

NSB urges clean-up test in Beaufort

The Associated Press

North Slope Borough Mayor Eugene Brower has urged the state to require the oil industry to demonstrate its ability to clean up an Arctic Ocean oil spill by using real oil on the Beaufort Sea.

Speaking with state officials during a teleconference hearing Thursday, Brower said on-site tests should be conducted in the Beaufort to see if the industry can cope with actual ice conditions.

The industry has said it wants to show it can clean up an oil spill, but that it is philosophically opposed to a test in the Beaufort. It says adequate tests can be conducted in an on-shore pit.

During a previous teleconference hearing earlier in the week, a spokesman for the environmental group Trustees for Alaska had urged tests in the Beaufort on the grounds they should be as realistic as possible.

Another North Slope Borough witness at the Thursday hearing, scientific adviser Tom Albert said that to conduct the tests other than in the most realistic conditions possible would be "avoiding the real issue."