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OneAlaska: Labor, business, policy, and Alaska Native leadership unite to protect Alaska's economy, oppose the latest attempt to overhaul Alaska's oil tax laws

ANCHORAGE- Nov. 7 - Labor leaders, members of the business community, independent thought leaders, and Alaska Native corporation leadership have joined forces to protect Alaska's economy and working families to oppose a proposed ballot measure aimed at overhauling the state's oil tax structure for the eighth time in 14 years. The group, called OneAlaska, has officially filed with the Alaska Division of Elections as a ballot measure group.

OneAlaska's Chair is Chantal Walsh, petroleum engineer and former Oil and Gas Division Director for Governor Bill Walker.

OneAlaska co-chairs are:

- Nicholas Begich III, Eagle River– Small business owner, entrepreneur
- Genevieve Bell, Fairbanks – Manager at family owned business
- Gary Dixon, Anchorage – Secretary/Treasurer Teamsters Local 959
- Jason Grenn, Anchorage – Former Independent state legislator
- Crawford Patkotak, Utqiagvik – Board Chair, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, whaling captain
- Bill Popp, Anchorage – CEO, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation
- Julie Sande, Ketchikan – Small business owner of several family owned businesses, AIDEA Board member
- Jill Schaefer, Soldotna – Small business owner
- John Sturgeon, Eagle River – Forestry executive, former State Forester & Champion for state's rights and two-time, unanimous victor at the United States Supreme Court
- Jodi Taylor, Anchorage – Small business owner

The proponents acknowledge their proposed ballot measure will increase the industry's oil taxes by at least 200% at a range of oil prices, including in both legacy and new oil fields. "With several significant, new development projects in the works, adding a punitive new tax on companies that are trying to invest in Alaska is the wrong idea at the wrong time," said **Chantal Walsh**, former director of the Division of Oil and Gas, and OneAlaska Chair.

"I am a proud political independent, and make decisions based on policy, not party affiliation," said **Jason Grenn**, former Independent member of the Alaska House of Representatives and OneAlaska co-chair. "The ballot measure is a mistake and should be rejected by voters. It contains provisions that would jeopardize new development; and make it harder for companies to invest here."

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“This ballot measure is bad for Alaska jobs, period,” said **Gary Dixon** with Teamsters Local 959, and OneAlaska co-chair. “We oppose any public policy that puts family-supporting jobs at risk, and this one fits the bill.”

“Make no mistake, this effort, if successful, would cripple the industry’s ability to invest in new technology and methods to safely extract additional oil from these fields. This means fewer jobs and increased uncertainty, and that is why I strongly oppose this ballot measure,” said **Crawford Patkotak**, Board Chair for Arctic Slope Regional Corporation and OneAlaska co-chair.

The State of Alaska’s own legal analysis identified flawed aspects of the measure. It reads: “The vagueness of the language and the lack of definitions would also lead to numerous implementation and potential constitutional concerns post-enactment.”

“The ballot box is the wrong place to enact complicated tax policy, especially policy that would damage our economy, both in Anchorage and statewide,” said **Bill Popp**, AEDC’s CEO.

“I am all too familiar with the government overplaying its hand and shutting down industries,” said **John Sturgeon**, a forestry executive and outdoor advocate who prevailed in two landmark U.S. Supreme Court cases relating to Alaska land access. “I have worked in Alaska’s Forest products industry for the past 50 years. I have seen it shrink from the second largest industry in Alaska to next to nothing. I don’t want to see that happen to Alaska’s oil industry from unfair taxation. I want my grandkids to grow up in a strong economy where everyone can get a job.”

“This initiative fails to meet the constitutional requirement to maximize our resources to the benefit of Alaskans,” said **Nick Begich**, small business owner and OneAlaska co-chair.

“Additionally, the initiative is so poorly constructed that were it to pass, it’s a near certainty that litigation would be the only result.”

OneAlaska members also intend to remind voters why the current tax law, sometimes referred to as Senate Bill 21 (or “SB 21”) has been effective in increasing investment, generating more revenue for the State at lower oil prices, stabilizing oil production, and otherwise creating a competitive, pro-business environment in Alaska.

Additional quotes from OneAlaska co-chairs and more information can be found at:

Website: www.onealaska.com

Facebook: facebook.com/weareonealaska

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Paid for by OneAlaska, Anchorage, AK. Chair Chantal Walsh and Co-chairs Nick Begich, Genevieve Bell, Gary Dixon, Jason Grenn, Crawford Patkotak, Bill Popp, Julie Sande, Jill Schaefer, John Sturgeon, Jodi Taylor approved this message. Top Contributors are Alaska Oil and Gas Association, Anchorage, Alaska.