

DOC HASTINGS, WA
CHAIRMAN
DON YOUNG, AK
LOUIE GOHMERT, TX
ROB BISHOP, UT
DOUG LAMBORN, CO
ROBERT J. WITTMAN, VA
PAUL C. BROUN, GA
JOHN FLEMING, LA
TOM McCLINTOCK, CA
GLENN THOMPSON, PA
CYNTHIA LUMMIS, WY
DAN BENISHEK, MI
JEFF DUNCAN, SC
SCOTT R. TIPTON, CO
PAUL A. GOSAR, AZ
RAÚL R. LABRADOR, ID, FL
STEVE SOUTHERLAND II, FL
BILL FLORES, TX
ANDY HARRIS, MD
JON RUNYAN, NJ
MARK AMODEI, NV
MARKWAYNE MULLIN, OK
CHRIS STEWART, UT
STEVE DAINES, MT
KEVIN CRAMER, ND
DOUG LAMALFA, CA

TODD YOUNG
CHIEF OF STAFF

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

Opening Statement by
The Honorable Doug Lamborn
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
At the Legislative Hearing on H.R. 3
Tuesday, April 16, 2013

EDWARD J. MARKEY, MA
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER
PETER A. DEFAZIO, OR
ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, AS
FRANK PALLONE, JR., NJ
GRACE F. NAPOLITANO, CA
RUSH HOLT, NJ
RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, AZ
MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO, GU
JIM COSTA, CA
GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN, CNMI
NIKI TSONGAS, MA
PEDRO R. PIERLUISI, PR
COLLEEN W. HANABUSA, HI
TONY CARDENAS, CA
STEVEN HORSFORD, NV
JARED HUFFMAN, CA
RAUL RUIZ, CA
CAROL SHEA-PORTER, NH
ALAN LOWENTHAL, CA
JOE GARCIA, FL
MATTHEW CARTWRIGHT, PA

JEFFREY DUNCAN
DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

"I'd like to thank everyone for coming before our Subcommittee to testify. We are here today to hear testimony on H.R. 3, 'The Northern Route Approval Act.' This legislation would remove the requirement for a Presidential Permit for the Keystone XL pipeline and deem the Department of State's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) from 2011 as satisfying all National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act requirements. This will ensure that after years of unexplained delays by the Obama Administration, the Keystone Pipeline will be fully constructed, American jobs will be created, and our dependence on imports from hostile foreign nations will decrease.

It seems that from day one the Obama Administration has put up roadblock after roadblock to prevent the approval of the Keystone pipeline— even going so far as to deny the application in January of 2012 after Congress required the President to issue a permit for the project unless he determined it was not in the national interest. We are left with the assumption that the Obama Administration does not believe a pipeline that will create tens of thousands of American jobs and securely bring 800,000 barrels of oil a day to American consumers is not in the best interest of the United States.

While not only being the last obstacle between the construction of the northern portion of the pipeline, President Obama had no problem taking credit for construction of the southern section of the pipeline – which does not require his approval. This is a frequent trend with the Obama Administration. On federal lands where the President is responsible, we see the lowest leasing in the recorded history of BLM. In contrast, private oil and natural gas leasing, where the President has no role, is nearing its highest level ever.

The Administration's own Department of Energy estimates the pipeline will transport up to 830,000 barrels of oil per day from the oil sands area of Alberta, Canada. This is nearly half of what the U.S. imports from the Middle East. Further, the State Department estimates this project will create approximately 42,100 jobs over a 1 to 2 year construction period – of which, 3,900 would be directly involved with construction. Alternately, TransCanada predicts this project would create 20,000 direct jobs, and 120,000 indirect jobs. Further, this project will lead to billions of dollars in investment into the U.S. economy.

Since 2008 when the initial application was filed, the State Department has issued a draft EIS, and a final EIS. The President has rejected one application, a second application has been filed, and another EIS was issued. The State Department has repeatedly determined the pipeline would have limited adverse environmental impacts. At this point, the Keystone XL pipeline has been more extensively studied than the Alaska Pipeline at the time TAPS was approved.

Unfortunately, while the Administration continues to create more needless hurdles for the pipeline, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has announced that due to unexplained delays by the Obama Administration, Canada has no choice but to consider alternative options for bringing its oil to market – including construction of a pipeline from Alberta to the Pacific coast for export to China.

With each day that passes, President Obama continues to stand in the way of a project that will create American jobs and lessen our dependence on oil from dangerous parts of the world. For years, we have heard my colleagues on the other side moan that we are too dependent on the Middle East for oil, and when finally presented with the best opportunity in a generation to get America off Middle Eastern oil they don't want that either. America is slowly losing an opportunity to contribute to our future energy security by further integrating our friendly Northern neighbor into our energy economy.

If the President refuses to act on this project, which is clearly in the best interest of the United States and will bring tremendous benefits to our country, Congress must act and must do so quickly. The Northern Route Approval Act would ensure that after years of extensive studies, construction of this pipeline can go forward and America can begin to benefit from this tremendous opportunity.

I'd like to thank our witnesses for taking time out of their schedules to testify for us today and I look forward to hearing your testimony."