

**Arctic Economic Development Forum**

The Wilson Center, Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, 6 April 2016

**Speaker and Panelist Biographies**

In order of program appearance

The Honorable **Jane Harman** is the director, president, and CEO of the Wilson Center. She previously served as the U.S. Representative for California’s 36th Congressional District, stepping down in 2011 to join the Wilson Center. Congresswoman Harman served on three major security committees: Armed Services, Intelligence, and Homeland Security. She is a graduate of Smith College and Harvard Law School, and served as staff director of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee, deputy cabinet secretary under President Carter, and as special counsel to the Department of Defense.

The Honorable **Lisa Murkowski** is the senior U.S. senator from Alaska, and the first Alaskan senator to be born in-state. Senator Murkowski serves in many leadership roles in the U.S. senate, including chairing the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Before being elected to the senate in 2002, she served in the Alaska House of Representatives and practiced law in Anchorage. Senator Murkowski holds a JD from Willamette College of Law.

The Honorable **Angus King** is the junior U.S. senator from Maine, elected to office in 2012. He also served as governor of Maine from 1995 to 2003. He is the founder of Northeast Energy Management, Inc., which develops energy conservation initiatives for commercial and industrial users, as part of a career working for alternative energy companies. Senator King previously served as chief counsel to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Narcotics, in the office of former senator William Hathaway.

**Laura Dawson** is the Director of the Canada Institute at the Wilson Center. Named one of Canada’s Top 100 foreign policy influencers by the Hill Times in 2014, Dawson is a speaker, writer, and thought leader on Canada-U.S., NAFTA and international trade issues. Previously, she served as senior advisor on economic affairs at the United States Embassy in Ottawa and taught international trade and Canada-U.S. relations at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs. Dawson holds a PhD in political science.

**Tara Sweeney** is the executive vice president of the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, the largest locally-owned business in Alaska. She is also the chair of Arctic Economic Council and represents the Iñuit Circumpolar Council. Sweeney serves on the board of the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Coast Guard Foundation Board of Trustees, and many other organizations. She received a BS from Cornell University.

**Eero Hokkanen** is communications manager at Arctia Ltd., a Finnish company that provides icebreaking, ice management, oil recovery, and specialized multipurpose vessel services. He previously worked for Team Arctic Finland, a cooperation of companies offering total concept solutions for Arctic and other harsh conditions. Hokkanen has also worked as a political officer at the Finnish Embassy in Oslo, and as secretary to an independent expert group established by the prime ministers of Finland, Norway, and Sweden.

**Haukur Óskarsson** is the owner and CEO of Refskegg Ltd., a consulting firm specializing in project management and business development. He is also a board member of the Icelandic Arctic Chamber of Commerce, and vice chairman of the board of the new container and bulk harbor in Nuuk, Greenland. He has extensive experience in many Arctic engineering and industrial fields, having previously worked at Mannvit Ltd., Skeljunger, and Raðgarður Ship Consulting PLC.

The Honorable **Magni Arge** is a member of the Folketinget, the Danish Parliament, representing the Faroe Islands. He was elected as one of two Faroese representatives in 2015. Arge is one of the leading business figures of the Faroe Islands, as former CEO of Atlantic Airlines, the national Faroese airline, and as chairman of the Faroese Oil Industry Association.

**David Biette** is a global fellow with the Wilson Center’s Polar Initiative, which he founded and served as director. He also founded and directed the Wilson Center’s Canada Institute. Before joining the Wilson Center, Biette worked as executive director of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, and as a political-economic officer at the Canadian Consulate in New York City. Biette earned his MA from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

**Felix Tschudi** is the chairman and owner of Tschudi Shipping, which specializes in both conventional and non-conventional shipping markets. He is the chairman of the Centre for High North Logistics, a non-profit research foundation focusing on transportation solutions in the Arctic, and is the former president of the Oslo Shipowners’ Association. Tschudi is a graduate of the Royal Norwegian Naval Academy, and served as a sub-lieutenant with the Royal Norwegian Navy.

**Julie Gourley** has served as the U.S. Department of State’s senior Arctic official since 2005. She previously served with the Department of State and the Environmental Protection Agency. Before her work with the Arctic Council, Gourley led U.S. delegations involved in international regulation of hazardous substances, such as the Rotterdam Convention and Montreal Protocol.

**Susan Harper** is Canada’s senior Arctic official with Global Affairs Canada, where she headed her country’s delegation through Canada’s chair of the Arctic Council. She previously served as director general for trade controls and technical barriers. Harper has previously served in postings in the United States, Argentina, France, and Cameroon, and as Canada’s ambassador to Uruguay.

**Else-Berit Eikeland** is Norway’s Arctic ambassador and senior Arctic official with the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a position she has held since 2012. As part of her career with the Norwegian Foreign Service, she previously served as Norway’s ambassador to Canada, and has had postings in London, Manila, and San Francisco. Eikeland has a master’s degree and was educated at the University of Bergen and at the Norwegian School of Management in Oslo.

**Veronica Slajer** leads the team of professionals at the North Star Group, an advocacy, research, and community engagement firm she founded in 2002. She has more than 30 years of experience with economic development, community engagement, stakeholder relations, and matters affecting rural communities and Indigenous peoples. Slajer was appointed by the secretary of interior to the U.S. Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and she holds a master of rural development degree from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

**Michael Perkinson** is a managing director and chief of staff to the global chief investment officer at Guggenheim Partners. Before joining Guggenheim, Perkinson worked with Veracity Worldwide, LLC, founding its China practice. Perkinson previously served as a U.S. diplomat and naval officer, and holds degrees from American and Johns Hopkins Universities.

**Nils Andreassen** is the executive director of the Institute of the North, which has a mission to inform public policy as it relates to natural resource development in the Arctic and Alaska and improved living and economic conditions for northern residents. The Institute of the North is the secretariat for the Alaska Arctic Council Host Committee and the host of the Arctic Energy Summit. Andreassen has a degree in peace and development from the University of Bradford in England, and a background in rural and international development.

The Honorable **Sjúrður Skaale** isa member of the Danish Parliament, the Folketinget, representing the Faroe Islands as an autonomous country within the Danish Kingdom. In Parliament, he chairs the committee on Faroese affairs and a working group on the Arctic. Skaale previously served in the Faroese Parliament, and has worked as a journalist and taught political science.

**Drue Pearce** is a senior policy advisor with Crowell & Moring’s Environment and Natural Resources and Government Affairs groups. She has previously served as the first Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects, where she coordinated the activities of more than 20 federal agencies to facilitate the delivery of natural gas from the North Slope to North American markets. Pearce was a senior advisor to two secretaries of the interior, and served for 17 years in the Alaska State Legislature, including two terms as senate president.

**Peggy Philbin** is the deputy executive director and chief operating officer of Select USA, a federal initiative to promote and facilitate direct investment in the United States, through the U.S. Department of Commerce. She previously served as deputy director of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, as well as with the Department of State, Department of Justice, and the Executive Office for Immigration Review. Philbin received a Meritorious Presidential Rank Award for her work as executive director of the Department of State’s Bureau of Administration.

**Gail Schubert** is the president and CEO of the Bering Straits Native Corporation, which serves 17 villages along the Bering Straits. She is an Inupiaq Eskimo, and was born and raised in Unalakleet, Alaska. Schubert serves on many boards and councils, including the State of Alaska’s Retirement Management Board, and the Arctic Economic Council. Schubert earned an MBA and JD from Cornell University, and among other honors is a recipient of the Northwest Indian Bar Association’s Unsung Hero award.

**Bill Popp** is the president and CEO of the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, where he markets Anchorage and Alaska to global industries and assists Alaskan businesses looking to expand. He serves on the board of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce, as chairman of the governor’s Broadband Task Force, and with many other Anchorage and Alaskan organizations. Popp has previously served as an elected official for the Kenai Peninsula Borough municipal government.

**Dana Eidsness** is the director of the Maine North Atlantic Development Office, which she founded in 2014 as an initiative of the Maine International Trade Center. She works closely with partner organizations to develop trade and investment opportunities for Maine businesses in North Atlantic markets. Eidsness previously served as the director of international business with the Vermont Chamber of Commerce, and as executive director of the Forum on Democracy and Trade in Washington, D.C.