

## Media Research Institute

In Pipeline Battle, Left Hypes Climate Threat Ignores Need for Jobs, Oil  
**Lefty media outlets attack Keystone XL project with climate alarmism, 'absurd' economic claims.**

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The environmental left is at it again. This time they are pressuring the Obama administration to reject a \$7-billion oil pipeline that would run from Canada to Texas, bringing with it millions of barrels of oil and thousands of jobs.

Alarmist NASA scientist James Hansen, who has actually called for oil executives to be tried for [crimes against humanity](#), is part of the Tar Sands Action efforts to stop the Keystone XL pipeline. Hansen wrote for the lefty publication Alternet that the pipeline ["will be game over for our planet."](#) Alternet is part of the Media Consortium, a network of "progressive" media outlets financed by George Soros.

On Nov. 6, environmental extremists like Hansen plan to encircle the White House in protest. They've been well supported by left-wing media outlets funded by Soros including Alternet, [Democracy Now!](#), Huffington Post and others. The pipeline and the protests have barely gotten any broadcast network coverage; instead the battle is being fought in the left-wing press. That fight has included attacks on the Koch brothers for being financial invested in the project, even though they deny it.

On Sept. 1, NPR (which has received \$1.8 million from Soros) aired a story weighted entirely in favor of Keystone opponents. The report included five people opposed to the project because they claimed tar sands oil is [much dirtier](#) than oil or simply that the tar sands should not be tapped at all. Not a single proponent of the project was quoted. One of extremist opponents was Bill McKibben who they labeled an "activist," but didn't mention how far left his views are.

McKibben was behind the 2007 "Step it Up" demonstrations designed to pressure the government into regulating greenhouse gas emissions, to the great expense of businesses as well as energy consumers. They were demanding an [80-percent mandatory decrease](#) in CO2 emissions by 2050. Myron Ebell of the Competitive Enterprise Institute told Business & Media Institute that would require heating only a single room in houses as well as giving up cars and air conditioning. Not exactly the lifestyle many Americans are ready to embrace.

McKibben also condemned the pipeline on Alternet saying that ["Alberta's tar sands are the continent's biggest carbon bomb"](#) and ["may make North America the New Middle](#)

[East.](#)" To drivers sick of paying upwards of \$3.50 a gallon that sounds like sweet relief, not a catastrophe.

As for the tar sands being "dirtier" than other forms of oil and gas, energy experts Daniel Yergin, Chairman of Cambridge Energy Research Associates, and Thomas Pyle, president of Institute for Energy Research, have explained how little the difference in emissions is between oil from the tar sands and other forms. That point was completely missing from NPR's story.

Yergin and Pyle have separately pointed out that oil sands crude emits ["only between 5 percent and 15 percent more greenhouse gas than conventionally derived petroleum products."](#) Also, the greenhouse gas argument is moot if other countries end up refining oil sands crude even if the U.S. refuses to build the pipeline. It is unrealistic to think no one will develop that energy resource.

Pyle wrote for U.S. News & World Report that even if the U.S. rejects Keystone XL, oil from the tar sands will still be developed. He said PetroChina, Sinopec and India's Ministry of Petroleum and National Gas have all set their sights on Canada's oil sands.

Buried at the end of the NPR story was an admission that "American automobiles are already burning oil from the Canadian tar sands. Other pipelines bring in about a million barrels a day. The Keystone XL would not even double our imports of this dirty but abundant crude."

Yergin also explained in a recent Washington Post op-ed that the pipeline "would increase the length of the oil pipeline network in the United States by just 1 percent."

### **Obama Announces He Will Decide, Instead of State Department**

Liberal activists have been engaging in civil disobedience protests of the pipeline (and getting arrested) for over a month. According to an Oct. 4 story by The Huffington Post, the lefties wanted Obama ["to strip the State Department of its authority to permit the controversial oil pipeline project."](#) The opposition claimed the government agency had demonstrated pro-industry bias.

On Nov. 1 it became clear that Hansen, McKibben and the other anti-Keystone protesters got what they wanted. Even though the State Department had already been studying the matter for three years, Politico reported on Nov. 1 that President Obama will make the decision to approve or reject the Keystone XL pipeline, rather than the agency.

In an interview with a Nebraska station, Obama said ["They'll \[the State Dept.\] be giving me a report](#) over the next several months, and you know, my general attitude is, what is best for the American people? What's best for our economy both short term and long term?"

The State Department has been reviewing TransCanada's \$7 billion plan to build the Keystone XL for three years. If built, the pipeline would transport oil from the Alberta tar sands to Texas oil refineries. It could also change the energy game in a big way according to Yergin who wrote in The Washington Post that Canadian oil sands output could double (from 1.5 million barrels a day current production) by 2020.

"This increase, along with its other oil output, would make Canada a larger oil producer than Iran - becoming the world's fifth largest, behind Russia, Saudi Arabia, the United States and China," Yergin noted.

It would increase America's energy security by lessening U.S. dependence on hostile sources of oil. Even ABC's "Good Morning America" admitted in one of the few news briefs about the pipeline that a "new report claims it would dramatically reduce U.S. dependency on oil from the Middle East."

According to Pyle, the project has many "economic benefits." He mentioned that it would reduce reliance on hostile foreign sources of oil, "create 20,000 direct high-wage jobs," and raise tax revenue in states along the pipeline as well as generate ["thousands of indirect jobs."](#)

The State Department has already said that the project would "cause minimal environmental impact if it was operated according to regulations" The New York Times reported. Yet, The New York Times framed the pipeline project as dividing "along old lines: jobs versus the environment" on Sept. 28.

### **Soros Connections, Attacks on Koch Brothers**

Many of the left-wing news outlets that get funding from Soros have been attacking the Keystone project from multiple angles. The network of liberal web sites has claimed that the pipeline will [kill jobs](#) and raise prices for oil/gas. But those sites also claim that the Koch brothers stand to benefit from the project, even though they deny having a vested interest in the project.

ProPublica, an investigative journalism start-up that has gotten two contributions of \$125,000 each from Soros' Open Society Foundations, was just one of the left-wing outlets that reported a study from Cornell University's Global Labor Institute which claimed the \$7 billion project would "create no more than 2,500-4,650 temporary direct construction jobs for two years." The same study claimed more jobs would be destroyed than created.

But Robert L. Bradley Jr., CEO of IER and Cato Institute adjunct scholar, criticized the "curious findings" of that study on Oct. 19. Bradley wrote that the Cornell study's claims "defy economic logic - as well as every previous estimate of the economic impact of Keystone XL. Simply put, the study's conclusions are specious, even absurd."

Bradley also pointed out that the Cornell study was "authored [by a board member of Greenpeace Canada and financed by Goodman Group](#), a consulting firm that puts the interest of its environmentalist clients first."

Local newspapers also refute the notion that the pipeline will not create jobs. The Little Rock Arkansas Democrat-Gazette reported on Oct. 12, 2011, that more than 600 jobs in that city "hinge" on approval of the Keystone XL pipeline. If the government refuses to allow the pipeline, Welspun Corp. Ltd (an Indian pipe manufacturer with U.S. headquarters in Little Rock) "would have to suspend operations for about two years while it tries to sell the 800 miles of pipe it has manufactured" for the Keystone project.

The [Calgary Herald](#) also reported on the hiring companies need to do for Keystone XL (in the U.S. and Canada) and another Canadian pipeline. U.S. Chamber of Commerce president Tom Donohue told ABC's "This Week" the project would create 250,000 jobs.

Another reason the left-wing has been attacking the pipeline is because they say one of its favorite targets, the Koch brothers, stand to benefit from the Keystone XL project. According to Reuters, "if President Obama allows a permit for the Keystone XL to be granted, he would be handing a big victory and great financial opportunity to Charles and David Koch, his bitterest political enemies ..."

Koch Industries already purchases a lot of Canadian oil sands crude and is ["well-positioned to benefit from increasing Canadian oil imports."](#)

Despite the rampant [reporting](#) of those claims among liberal web sites, Koch has denied that and IER called it a diversionary tactic by Congressman Henry Waxman, D-Calif. Waxman is trying to investigate whether or not the Kochs' have a financial interest in the project.

IER wrote on Oct. 20, "[Koch Industries is not invested in the Keystone XL pipeline project](#). It is not a buyer from, a seller to, or a shipper associated with the project. In fact, Koch already receives Canadian oil for one of their refineries and therefore enjoys a secure supply of Canadian oil, as opposed to oil from OPEC. And it is OPEC and other countries like Brazil, not Koch Industries (and certainly not the environment), which stand to benefit if our neighbor to the north is denied additional access to U.S. markets."

Additionally, IER explained that a Koch subsidiary, Flint Hills, has only a generic interest in the project.