

Written Testimony before the House Energy & Environment Committee

HCR 5014

Submitted by J. Kent Eckles, Vice President of Government Affairs

Thursday, March 14th, 2013



The Kansas Chamber appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony in favor of HCR 5014.

The Chamber strongly believes the Keystone XL Pipeline is in the United States' best interest, and we encourage the White House & the U.S. State Department to expeditiously permit this project to move forward. This infrastructure will be critical to improving our nation's energy security at a time of increasing instability in key producing regions.

Notwithstanding efforts to increase energy conservation and the use of renewable fuels, Americans will continue to consume millions of barrels of oil each and every day for the foreseeable future. In fact, the Energy Information Administration projects that U.S. demand for oil will remain constant (around 19 million barrels a day) from now until at least 2035.

Access to affordable, stable supplies of petroleum remains one of the most vital components for a growing economy. Here in Kansas, several industries – including a large agriculture sector – and millions of consumers depend on stable energy costs to fuel their livelihoods. However, the uncertainty about long-term supplies and increased price volatility is quickly becoming a critical issue. With global demand steadily rising and political instability spreading throughout oil-exporting nations, the United States must permit Keystone XL as a means to mitigate against these threats.

This project will allow over 700,000 additional barrels of American and Canadian crude to be transported to U.S. refineries and then to American consumers. In fact, access to larger supplies of North American energy will significantly reduce U.S. dependence on overseas oil. Moreover, the transport of these essential supplies will be less susceptible to distribution since pipelines remain the most reliable, safest form of oil transport.

We appreciate the thorough assessment the State Department undertook to ensure that our environment in Kansas would not be adversely affected by the pipeline's construction and operation. Now that the environmental assessment has been completed, we support passage of HCR 5014 to urge the State Department to conclude that this project is in our nation's best interest given all of the economic and energy security benefits.

We urge the Committee to pass favorably HCR 5014.

The Kansas Chamber, with headquarters in Topeka, is the leading statewide pro-business advocacy group moving Kansas towards becoming the best state in America to do business. The Chamber represents small, medium and large employers all across Kansas.

