

Similarly, your concern over carbon pollution is also misguided. Instead of focusing on the root cause of carbon emissions, which is the consumption of fossil fuels, you posit the simplistic, more parochial solution of halting U.S. oil and gas development in the Arctic. While this may make for lively banter during wine and cheese socials in Olympia, it reeks of the paternalistic past when the state of Alaska was plundered by people from Washington and elsewhere who coveted our resources. But instead of whales, fish, or timber as it was in those days, it's wilderness areas and romantic notions of what the Arctic should be that continue to drive outsiders like yourself to glibly advocate for limiting resource development.

It should be noted that the State of Washington emits over twice the amount of carbon dioxide as Alaska. Perhaps we should call on the Environmental Protection Agency to refuse permits to large factories that build airplanes or other products in Washington state so that your levels of carbon pollution are diminished? Of course, we wouldn't do that out of respect for the people of your state whose livelihoods depend on those vital industries.

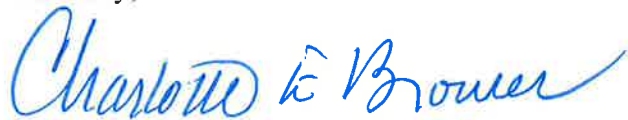
If you're serious about the limiting the entrenchment of fossil fuel use in our society, perhaps you should start first with making more responsible personal choices rather than attacking another state and region's largest economic generator. Limiting resource development in the U.S. will only benefit foreign nations who have much less respect for the natural environment and who will gladly take our country's place to fill the demand.

But if you'd like to understand the benefits that responsible resource development can bring to a region, we invite you to come and visit the North Slope. Here you can learn from those of us who can still remember the old times when some parents had to watch their children die in their arms because there was no clinic or medical staff to treat them or when hunters would go out on the ice never be heard from again due to lack of communications and search and rescue capability. You could listen to stories about children who had to leave their communities to go to Bureau of Indian Affairs schools where they were abused and forbidden to speak our native language or about people getting sick and dying due to unsanitary water and sewer systems.

Thanks to the vision of our elders who recognized the benefits that resource development could bring to our people and region, we Inupiat do not have to endure these types of conditions any longer.

So in the future, we hope you will take the time to more carefully consider the policies for which you advocate. Then perhaps you might bring about more good than harm.

Sincerely,



Mayor Charlotte Brower
North Slope Borough