Alaska House Bush Caucus

Representative Bryce Edgmon, Chair, District 37
Alaska State Legislature
120 4th St. State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Nellie Jimmie. District 38
Representative Neal Foster, District 39
Representative Robyn Frier, District 40

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Ms. Kelly Hammerle
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (VAM-LD)
45600 Woodland Road
Sterling, VA 20166-9216

Submitted via regulations.gov

Re: Comments on the 11th National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Draft Proposed Program: 1st Analysis and Proposal

Dear Secretary Burgum and Ms. Kelly Hammerle:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the preparation of the 11th National Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. We represent communities across western Alaska that have relied on the Bering Sea for countless generations. Alaska has consistently supported a tailored approach to offshore leasing, focusing on areas that have high resource potential, economically recoverable resources, and industrial infrastructure to support development. The Bering Sea lacks all these necessary qualities, and because of this absence, holds no industry interest for offshore development. However, the Bering Sea does hold other wealth. The Bering Sea supports industries and communities with commercial and recreational fishing, subsistence, traditional ways of life, tourism, and other uses. Fishing groups and fishery regulators have opposed offshore leasing in the Bering Sea to protect essential fish habitat, sustainable management practices, and the reputation of Alaska's multi-billion dollar wild seafood industry. Tribes along the Bering Sea coast have remained unified in their opposition to oil and gas leasing in the Bering Sea for over 40 years to protect food security and traditional ways of life.

Because of the absence of offshore oil and gas potential and the rich abundance of other multi-billion dollar industries and traditional practices already occupying the Bering Sea, we ask that the areas the Norton Basin, St. Matthew-Hall, Navarin Basin, Aleutian Basin, and St. George Basin be excluded from the 11th National OCS Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Sincerely,

Representative Bryce Edgmon,
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Representative Nellie Jimmie

Representative Neal Foster

Representative Robyn Frier