

CLIENT NEWS UPDATE
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On Tuesday, July 23, 2013, UTA's Brigham McCown was invited to Capitol Hill in Washington to participate in event on the national interest and security implications of the Keystone XL pipeline. The event, hosted by *The Hill* newspaper, featured a number of outspoken proponents of Keystone including North Dakota Senators John Hoeven (R) and Heidi Keitkamp (D), as well as former national Security Advisor General Jim Jones.

In a panel discussion, McCown was asked to provide insight on specific steps the administration could be taking to expedite approval of the pipeline.

"Executive Order 1337 was instituted in 2004 by President Bush. It is to facilitate the building of cross-border energy and transportation crossings and projects. It was intended to facilitate, expedite and coordinate. If President Obama wanted to, he could revoke that Executive Order today," said McCown, noting that a number of "other pipeline projects" are "flying under the radar" while Keystone XL continues to be delayed for political reasons.

"The Keystone debate has delved too deep into political rhetoric and has moved away from the scientific facts," he added. "It is important that the Administration work to address these issues and lift the delay on the creation of the Keystone Pipeline, which will provide both a safer and more economic pathway for energy transportation."

Poll: Broad Public Support for Keystone XL

The debate over whether to approve the Keystone XL pipeline has been settled in the minds of most Americans. So says the result of newly released United Technologies/*National Journal* Congressional Connection Poll that finds two in three Americans – or 67 percent – support the project. Among the poll's findings:

- A majority of Democrats, 56 percent, support construction of the Keystone XL pipeline
- Fewer than one in four Americans, 24 percent, oppose construction of the Keystone XL pipeline.

TOPLINE POINTS

1. President Obama could approve Keystone XL construction today if he wanted to. Executive Order 1337 was instituted by President Bush in 2004 to facilitate cross-border energy projects. President Obama could repeal that order immediately if he chose to, and grant approval to Keystone XL.

2. The American public overwhelmingly approves of construction of the Keystone XL pipeline. 67 percent of Americans approve of the project, including a huge majority of Republicans and a strong majority of Independents and a solid majority of Democrats.

3. Oil sands crude are no more corrosive than conventional crude. A recently concluded study conducted by the National Research Council (NRC) found no evidence of chemical or physical properties of diluted bitumen that significantly differ from that of other crude oils, and it found bitumen poses no increased risks to pipelines because of increased corrosivity.

Study Finds Dilbit No More Corrosive Than Conventional Crude

For nearly five years, environmentalists opposed to construction of the Keystone XL pipeline have routinely invoked a single argument in response to statistical evidence showing pipelines are far and away the safest method of transporting petroleum products: oil produced from Canadian oil sands – diluted bitumen – is far more corrosive than conventional crude, and thus likely to corrode the Keystone XL pipeline, leading to spills.

That argument has been debunked and discredited by a recently completed National Research Council (NRC) study 10 months in the making that found no discernible differences between conventional and oil sands crude.

“Diluted bitumen has no greater likelihood of accidental pipeline release than other crudes,” concluded NRC. “The committee that wrote the report found that diluted bitumen has physical and chemical properties within the range of other crude oil and that no aspect of its transportation by pipeline would make it more likely than other crude oils to cause an accidental release.”

The report should offer further reassurance to the Obama administration as it continues to weigh the benefits of Keystone against the risks.

In a speech last month at Georgetown University, the President preconditioned approval of Keystone on evidence that the project would not “significantly exacerbate the problem of carbon pollution.”

A study released by the State Department in March concluded any carbon impact created by Keystone XL would be negligible, since Canada has already announced its intent to develop oil sands and bring its product to market by any available means.