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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

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April 25, 2014

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We were pleased to hear that a State Department official confirmed in a statement to *Politico* on April 23rd that the Keystone XL tar sands oil pipeline's National Interest Determination "will address health impacts."

The official's statement was unclear on the State Department's commitment to conduct an independent comprehensive human health study. We believe this study is necessary.

As we indicated in our previous letter on February 26th, the Final Supplemental EIS is inadequate in analyzing and addressing the potentially serious human health impacts on the numerous communities that confront each step of the toxic tar sands oil process -- from the extraction to the transport to the refining to the waste disposal.

Based on the human health impacts that we do know about, building this pipeline is not in the national interest. These impacts include the significantly higher levels of dangerous air pollutants and carcinogens found downwind from where tar sands oil is refined, the exposure to tar sands oil from pipeline spills, and the open disposal of the tar sands waste byproduct known as "pet coke" that exposes communities to blowing black dust containing concentrated heavy metals.

The Final Supplemental EIS makes only cursory mention of limited and outdated studies on many of these issues and ignores others. Only the completion of a separate comprehensive health analysis of tar sands oil and the Keystone XL pipeline can fully address these matters.

We look forward to your commitment to complete this independent health study, and we offer our assistance in ensuring that the numerous peer reviewed studies and the people on the front line of these impacts are made available to you to include in the study.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer
Chairman, Committee on
Environment and Public Works



Sheldon Whitehouse
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Clean Air and Nuclear Safety