May 31, 2026

As religious leaders of organizations across a broad spectrum of religious life, we urge you to pledge not to bid on the upcoming lease sale on June 5 for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

As faith leaders, we are called not only to care for all of God's children but to also protect God's nonhuman creation. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, a part of God's creation that stands alone in its vast wilderness, ecological significance, and beauty, is an inspiring, wild landscape. It is home to polar bears, wolves, migratory birds, and a Porcupine Caribou Herd that is 180,000 strong. It is also a landscape sacred to Alaska's Indigenous Gwich'in communities, for whom the coastal plain of the Refuge is "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins."

The Gwich'in people are dependent on the health of the landscape and the Porcupine caribou, which constitutes a majority of their food source, to maintain their culture and way of life. Drilling for fossil fuels in the Refuge will devastate the land, contribute to ongoing climate change, and threaten the ten thousand year-old traditions that the Gwich'in people depend upon to survive.

Inspired by our dedication to defending all of God's creation – which includes the Gwich'in people and their fundamental rights – the faith community at large has been committed to protecting the Arctic Refuge for decades, and we are not alone. In February, when the federal government held a comment period regarding potential lease sales in the Arctic Refuge, more than 150,000 people submitted comments opposing drilling in the Arctic – an astounding testament in support of protecting this sacred landscape.

While there has been strong sustained public opposition and an overwhelming lack of market interest in drilling in the Arctic, our motivation for protecting the Arctic Refuge from drilling ultimately rests on a profound moral obligation we believe is shared by all: to promote justice, to steward God's creation, and to honor and protect sacred places. We hope that you will join us to protect the Arctic Refuge by pledging to not bid during the upcoming lease sale.

Sincerely,

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Texas State Missionary Baptist Convention
Senior Pastor
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Executive Director

New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light

Bishop Francine Brookins
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Sister Joan Brown, osf
Franciscan Sister
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