

Congressmen Peter Welch (D-VT) and Steve Cohen (D-TN-9) today said the U.S. Department of State's newly released Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline fails to suitably note the full impact the controversial project will have on our country's environment. TransCanada – which supplies some of the biggest oil companies in the world with toxic tar sands oil – is seeking State Department approval to build the Keystone XL Pipeline, a new 2,000 mile pipeline from Alberta, Canada to the Gulf Coast in Texas. The State Department, which has authority over permitting all international pipelines, is expected to make a decision by the end of 2011.

"I am disappointed that after numerous Congressional letters and serious concerns from the environmental community the State Department has failed once again to adequately assess the real environmental impact of the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline," said Congressman Cohen. "With 12 spills in less than one year of operation in the original Keystone Pipeline, TransCanada has proven they are incapable of safely operating a tar sands pipeline that protects our environment and economy. Natural resources like the Ogallala Aquifer which Keystone XL would run through are invaluable and we should not put a dangerous, dirty tar sands pipeline through the heart of it."

"This pipeline will carry 900,000 barrels of tar sands oil nearly 2,000 miles per day. Transporting this amount of tar sands oil this distance has never been done before," Rep. Welch said. "The U.S. pipeline system was not designed for it and safety regulations were not written with the potential impacts in mind. The State Department analysis greatly underestimates the risk of this pipeline to the environment and our nation's energy security."

Exxon's 40,000 gallon pipeline spill in early July is the most recent in a string of pipeline spills that have devastated the economy and environment throughout America's heartland. Less than one year ago, TransCanada began operating the Keystone Pipeline, the first leg of the proposed Keystone system. Despite TransCanada's claims that Keystone is "the safest pipeline ever built" and would spill once every seven years, Keystone spilled 12 times in less than one year and was shut down because it was determined to pose a "threat to life, property and the environment."

Congressmen Cohen and Welch have been leading Congressional advocates in calling upon the State Department to ensure that the Keystone XL Pipeline is safe and will never pose a threat to life, property, and the environment. In June, they spearheaded a letter citing concerns about the controversial Keystone XL Pipeline. The letter was addressed to U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson and was signed by more than 30 members of the U.S House of Representatives. This letter was a follow-up to another Congressional letter that urged the State Department to conduct a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement – a review of the total safety and environmental impacts of the proposed project.

[Read the June 2011 letter to Secretary of State Clinton and EPA Administrator Jackson](#)

[Read the June 2010 letter to Secretary of State Clinton](#)

[Read the December 2010 letter to Secretary of State Clinton urging a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement](#)