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Contact: Corey Himrod

Tel: 202-266-0426 or Email: corey@alaskawildaction.org

Alaska Wilderness League Action Launches Ad Campaign Targeting Senator Susan Collins

Collins cast one of the decisive votes to mandate oil leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Washington — Today, Alaska Wilderness League Action is launching a digital ad campaign holding Senator Susan Collins of Maine accountable for her controversial 2017 GOP Tax Act vote to mandate oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, an area she had previously fought to defend. The digital Facebook ads feature the voices of real Mainers from all walks of life and will run for the next two weeks targeting swing voters and voters that support protecting America's public lands and waters.

[View the extended ad here.](#)

During the President George W. Bush administration, [Senator Collins joined eight of her Republican colleagues](#) in [voting](#) to protect the Arctic Refuge, saying that doing so "would be akin to wasting resources that should rightfully be there for future generations." Fifteen years later, however, with President Trump's proposed tax cuts on the line, Senator Collins broke her promise to the people of Maine to defend this this national treasure and the people and wildlife that depend on it.

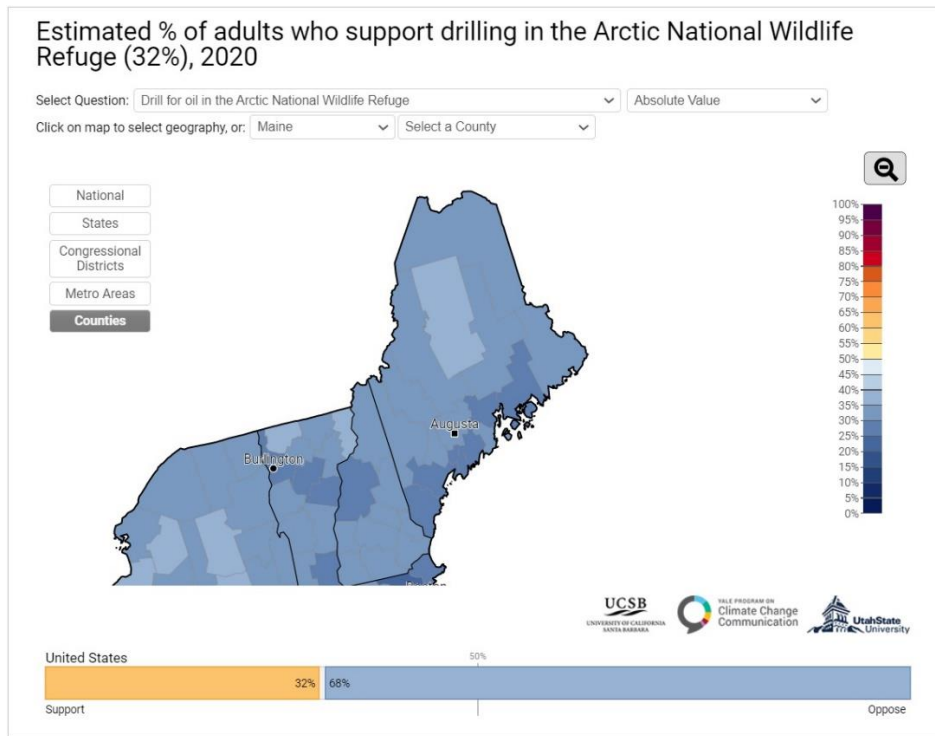
"Let's be clear that on one of the most important public lands vote of her career, Senator Collins stood with Big Oil and not with the people of Maine who want to protect our national parks, national wildlife refuges and other cherished landscapes," **said Adam Kolton, executive director of Alaska Wilderness League Action.** "Maine deserves leaders who will courageously lead the fight for our public lands and for our climate future."

According to the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication's [September 2020 poll](#), an estimated 68% of Mainers oppose drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.



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Here’s what a snapshot of Mainers has to say:

“In the past, I’ve reached out to Susan Collins, for her to pledge her support for protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. And each time, she’s pledged that support, until 2017 when she voted for the Republican tax bill that opened the refuge to drilling and resource extraction. I’ve supported Susan Collins in the past, but I can’t pledge that support now. Wildlife can’t vote, but you can.” — **Michael Boardman – 2019 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Arctic Refuge Artist-in-Residence (Scarborough Marsh, Maine)**

“I first lobbied Susan Collins in middle school, urging her to do something to address the climate crisis and the wildlife crisis that I learned were taking place in Maine, our country, and around the world. She told me that she recognized the significance of these issues and would take steps to address climate change and protect wildlife. Her vote for the 2017 tax bill that opened the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil development was the worst possible thing she could have done for wildlife and our climate future.” — **Emma Houston – professional outdoor wilderness guide (Mt. Desert, Maine)**

“Senator Collins enjoyed the support of Maine’s conservation minded citizens for many years, we who live on MDI (Mount Desert Island) used to be among them. Not anymore. With her support of the 2017 tax bill, she showed us she no longer had the will to do the right things for us. Instead, she voted to allow the big oil companies to destroy America’s priceless public lands. Will Maine’s priceless public lands be next?” — **Daniel Tandy – former National Park Service ranger (Bar Harbor, Maine)**

“As a mom, and as an educator, I worry about our kids’ future, especially with climate change, the effects of which we are already feeling here in Maine. That’s why I was disappointed in Senator Susan Collins’ vote to allow oil and gas companies to drill the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, a vote that sold off a national treasure to the highest bidder, and will increase pollution and put wildlife at risk. We need



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a senator who will fight for climate solutions and protect our environment. My kids and all of our kids' future depends on it.” — **Jennifer Paisley – Teacher (Hallowell, Maine)**

“This is an incredibly special place, and there’s nowhere like it in the United States. I’ve written personal letters to Senator Collins asking her to protect the Arctic Refuge from drilling, and although she said she would protect the region, she voted to open the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas exploration in the 2017 tax bill. I was incredibly disappointed, and I worry that political pressure has changed her values as she’s demonstrated in many of her recent votes. Can we trust that she will defend even the outdoor places in Maine any longer?” — **Kay Henry – Entrepreneur (Harpwell, Maine)**

Failing to hold the Trump administration accountable for its rushed lease sale process, for repeatedly sidelining and silencing its own scientists, for refusing to conduct recommended new studies, and for [burying expert concerns](#) about impacts to hundreds of thousands of calving caribou, denning polar bears, and millions of nesting and staging migratory birds not only threatens the Arctic Refuge but undermines the entire National Wildlife Refuge System. By making oil and gas a purpose of a national wildlife refuge for the very first time in history, Senator Collins established a dangerous precedent for reversing public land protections in Maine and around the country.

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*Alaska Wilderness League Action was founded in 2004 with the goal of strengthening the efforts to protect wild Alaska. Please note: Alaska Wilderness League Action is an affiliated but separate organization from Alaska Wilderness League. As a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization, Alaska Wilderness League Action engages in various advocacy and political activities for which Alaska Wilderness League, a 501(c)(3) organization, faces certain legal limitations or restrictions. **News and information released by the Alaska Wilderness League Action therefore must be identified as coming from Alaska Wilderness League Action.***



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