

Keystone XL Pipeline Press Conferences Have Opposing Views

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GRAND ISLAND -- Prior to the Keystone XL public hearing held Thursday, April 18, at the Heartland Convention Center in Grand Island, two simultaneous press conventions were held only several hundred feet apart, yet remained worlds apart in their perspectives regarding the highly controversial Canadian tar-sand pipeline.

Nebraskans, as well as the nation, struggle deciding if there are any national benefits to bringing in a foreign owned corporation's pipeline, used to transport Diluted Bitumen (DilBit), to Gulf Coast refineries where the oil will be refined into petroleum product, and then sold onto the world market will actually benefit the United States of America.

In a press conference held by "key supporters of the Keystone XL Pipeline" speakers talked about how the Keystone XL would be in the nation's interest.

Brigham McCown, former acting administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration, stressed three points. He said pipelines are the safest way to transport oil. He said that the Tar-sands are no different than conventional crude oil. And, McCown said the pipeline would be the safest ever built.

McCown also said "opposing the keystone XL is short sided" and that construction of the KXL would "likely reduce the number of spills in the future." He added that "every aspect of the KXL raises the bar."

Others spoke at the KXL supporters briefing about the price of oil and how current tar-sand oil is selling at \$30 to \$50 less than the Brent oil prices, and the KXL would help that situation lower the price of fuel.

When asked if the oil would be exported, Cory Goulet, VP Keystone Projects, answered, "It makes no sense."

Dave Barnett, Special Advisors to the United Association of Plumbers, Pipefitters, Welders and HVAC technicians told the press, "The answer is not to stop this pipeline but to create more of these projects."

Several hundred feet away, Bold Nebraska, an organization opposed to the KXL conducted a press conference of their own. Susan Connolly, spoke about the over 100 homes that Enbridge, also an oil pipe operator, had to buy after they were destroyed when a million gallons of DilBit spilled into the Kalamazoo River for 17 hours while the control room in Canada couldn't decipher their own instruments. Hilton Kelly, a resident from the Gulf Coast refinery area, spoke about the dangers to local environments due to refinery discharges.

John Hanson, with Nebraska Farmers Union, spoke about how often these pipelines spill and the dangers any leak, regardless of how small, would have tremendous negative effects on the Sandhills and the Ogallala Aquifer.

Brian Jorde, an attorney representing a landowner's organization, NEAT, spoke about his perceived injustices being done by TransCanada by their unwarranted threats of eminent domain which would take a permanent easement from Nebraska landowners.

Attendees to these two press conferences surely came away wondering who is right, what is right for Nebraska and what is right for the nation.

Immediately following the two press conferences, hundreds of people lined up to attend and many to testify about why or why not the Keystone XL pipeline should be built through Nebraska.

[Watch Video from the BOLD Conference](#)