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**CONTACT:**

Tammy Canney (for Frank Cownie, Mayor, Des Moines IA)  
**515-283-4944**

Lisa Tarnow (for Jennifer Hosterman, Mayor, Pleasanton CA)  
**925-931-5001**

Greg Bach (for John Dickert, Mayor, Racine WI)  
**262-636-9212**

Kitty Piercy, Mayor, Eugene OR  
**541 682-5010**

**Mayors Supporting a Clean Energy Future React to the President's Decision on Keystone XL**

**Statement of Mayors Frank Cownie (Des Moines IA), John Dickert (Racine WI), Jennifer Hosterman (Pleasanton CA) and Kitty Piercy (Eugene OR), leaders of mayoral effort against high carbon fuels**

As mayors highly involved in the push to help move America toward a clean energy future, we commend and support in the strongest terms President Obama's decision to deny the presidential permit for the proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. We view this landmark decision as an important step in protecting the health and safety of Americans – and the environment which sustains us all. Moving toward clean energy sources, and away from high carbon fuels like tar sands oil, is a no-brainer of the highest order, especially given the strong contribution that the clean energy sector is already making in the U.S. economy. High carbon fuels dirty our air, pose grave threats to fresh water, and ratchet up carbon emissions at a time when we're all trying – at the local level and beyond – to reduce carbon outputs, improve air quality and slow climate change. We believe the President has shown wisdom and leadership in rejecting the pipeline and thereby demonstrating the Administration's commitment to clean energy, which reduces our dependence on oil and creates jobs that ultimately benefit everyone.

In November of last year, we reached out to mayors across the country on the Keystone XL pipeline issue, and the interest in finding a better way to meet our transportation energy needs than importing high carbon fuels like tar sands oil was overwhelming. The result was a letter to President Obama from 103 mayors, coast to coast, asking the President to deny the presidential permit for the pipeline in order to protect the health and safety of the American people by protecting our environment, present and future.

As we mayors stated in our letter: "Expansion of high carbon fuels such as tar sands undermine hard work by local communities everywhere to fight climate change, reduce dependence on oil, and create a

clean energy future.” Our cities and towns are where the rubber hits the road, when it comes to the many negative impacts – not just on the environment, but on our health and pocketbooks as well – of continuing to rely on oil for our transportation needs. This is why so many of us, in all regions of the country, actively support greener, cleaner ways of getting around, as well as the creation of clean energy and green-collar jobs which put us to work and protect our environment all at the same time.

The Keystone XL pipeline is not being proposed for the benefit of the American people, and this is abundantly clear for several reasons.

First, any honest assessment of the Keystone XL pipeline plans shows that this project proposal is a business strategy designed to benefit first and foremost, of course, the project proponent and its investors by opening access to world markets – via United States ports. That is, much of the tar sands oil to be transported by the Keystone XL pipeline is not for U.S. consumption at all, but rather for export to other countries after it is “upgraded” in the U.S. (because it’s cheaper to upgrade and refine it here, at our ports, where it is closer to lucrative export markets).

Second, even military experts agree that importing tar sands oil won’t make us safer. Keeping the country dependent on oil inevitably leads to involvement in conflicts likely to affect world oil supplies and prices. Canadian tar sands oil is a small a piece of the pie in terms of world oil resources, so it cannot influence world oil prices in any meaningful way, and some high-ranking members of the military have described the proposed Keystone XL pipeline project as “a gift to our enemies” because it would keep us addicted to oil and slow down the development of American-made sources of renewable, cleaner fuels that would make us more energy independent.

Third, the job-creation potential from the proposed Keystone XL pipeline project is miniscule and as a Cornell University economic analysis aptly demonstrated, will likely be cancelled out by job losses resulting from higher gas prices if the pipeline is built. Higher prices could happen here when tar sands exports overseas fetch higher prices for Canadian producer. Finally, it is now clear that the jobs created by Keystone XL would be small in number, temporary and in opening in areas lucky enough to have unemployment rates much lower than the national average.

We are heartened by the President’s decision to ensure that before any final decision is made about the Keystone XL pipeline, and the high-carbon, tar sands oil it would carry, the Administration will ensure that a full and thorough assessment of the project’s impacts is carried out. In announcing his decision, the President underscored the importance of such an assessment for protecting “the health and safety of the American people, as well as our environment”, and we believe that denying the permit in order to ensure a proper assessment was the only responsible course of action. We believe the brightest future for the health, wealth and security of our citizens stands with clean energy, and we are happy to work with the President to make it a reality.

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