



United States Arctic Research Commission

May 6, 2010

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Commissioners

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Senior Staff

John W. Farrell, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Arlington, VA

Cheryl Rosa, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Deputy and Alaska Office Director
Anchorage, AK

Dear Mr. President,

I hereby tender my resignation as Chair of the United States Arctic Research Commission effective at the end of its next meeting, now scheduled June 2-3, 2010 in Washington. I am exploring how I can further serve the people of Alaska as an elected official, and I feel that being a candidate is not compatible with my continued service on the Commission. I pledge to work with Vice Chair Michele Longo Eder, and whomever you designate as my successor, to assure a smooth transition.

It has been an honor to serve as a Commissioner since 2001 and as Chair since 2006. During that period, Arctic sea ice has receded to historic minimums and scientists have produced stunning geographic, climatic, and oceanographic discoveries, some of which will bring new U.S. territory in the continental shelf off Alaska. I am proud of the Commission's work to help Alaska and our nation get ready for an accessible Arctic.

But like so many Alaskans, I am frustrated that two of the Commission's most urgent calls for action have gone unanswered in Washington. The Commission has repeatedly warned that the nation's oil spill research program has been whittled down to almost nothing. We have sought robust research for the Arctic and the nation that was promised in the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 to help make spill response faster, more practical, and effective. While we and other nations explore deeper in the Gulf and further offshore in the Arctic Ocean, we have not kept up with research goals the nation has set. Yet eight cents a barrel collected now from every barrel produced or used in the U.S. has built a fund which could fund research to reduce spill risks. Washington can no longer ignore this. Coastal residents in the Gulf, Alaska and other parts of the Arctic could pay a heavy price for this negligence.

Just as important, and despite repeated pleas from the Commission, tribal health authorities, Alaska's Congressional Delegation, and bereaved family members, the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Health and Human Services have not yet stepped up to fund critical research to give caregivers better tools to fight the terrible suicide epidemic in rural Alaska. Here, a greater percentage of young people—our children—are dying than any place else in the nation. It is an outrage.

For Alaska, and for our country, your help on both of these issues will save lives, build jobs, and bring hope. Thank you for the other support you have given the nation's Arctic research program, and for the opportunity to serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mead Treadwell".

Mead Treadwell, Chair

The President

5/6/10

cc: U.S. Arctic Research Commissioners and Advisors
Dr. John Farrell, Executive Director, USARC
Dr. John Holdren and Dr. Shere Abbott and Dr. Kate Moran, OSTP
Governor Sean Parnell
Dr. Arden Bement, National Science Foundation
Senator Lisa Murkowski
Senator Mark Begich
Representative Don Young