

For Immediate Release
March 16, 2005

Contact:
Galen Munroe, (202) 624-6904

TEAMSTERS HAIL BIPARTISAN SENATE VOTE SUPPORTING ANWR OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT

Official Statement of Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa

For the past four years the Teamsters Union has been a part of a growing grassroots and lobbying effort to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil and gas development. Working with a coalition of labor unions, native Alaskan groups and energy independence advocates, we have succeeded in winning multiple votes in the House of Representatives in favor of opening ANWR.

Over the years we have also succeeded in winning over the public opinion of the American people. And finally, today we succeeded in winning the bipartisan support of the United States Senate. Sen. Ted Stevens (R- AK) was a tireless leader in this fight for the citizens of Alaska and working men and women across America.

For the Teamsters the primary motive for our support of this effort has been constant and singular – job creation. But the benefits to opening ANWR will extend beyond the Americans it will put to work and the growth it will create in the nation's economy. Today's vote marks a move toward energy independence and will finally allow the 75 percent of Alaskans who support opening ANWR – including the native peoples who actually live in the refuge – to develop their own lands in an environmentally responsible manner.

The Teamsters will continue the fight to open ANWR until we have succeeded. We look forward to putting this prolonged national debate behind us and getting to work at developing the resources in ANWR and providing energy for the people of the United States.