Fox Resurrects Its Gas Price Sham For Romney

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Today, Fox News correspondent John Roberts asked, "what are the presidential candidates doing in their energy plans to keep the price of gasoline down?" With that, he'd already started on the wrong foot. As several Fox figures **acknowledged in 2008**, "no President has the power to increase or to lower gas prices."

Yet Roberts falsely suggested that by opening up more lands to drilling and authorizing the Keystone XL pipeline, Mitt Romney could lower gas prices. As at least **20 experts**, including those from the conservative American Enterprise Institute and the libertarian Cato Institute, have explained, increasing oil production in the U.S. will not lower the price of gasoline. In fact, gas prices have remained high for the U.S. even as the number of oil rigs in operation in the U.S. has **soared** in recent years:

Roberts specifically suggested that Romney's pledge to open up the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) and federal lands to more drilling would affect gas prices. But the nonpartisan Energy Information Agency (EIA) stated that opening up the OCS would have an "**insignificant**" impact, and the EIA director **testified** before Congress that "Long term we do not project additional volumes of oil that could flow from greater access to oil resources on Federal lands to have a large impact on prices given the globally integrated nature of the world oil market." Not to mention that the Obama administration projects about **three-quarters** of recoverable oil and gas below the OCS will be open to drilling by 2017, and oil production on **federal lands** is up in recent years.

As for Keystone XL, economist Ray Perryman **said** that his analysis for TransCanada Corp. -- the methodology of which **has been questioned** -- found the pipeline would have an impact of only "around 3.5-4 cents per gallon of gasoline at current prices" once the pipeline "was fully implemented and flowing reasonably close to capacity." Gas prices have **risen** about 34 cents since July 1st - an increase that would dwarf any projected pipeline relief. Canadian economist Andrew Leach **said**, "I can't see any significant reason for KXL to lower gas prices," adding, "Long term, it's probably close to a wash, but if anything, it's a small increase [in gas prices] from eliminating the crude glut in the Midwest."

Roberts also noted that Romney **claims** to support basic research for alternative energy, but he didn't mention that he recently chose a running mate who **voted** to **eliminate** even that.

Roberts also covered President Barack Obama's energy policies, **noting** that he implemented fuel efficiency standards. Rightly so -- after all, experts like the Council on Foreign Relations' Michael Levi have **stated** that "to fundamentally reduce U.S. vulnerability to the vagaries of world energy markets, we need to rein in our extraordinary (and economically self-damaging) demand." But the need to reduce our oil dependence in order to protect **consumers** from high and unpredictable gas prices and become more **energy secure** was absent from Roberts' report.

And while Roberts was right to highlight Obama's support for alternative fuels like **algae biofuel**, he derided such technologies as a "long way off." Still missing: acknowledgement that **no policy** will reduce gas prices in the short term. Our dependence on oil is a long-term problem that requires long-term solutions.