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### **John Binkley Says Alaska Needs New Leadership**

John Binkley, Republican candidate for governor, said Frank Murkowski's time in Juneau is a time of failed leadership.

Binkley, who announced his candidacy in December, said Frank Murkowski's announcement today that he is entering the gubernatorial race is yet another example of how Murkowski is out of touch with Alaskans.

"Alaskans recognize that Murkowski has failed to bring people together to find solutions," Binkley said. "He has failed to meet his campaign commitments, failed to put aside special interests and failed to make decisions in the best interest of all Alaskans."

Binkley said Murkowski's decision will have no real impact on his already well-organized and well-financed campaign. "I am receiving a groundswell of popular, grassroots support," he said.

"In the past five months I have traveled across the state and received tremendous support. Countless Alaskans have told me they are tired of the way Frank Murkowski has run the government."

"It is a critical time in Alaska's history and we need strong leadership that can bring people together, build consensus and move Alaska in the right direction," Binkley said. "Frank Murkowski has not only failed to build consensus with his gas pipeline proposal, but he has consistently demonstrated a total unwillingness to work with legislators, give fair consideration to alternatives or build a compromise."

While Murkowski said his main focus in running is to continue his work on his proposed gasline contract, he has bungled the negotiations and he continues to push a plan that in its current form has little or no chance of passing the Legislature."

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Binkley said he doesn't think Murkowski's idea of locking in tax rates for oil companies for 30 years is good public policy.

"I don't think it is good policy to hold oil companies harmless against a vote of the people, or to give them fiscal certainty without having certainty on our end that a pipeline will be built."

"We need new leadership in the governor's office that can rise above self interest and put the interests of Alaskans first," Binkley said.

"We need new leadership in Juneau that will be fiscally responsible with state spending," Binkley said. "The state just passed the biggest budget in its history. Frank Murkowski has state spending moving in the wrong direction."

"From eliminating the longevity bonus, to proposing to spend part of the Permanent Fund, to proposing many tax increases, to proposing the largest budget in state history, Murkowski has failed to deliver on the promises of his first campaign."

"I will be a strong negotiator with the oil companies and will close a gasline deal that will protect the interests of future generations of Alaskans. I am a consensus builder who respects the role our Legislators play," Binkley said.

"Alaskans need strong leadership focused on making sure future generations of Alaskans have the same opportunities we had to raise a family, get work and take advantage of all the state has to offer. I will provide that kind of leadership."

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