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Testimony on H.R. 2150  
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Good Morning,

I appreciate the invitation from Chairman Lamborn to testify and the sub committee for taking the time to listen. My oral testimony will be the same as my written remarks.

My name is Tim Sharp and I am the Business Manager of the Alaska District Council of Laborers, an organization representing approximately five thousand union workers. We are mainly construction, maintenance and manufacturing workers employed throughout the state of Alaska. We work in the oilfields, on roads and bridges, within the building and construction trades industry, as well as, maintain both public and private infrastructure facilities all over the state.

I am here today and excited to strongly support H.R. 2150 or the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska Access Act introduced by Congressmen Young, Hastings and Lamborn. We are in strong support for a number of different reasons, but they boil down to two main issues that most impact my membership. Most simply put, those are jobs, and affordable fuel and energy.

There was never a question of “if” the NPRA should be opened, only “when”. We would suggest that with the dwindling amount of oil presently being pumped through the Trans Alaska Pipeline, the cost of gas and heating oil for the average American increasing to business and commerce stifling rates, the huge numbers of unemployed construction workers, the extra cost burden presently being exacted on our rural Alaskans in the form of six to ten dollar per gallon fuel, that there is no better time than now.

There will of course be the inevitable wailing and gnashing of teeth from those who never met a road, bridge, dam or pipeline that they liked; especially from certain organizations outside our state run by people that have never been there, that wish to lock our state up out of their own misguided perception of what they think it should be. From the perspective of the people I represent and most Alaskans I know, we need jobs and we need affordable energy and fuel. We see no wisdom in not

taking action to begin to address the obvious immediately and feel this legislation is a straightforward approach towards doing so for the nation.

Also, to at least show that we are responsible stewards of our own state I would also support any development being tied to the most stringent ecologically friendly engineering possible. It means more jobs, protects the environment and will result in cheaper and more abundant energy.

The other reason for moving this legislation now is that oilfields are not built or developed overnight. I would think that five years would be a very conservative guess toward a minimum time line in going from permitting to blueprints, to further exploration, to roads and pad construction, to pipelines, and finally to market. However, the upside would be five years of good employment leading up to a time of bringing a downward pressure to the price per gallon of gasoline or heating fuel. We see no downside for Americans.

It also has been my observation, after twenty years in the Alaskan oilfields, that the amount of spin off jobs created in support of this type of development are huge. There may also be large amounts of natural gas to be discovered, tapped and developed as a result of newly concentrated commercial activity in the NPRA.

Finally, and possibly most important, is that Alaska has always had the potential to be a huge breadbasket of natural resources for America. Shy of permitting and politics, the only thing that keeps this from becoming a reality is the extraordinarily high cost of energy here that it takes to develop them. This legislation moves us towards changing that and helping to control our own destiny as a state and a nation.

The only thing we can know for sure is; that which is not working already and that any further inaction for lack of political will, will only put us further behind the eight ball of increased dependence on foreign oil.

Jobs and energy... Please support this timely and much needed legislation for our country.

Thank you again for taking the time to listen.