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**Letter: What is AIDEA thinking?**

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The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority (AIDEA) is considering spending $20,000,000 of our state money to bid on oil and gas leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

AIDEA is proposing to bid on these leases in the desperate attempt to see that oil development happens on the coastal plain of the refuge, despite the fact that many national and international financial institutions will not provide loans for these actions. It appears many of the oil companies themselves are also thinking this is not a wise investment.

So how does it make sense for a state agency to consider spending state moneys in pursuit of what looks like an unrealistic dream when private oil companies are signaling they may not want to invest in these high-risk lease options?

At this challenging and unprecedented time in our history, AIDEA should instead make it a priority to financially assist struggling Alaskan-owned small businesses and Alaska residents who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**— Kathleen M. O’Reilly-Doyle**