereafter. To make matters worse, in December 2024, BLM issued a final ROD that permanently closed 76% of the area to further energy development. Thankfully, Congress' 2025 tax package rebuked this plan, and mandated four lease sales in the next decade. Passing H.J. Res. 131 will help achieve this target.

In a recent NFIB member ballot, 88% of NFIB members supported Congress streamlining regulations on the production and transportation of energy sources.[2] Repealing the 2024 ROD would do just that, allowing for the production of more American energy on land owned by the taxpayer.

NFIB supports repealing this burdensome rule and other rules that increase production costs and make energy less affordable and reliable for small businesses. We look forward to working with you to advance this bill and help ensure continued American energy dominance.

Sincerely,

Louis A. Bertolotti
Principal, Federal Government Relations
NFIB

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[1] Holly Wade & Madeline Oldstone, Small Business Problems & Priorities, NFIB Research Center, July 2024. http://bit.ly/40uXas5.
[2] NFIB Member Ballot, Mandate, vol. 582., March 2023, *Should Congress streamline regulations to facilitate the production and transport of oil, natural gas, and other energy sources in the United States? (Yes: 88% No: 6% Undecided: 6%)*