



# Dan Sullivan

U.S. SENATOR *for* ALASKA

706 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

NEWS RELEASE

[Sullivan.Senate.gov](http://Sullivan.Senate.gov)



[SenDanSullivan](#)



[@SenDanSullivan](#)



[Sen\\_DanSullivan](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 16, 2025

Contact: Michael Soukup, 202.224.6232

## Army Corps Nominee Commits to Sullivan to Prioritize Alaska's Nome Port Project

WASHINGTON—U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska), a member of the Senate Environment & Public Works (EPW) Committee, secured a commitment this week from Adam Telle, nominated to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works in charge of the Army Corps of Engineers, to prioritize the Port of Nome project, the nation's first deep-draft Arctic port, in light of Alaska's strategic importance constituting the entirety of America's Arctic.

"The Port of Nome has bipartisan support," **said Sen. Sullivan**. "We don't have an Arctic port anywhere to push back on the Russian and Chinese aggression in my part of the [country]. That project, it's really important. We've got to get it over the finish line. Can I get your commitment to work with me and the others in this committee on that project?"

"Senator Sullivan, one of the most strategic issues that confronts the United States of America today is our status as an Arctic...nation," **said Mr. Telle**. "This is an area of the world that the Chinese Communist Party is very interested in. The Russians are very active. Your state is front and center to the United States of America's being an Arctic nation. We must be. It seems to me that, if we're going to be an Arctic nation, that Alaska ought to be one of the key launching points of that force projection and power projection and economic projection. I look forward to working with you to help make the case for the strategic nature of Alaska and the Port of Nome as it relates to the United States asserting itself as an Arctic nation."

In his questioning during the EPW hearing, Sen. Sullivan also highlighted President Donald Trump's executive order, "[Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential](#)," which directs the Corps to "review, revise or rescind any agency action that may in any way hinder, slow, or otherwise delay any critical project in the State of Alaska." Mr. Telle reiterated his understanding of and support for carrying out the President's Alaska order in relation to critical projects, including the Port of Nome.



Click [here](#) or the image above to watch Sen. Sullivan in the EPW hearing.

Below is a transcript of Sen. Sullivan's exchange with Mr. Telle on the Port of Nome and the Alaska EO.

**SEN. SULLIVAN:** *I appreciated our meetings, Mr. Telle and Mr. McMaster. It's hard to build anything in Alaska. Right? You want to build a road, a sidewalk, you usually get 12 radical far-left environmental groups that sue to stop it. We have the King Cove Road. We've only been trying to get that done for 40 years. A nine-mile, single-lane gravel road that every Democrat in the country—including, God rest his soul, Jimmy Carter, writes op-eds [saying] you can't build a road in Alaska. Then it went so bad, we had the Biden administration's Last Frontier Lock Up. My great state suffered through 70 executive orders and executive actions from the Biden administration singularly focused on Alaska. I like ripping this up because that's not the issue anymore. We now have President Trump who issued his day-one executive order called, "Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential." Mr. Telle, as you and I discussed, there's a lot of great provisions in here. This is all about getting things done in Alaska, not crushing us as the radical left wants to do. There's a really good provision about the Corps of Engineers. I'm going to read it to you: "The assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works"—that's you—"shall immediately review, revise or rescind any agency action that may in any way hinder, slow, or otherwise delay any critical project in the state of Alaska." That's from the President. Will you commit to abide by that very expansive provision to get things done in my great state after four years of being crushed by the previous administration?*

**MR. TELLE:** *Senator Sullivan, absolutely. When I visited your office, I tattooed the executive order that the President issued on Alaska on my heart.*

**SULLIVAN:** *By the way, that's a great answer.*

**TELLE:** *I will go ahead and read the second paragraph to you from memory, which essentially says that I shall, if confirmed, coordinate as closely with the Governor of Alaska as a human could possibly coordinate.*

**SULLIVAN:** *Good. And the Senator from Alaska.*

**TELLE:** *Of course.*

**SULLIVAN:** *The Port of Nome has bipartisan support. We don't have an Arctic port anywhere to push back on the Russian and Chinese aggression in my part of the [country]. That project, it's really important. We've got to get it over the finish line. Can I get your commitment to work with me and the others in this committee on that project? That's an interesting project. I mentioned, you had your SASC hearing yesterday. That's EPW, and that's very much DoD, to be able to have Navy ships, icebreakers, be able to pull up to the port of Nome. We don't have a port in the Arctic right now that can handle Navy ships and icebreakers.*

**TELLE:** *Senator Sullivan, one of the most strategic issues that confronts the United States of America today is our status as an Arctic and Antarctic nation. This is an area of the world that the Chinese Communist Party is very interested in. The Russians are very active. Your state is front and center to the United States of America's being an Arctic nation. We must be. It seems to me that, if we're going to be an Arctic nation, that Alaska ought to be one of the key launching points of that force projection and power projection and economic projection. I look forward to working with you to help make the case for the strategic nature of Alaska and the Port of Nome as it relates to the United States asserting itself as an Arctic nation.*

Below is a timeline on the Port of Nome expansion project:

- Water resource projects developed by the Corps undergo a multi-stage process. Standard Corps project delivery consists of the Corps leading the study, design, and construction of authorized projects. However, each stage of that process must qualify for an existing authorization or receive a separate authorization from Congress, as well as receive congressional appropriation at each stage to proceed. Congress authorizes the Corps' actions through periodic *Water Resource Development Acts* in the Senate EPW Committee and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.
- In 2012, the Corps launched the Alaska Deep Draft Arctic Port System Study to evaluate potential locations on the northern and western coasts of Alaska, and to determine the feasibility of constructing navigation improvements as part of a larger system of port facilities in the Arctic and sub-Arctic region. Following the selection of Nome as the location for an Arctic port, the Corps began a feasibility study, assessing the costs of the port versus the benefits. The Corps paused the feasibility study following the departure of Shell Oil Company from the Arctic, which significantly tipped the cost-benefit ratio against the port project.
- In the 2016 *Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act*, Sen. Sullivan and the late Representative Don Young (R-Alaska) included two provisions to justify a potential Arctic port based on its value to surrounding communities and its importance to national security.
- In 2017, following enactment of the *WIIN Act*, senior Corps leaders committed to Sullivan and Young to utilize the new authority to restart the feasibility study for the port.
- On February 2, 2018, the City of Nome and the Corps initiated a cost-sharing agreement.
- On October 23, 2018, President Trump signed *America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA)*, which included Sullivan-Young language to expedite completion of a Corps feasibility study for the Nome port.
- On May 29, 2020, the Corps announced the completion of the chief's report for the Port of Nome Modification Feasibility Study, making the project eligible for congressional authorization and funding.
- In December 2020, President Trump signed the *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020*, which included language, championed by Sullivan and Young, authorizing \$379 million for the federal share of the Nome Deep Draft Port Project.
- On November 15, 2021, the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)* was signed into law. The bill provided \$250 million over five years for the construction of remote and subsistence harbor projects. These projects are in locations that are not connected to a road system, and for ports are vital to the long-term viability of the community.
- On January 19, 2022, the Corps announced that the entire \$250 million from the IIJA for remote and subsistence harbor projects will be directed to the Port of Nome.
- On July 28, 2022, the Senate passed the *Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2022*. The legislation included key victories for Alaska infrastructure, including increasing the federal cost-share for the Nome Deep Draft Port Project.
- On December 15, 2022, the Senate [passed](#) WRDA 2022 as part of the *FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act*.

- On October 31, 2023, Senators Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) [announced an \\$11.2 million grant](#) for the construction of water and wastewater, fuel, power, and communications infrastructure to expand and deepen the Port of Nome. The grant was made possible by the IIIJA.
- On January 25, 2024, the Corps [announced](#) a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) for the Port of Nome expansion project, which includes the construction of a new deep-water basin. The PPA, which legally binds the government and the State of Alaska to execute the project, was marked by a signing ceremony held in Nome.
- On February 12, 2025, several Arctic policy experts [testified](#) at a Senate Commerce Science & Transportation Committee hearing in support of increasing infrastructure investments in Alaska, including the Port of Nome expansion.

# # #