

COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND  
TECHNOLOGY**  
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



For Immediate Release  
May 7, 2013

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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)  
Hearing on “Keystone XL Pipeline: Examination of Scientific and Environmental Issues”**

**Chairman Smith:** In December 2008, then President-elect Obama announced a massive new economic stimulus proposal, which he said would focus on “shovel-ready” construction projects. Less than three months earlier, TransCanada submitted to the Federal government what might be considered the epitome of all shovel-ready projects: a request to build the 1,700 mile Keystone Pipeline from Alberta to the Texas gulf.

Four and a half years have passed since the President made “shovel-ready” part of the political discussion. Today TransCanada still waits for the Federal government to decide whether allowing a company to create more than 40,000 jobs building a pipeline to deliver oil from an ally is in our national interest. Many Americans would consider such a decision to be simple. But the Federal government has required millions of dollars, years of study and thousands of pages of reports.

Fortunately, the end is in sight. In the coming months, the Obama administration will decide the future of the pipeline. Today we will discuss the scientific and environmental factors at the center of the debate that surrounds this decision.

Ultimately, there are two major concerns in this debate: 1) whether we have the ability to construct and operate the pipeline safely, and 2) whether the pipeline’s construction will contribute significantly to climate change.

On both of these questions, extensive analysis undertaken by the State Department has affirmed the safety and environmental soundness of the project. For example, with respect to greenhouse gas emissions, the worst case scenario projected that approval of the pipeline could result in a U.S. annual carbon dioxide emissions increase of only twelve one-thousandths of one percent (0.0012%).

The Keystone Pipeline creates jobs and enhances our energy independence with minimal impact to the environment. This project, which has been thoroughly evaluated, should be approved immediately. I hope today’s discussion will provide members a useful scientific and environmental background for decision-making, as we move to consider legislation regarding Keystone on the House floor later this month.

Thank you and I yield back.

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