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Subject: Bishop defends Zinke pressure on Alaska senators

By Esther Whieldon

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House Natural Resources Chairman [Rob Bishop](#) today defended Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's recent call to Sen. [Lisa Murkowski](#) (R-Alaska) in which the secretary reportedly threatened to pull his support for energy and public land issues Murkowski cares about after she voted against taking up a bill to repeal Obamacare.

"That is not unprecedented, [he] has a right to do that," Bishop told reporters in the Capitol. Bishop said former Interior Secretary Sally Jewell would call him "complaining about some things that we were doing."

Bishop said President Barack Obama in 2009 had members of his Cabinet press senators over [funding for F-22s](#) in a defense authorization bill.

"When Obama sent his cabinet to lobby the Senate for a week on F-22, you don't think there was bullying and threatening that was going on with that? ... Come on, this has happened all the time," Bishop said. "There is nothing unique about this, there is nothing new about this. ... This is tradition."

Democrats are [demanding an investigation](#) into Zinke's calls to Murkowski and fellow Alaska Sen. [Dan Sullivan](#).

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