

# Alaska Legislature

## Representative Charisse Millett

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September 20, 2011

Congressman Doc Hastings  
Chairman, Natural Resources Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
1203 Longworth  
House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

[RE: Written Testimony for ANWR: Jobs, Energy and Deficit Reduction Oversight Hearing]

Congressman Hastings,

Thank you for holding an oversight hearing on the potential for job creation and deficit reduction through responsible oil production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and allowing me to provide written testimony.

The United States has vast traditional energy reserves waiting to be developed that can go a long ways towards reducing the federal deficit and creating new jobs without raising taxes.

The national unemployment rate currently stands at 9.1 percent and the national debt is 14 trillion dollars and rising. Now is the time to take bold steps to get America working again and to raise the money needed to pay down the crushing financial burden before we pass it down to future generations.

Domestic energy production in the United States is looking better than it has in decades. We now produce just over half of our energy needs domestically. Shale oil and gas production is creating new jobs and billions of dollars in new local and state government revenue.

After years of costly delays the EPA finally issued air quality permits to Shell so it can proceed with exploratory drilling in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. The estimated reserves indicate it could rival Prudhoe Bay.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration the United States has 22.3 billion barrels of oil and 283.9 trillion cubic feet of natural gas of proven reserves.

We have plenty of energy – what we need is the political will to open up areas where we know commercially viable oil and gas reserves exist.

There is no better example of that than ANWR. Congress deliberately set aside the 10-02 Area for future oil and gas production when it created the refuge over 30 years ago.

ANWR holds sizable oil and gas reserves and can help refill the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, a critical piece of our country's energy infrastructure.

I would like to dispel some of the misunderstandings that some Americans may have about ANWR and oil and gas development in the 10-02 Area.

First, if oil was discovered less than 2,000 acres out of 1.5 million acres would be used for oil and gas operations. *That comes to less than one half of one percent* of ANWR. Again, the 10-02 Area was intentionally set aside to meet the nation's energy needs.

Wildlife will not be harmed by oil production in ANWR. The Central Arctic Caribou Herd that migrates through the Prudhoe Bay area is many times larger than it was before oil production began.

ANWR could hold billions of barrels of oil and trillions of feet of natural gas. The potential revenue the federal government could make can run into the billions of dollars.

Jobs. Anywhere between 250,000 and 735,000 new jobs could be created if the coastal plain were developed.

You many have heard that Alaskans do not support opening ANWR. Nothing could be further from the truth. Public opinion polls taken over the past couple of decades have routinely shown that an average of 75 percent of Alaskans support oil development in ANWR. That includes the Alaska Natives who live near the 10-02 Area; Alaska's past and present congressional delegations and a long line of governors.

That broad support is also reflected in the resolutions passed by the Alaska Legislature every two years urging the federal administration and congress of open a tiny portion of the refuge to oil exploration and development.

Right now the focus in Washington D.C. and around the country is on job creation. States that are net energy exporters like Alaska, North Dakota, Texas and Wyoming all enjoy unemployment rates below the national average. The oil and gas industry pays good wages and benefits, pays taxes that fund education, transportation and public safety and also make generous charitable donations.

The successful energy based economies in those states have can be replicated nationally if the administration and members of congress act now to aggressively develop energy resources we know exist.

There are some people who say we need to cut our ties to fossil based fuels and move towards renewable and alternative forms of energy. I wholeheartedly support wind, solar and other forms of renewable energy. They have an important place in our energy portfolio.

But the fact is none of the available renewable energy technologies are capable of producing anywhere near the amount of electricity and space heat needed for our homes, businesses and public facilities.

That could happen someday but for now we will have to rely on oil, coal and natural gas.

This hearing can be the first step to putting the national economy back on its feet with jobs created through environmentally responsible oil development in the 10-02 Area of ANWR and other oil and gas basins around the country.

Again, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony to the committee. If I can be of any further assistance on this issue please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charisse Millett". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rep. Charisse Millett