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Governor Bill Walker
STATE OF ALASKA

January 19, 2018

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

Dear Secretary Zinke:

I am in receipt of your letter dated January 5, 2018 regarding the Department of the Interior Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) Draft Proposed Program for 2019-2024 as it relates to Alaska, and have shared it with Commissioner Andy Mack at the Department of Natural Resources. The State of Alaska will be participating in BOEM's January 23, 2018 public meeting in Anchorage and will also submit our formal comments prior to the deadline.

The Chukchi Sea, Beaufort Sea, and Cook Inlet planning areas have long been the focus of oil and gas exploration in Alaska. The State was encouraged to see multiple lease sales in all three of these areas in the draft proposed plan, and we support the inclusion of these sales in the program. I want to thank you for incorporating our input and taking a reasoned initial view of the national interests at stake for these areas.

I am writing to request that you direct BOEM to hold formal consultations with the tribes, Alaska Native corporations, and other stakeholders in the planning areas in Alaska where lease sales have been proposed. The State of Alaska has been in communication with tribal organizations and other stakeholders who have voiced concerns about the proposed program and we agree it is important for BOEM to consult and hold meetings with the tribes and Alaska Native corporations impacted by the proposed program. We also feel strongly the meetings should occur in each of the areas where lease sales have been proposed.

Thank you for your attention to this issue, and your continued recognition of the role responsible development in Alaska plays in our national efforts for energy dominance and American security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Walker".

Bill Walker
Governor