

**Sierra Club • Natural Resources Defense Council • League of Conservation Voters •
Friends of the Earth • Center for Biological Diversity • Earthjustice • Greenpeace USA •
Indigenous Environmental Network • Audubon • Environment America •
Environmental Protection Information Center • Honor the Earth • Klamath Forest Alliance •
Nebraska Sierra Club • Alaska's Big Village Network • Clean Water Action •
Western Organization of Resource Councils • Global Community Monitor •
Rainforest Action Network • Safe Climate Campaign • Conservation Law Foundation •
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future**

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 7, 2011

Dear Representative,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters, we write to you today to urge you to oppose H.R. 1938 sponsored by Representatives Lee Terry and Gene Green. This irresponsible legislation would expedite the approval of the proposed Keystone XL tar sands oil pipeline, which is currently under consideration by the Department of State for a Presidential Permit. This pipeline would cross six U.S. states (Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas) to grant the Canadian tar sands industry its first primary access to an international shipping port while threatening the health and livelihoods of thousands of Americans. The bill would specifically require a final decision on the Presidential Permit for the pipeline by November 1, 2011, unnecessarily expediting a process the Administration has already said they will conclude by the end of 2011. The environmental review under NEPA and the National Interest Determination for the pipeline should be thorough and based on science, not on an arbitrary timeline as defined by the State Department or mandated by H.R. 1938. Currently, the NEPA review is still lacking major pieces of pertinent information regarding greenhouse gas emissions, pipeline safety, alternative routes, and environmental justice; a decision should not be made before this information has been provided to the public and to relevant agencies.

The oil that would be carried by this dangerous pipeline is the most environmentally destructive form of oil on the planet. The boreal forest, a crucial carbon sink, is quickly being converted by the oil industry into toxic waste ponds so large they can be seen from space. Producing a barrel of oil from tar sands consumes three barrels of water, up to 1,500 cubic feet of natural gas, and generates three times as many greenhouse gases as producing a barrel of conventional crude oil.

Not only would this pipeline undermine our efforts to slow global warming, but it would threaten the health and livelihood of thousands of American landowners, farmers, and ranchers along its right-of-way, who depend on the rivers and aquifers crossed by the pipeline. As acknowledged in last week's hearing regarding pipeline safety in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, tar sands oil pipelines are a new phenomenon in this country. Serious questions remain about their safety, the frequency with which they will spill, and the public health impacts resulting from the inevitable spills. The Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Cynthia Quarterman, admitted in the hearing that a study to answer such questions regarding the safety of tar sands oil pipelines has simply not been done. We have recently seen the ramifications of such unanswered questions on one of two major tar sands oil pipelines currently operating in this country, the Keystone I; this pipeline has spilled twelve times in its first year of operation and was recently ordered shut down by Mrs. Quarterman's agency.

The Keystone XL pipeline would benefit oil companies at the expense of the American people. TransCanada, the Canadian company proposing to build the Keystone XL pipeline, is on record before the Canadian Energy Board stating that the project would, in fact, *increase* the price of oil in the Midwest, by manipulating the supply of tar

sands oil in the U.S. This scheme would increase the profits of Canadian oil companies by nearly \$4 billion. U.S. Senator Ron Wyden has called for a Federal Trade Commission investigation of these efforts to manipulate oil markets and the FTC is currently looking into TransCanada's stated plans.

At a time when we must find ways to end our dependence on fossil fuels, deepening our reliance on the dirtiest form of oil on the planet is simply not in the national interest. We believe that conducting the appropriate analysis under NEPA – which cannot be done properly if rushed – will make this clear. For all of these reasons we urge to you oppose H.R. 1938.

Sincerely,

Melinda Pierce
Deputy Director, National Campaigns
Sierra Club

Nellis Kennedy-Howard J.D., Navajo
National Campaign Associate
Honor the Earth

Susan Casey-Lefkowitz
Director International Program
Natural Resources Defense Council

Andrew Orahoske
Conservation Director
EPIC- Environmental Protection Information Center

Tiernan Sittenfeld
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
League of Conservation Voters

Kimberly Baker
Forest and Wildlife Advocate
Klamath Forest Alliance

Damon Moglen
Director, Climate and Energy
Friends of the Earth

Anna Aurilio
Washington, DC Office Director
Environment America

William Snape
Senior Counsel
Center for Biological Diversity

Carl Wassilie
Yup'iaq Biologist
Alaska's Big Village Network

Marty Hayden
Vice President of Policy and Legislation
Earthjustice

Lynn Thorp
National Campaigns Coordinator
Clean Water Action

Kyle Ash
Senior Legislative Representative
Greenpeace USA

Dick Boyd
Chapter Chair
Nebraska Sierra Club

Tom B.K. Goldtooth
Executive Director
Indigenous Environmental Network

Pat Sweeney
Director
Western Organization of Resource Councils

Denny Larson
Executive Director
Global Community Monitor

Mary Beth Beetham
Director of Legislative Affairs
Defenders of Wildlife

Brian Moore
Legislative Director
Audubon

Rebecca Tarbotton
Executive Director
Rainforest Action Network

Seth Kaplan
Vice President for Policy and Climate Advocacy
Conservation Law Foundation

Jan Jarrett
CEO and President
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future
(PennFuture)

Dan Becker
Director
Safe Climate Campaign