

Keystone XL rider in H.R. 3630 would rubber stamp Keystone XL tar sands pipeline while blocking efforts to protect America's landowners, fresh water and environment

The unrelated Keystone XL rider currently included in the House payroll tax-cut legislation would short-circuit the environmental review process for the proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline that would traverse six states in order to carry tar sands – the dirtiest form of oil on the planet – from Canada to an international shipping port in Texas, where it would have access to the international export market.

In November, the Secretary of State concluded that the existing Environmental Impact Statement was insufficient because it did not consider alternative routes, as required by statute. The H.R. 3630 Keystone XL rider provision would force the President to make an uninformed decision on the pipeline within 60 days, pre-approving a route through Nebraska before it has even been proposed.

The proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline would threaten the environment with significantly more global warming pollution than conventional crude oil, promote continued U.S. oil dependence, and jeopardize surrounding communities, ecosystems, and watersheds.

Keystone XL tar sands pipeline is not a national jobs package – it's job benefits have been greatly exaggerated. The only independent study on Keystone XL's job impacts, produced by the Cornell Global Labor Institute, projected that Keystone XL would have a negative net impact on employment in the United States. Keystone XL proponents are using discredited estimates of the project's employment impacts that project that the pipeline will create jobs for dancers, choreographers and speech therapists along the pipeline's rural route. The State Department's own study shows that the pipeline's construction will require no more than 6,000 direct temporary jobs and TransCanada itself has said admitted that Keystone XL would require just a few hundred permanent jobs to operate and maintain.

Expediting Keystone XL would undermine efforts of Nebraskans to consider a new pipeline route.

TransCanada has spent years trying to railroad the American people with a poorly considered route by bullying landowners with eminent domain, threatening Nebraska with lawsuits and providing government officials with misleading information about the feasibility of alternatives. President Obama's decision to consider a new route for the pipeline has given farmers and landowners a more level playing field when dealing with TransCanada. The Keystone XL provision would strip these protections for American landowners and the State of Nebraska.

Randy Thompson, a NE landowner and farmer, recently said of Senator Johanns support for the Lugar bill: "His reversal is disappointing. It's just really hard to understand what these guys are doing. It's just extremely frustrating when your own elected leaders who are supposed to represent your state and its citizens and resources are more interested in representing a foreign corporation."

Susan Luebb, a NE rancher, on efforts to expedite KXL: "This is about not being respectful of the people they are representing. Do they think we are just going to roll over? They think we will forget, but we will remember. This is not something that will go away in a month or a couple of years."

The proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline would promote oil dependency and harms U.S. security.

Shifting U.S. imports from unfriendly to friendly nations like Canada would do nothing to address underlying problems caused by America's oil addiction. Continued reliance on oil empowers all countries that are major oil exporters. As the Canadian government itself has noted, it does not influence the world price of oil and is a price taker, rather than a price maker. The only way to protect the United States from the vagaries of unfriendly exporters and volatility on the world oil market is to become independent from the oil exporters.

Keystone XL tar sands pipeline will provide a route for Canadian oil to be shipped to international markets. Recent evidence suggests that the real purpose of the pipeline is to give tar sands producers access to international markets. In its Congressional testimony, TransCanada refused to support a condition that the oil on Keystone XL would be used in the United States. Meanwhile, TransCanada has admitted to Canadian regulators that Keystone XL will increase the price that the U.S. pays for Canadian oil by up to \$4 billion.

Pipeline safety regulators should be given time to complete their study on the safety of tar sands crude before a permit decision is made for Keystone XL. Pipeline safety regulators have admitted that they cannot assure that current pipeline standards are sufficient to ensure tar sands pipelines can be built and operating safely. TransCanada's first tar sands pipeline, Keystone I, spilled fourteen times in its first year of operation. Both chambers of Congress are moving forward with legislation that would require a study of the tar sands pipelines. Expediting a Presidential Permit decision before that study is completed will prevent new standards from being incorporated in the design of Keystone XL to ensure its safe operation.

Keystone XL would undermine U.S. objectives to combat climate change. Greenhouse gas emissions from tar sands extraction and upgrading is four to five times more greenhouse gas intensive than conventional oil. Replacing conventional crude with tar sands from the Keystone XL pipeline would release an additional 27 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually. That's the same impact as putting over 5 million more cars on the street and would undo gains made by proposed rules to address emissions for new trucks.

The Keystone XL pipeline isn't needed and detracts from the U.S. goals to develop more efficient, cleaner and productive transportation solutions.

The United States has enough oil pipeline capacity without the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. There is already a whole system of pipelines from Alberta to the United States with recent approvals for two major dedicated raw tar sands oil pipelines to the Midwest. A recent Department of Energy study found that the situation will likely continue, with Keystone XL not bringing more Canadian crude into the United States until after 2030. Under proposed fuel efficiency standards for passenger cars and light trucks, 2017 to 2025 model year vehicles would be required to achieve an average of 54.5 miles per gallon – nearly double the fuel efficiency average of today's cars. This measure alone will reduce U.S. dependence on oil by 1.7 million barrels per day (mbd). That's twice what Keystone XL would carry at full capacity. Deeper cuts of 7 mbd are possible by 2030. In short, we do not have an ever-escalating need for more oil and we can offset our oil use already now in the short-term.