

**For Immediate Release**

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**Binkley Says Murkowski Fundraiser Tied to Oil Company is Inappropriate**

Republican gubernatorial candidate John Binkley said today he is disappointed in Frank Murkowski's decision to hold a political fundraiser sponsored by a top oil company executive who is directly involved in negotiations for the gasoline contract.

"It is at best inappropriate for Murkowski to be financially dependent on an oil company he is supposed to be negotiating with, on behalf of Alaskans," Binkley said. "On Thursday Murkowski used scare tactics in telling the legislature they must approve his gasoline deal now. On Tuesday he will collect money for his re-election campaign at an event sponsored by one of the oil company executives. It shows terribly poor judgment."

Murkowski's campaign mailed invitations to the fundraiser to be held on Tuesday, July 18, listing as a sponsor, Jim Bowles, president of ConocoPhillips Alaska.

"Alaskans expect their governor to negotiate a deal in good faith and without such conflicts of interest," Binkley said. "Murkowski cannot deny how bad it looks for him to be holding political fundraisers with oil companies. These kinds of missteps are why Alaskans have lost trust in their governor."

Binkley said Alaska can complete a deal for a gas pipeline that protects the future of the State. He stressed the need for a governor who is not beholden to the oil companies.

"We have tremendous potential in Alaska and we can get a gasoline deal done on our terms," he said.