

March 8, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
361A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders Reid and McConnell:

The National Construction Alliance II (NCA II) strongly supports the Hoenen amendment, #1537, to expedite the permitting of the Keystone XL pipeline, the 1,700-mile pipeline designed to bring crude oil from Alberta, North Dakota, and Montana to refineries in the Gulf Coast. The NCA II – a partnership between two of the nation's leading construction unions, the International Union of Operating Engineers and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America – believes that the project will deliver significant energy, economic, and national security benefits to the nation. The project also represents an environmental improvement by transshipping this crude oil in the indisputably safest way to move the commodity, at the same time displacing existing truck-, water-, and rail-borne shipments of the fuel.

The Keystone XL is now in its fourth year of permitting, and every day that passes represents a missed opportunity to put thousands of union construction workers back on the job building the largest private construction project in the United States. Delay until 2013 is simply unacceptable. The legal record clearly supports finding the project in the national interest. According to the State Department's own Final Environmental Impact Statement, the fifty-seven special conditions developed by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration – and voluntarily agreed to by TransCanada – "...would have a degree of safety greater than any typically constructed domestic oil pipeline system under current regulations."

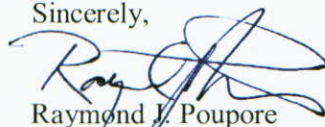
Consequently, the Carpenters and Operating Engineers support Senator Hoenen's amendment to advance the Keystone XL pipeline proposal. The NCA II also opposes the Wyden amendment, #1817. While pursuing an admirable goal, the amendment is unworkable and does not reflect the reality of the way crude oil is refined and shipped in America. For example, different batches of crude oil are often blended at shipping terminals, and it is virtually impossible to track a batch of crude oil through the complex process of transforming it into a usable refined product.

We strongly encourage you to seek every legislative opportunity to expedite the permitting process for Keystone XL, while simultaneously fighting off proposals which are unworkable and fail to reflect the realities of the oil and gas industry. Given the high levels of unemployment among our members and other construction crafts, the expeditious permitting of this pipeline project should be of the highest concern to this Congress and the Administration.

The National Construction Alliance II respectfully urges you to support the Hoenen amendment to expedite the Keystone XL project. We also encourage you to oppose the Wyden amendment, which fails to recognize the dynamics of oil and gas transshipment in America.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Raymond J. Poupore  
Executive Vice President



UNITED BROTHERHOOD  
of CARPENTERS & JOINERS  
of AMERICA

Douglas J. McCarron  
General President



INTERNATIONAL UNION  
of OPERATING ENGINEERS

James T. Callahan  
General President