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Keystone XL and Northern Gateway pipelines

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To: milan.ilnyckyj@gmail.com

Dear Milan,

Thank you for writing to me regarding the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline.

New Democrats oppose this project because it is neither in the best interests of Canadians, nor does it meet the criteria of what constitutes sustainable development. There are significant environmental concerns, including damage related to the construction of the pipeline, as well as from potential oil spills along the pipeline and from oil tankers navigating the hazardous waters on the northwest coast of British Columbia. Spills of this nature would jeopardize the fishing and tourism industries in BC putting tens of thousands of livelihoods and the stability of those communities at risk. The wild salmon economy alone generates \$1.7 billion each year in BC. The Conservative government is playing fast and loose with BCs economy and ecosystems.

Further, this pipeline would contribute to the rapid and unchecked expansion of Canada's oil sands that the current government has permitted without any regard for economic sustainability, or the effects of this unchecked development on greenhouse gas emissions and the resulting climate change.

Development of the oil sands should take place within the context of a coherent and credible national energy strategy that will be good for the Canadian economy and good for our environment, one that has a transition to green energy and renewable technologies at its core. It is unacceptable that this Conservative government chases one raw bitumen pipeline project after another that serves only corporate profit interests to the detriment of our national interests.

New Democrats believe that the environmental assessment process must include the voices of all Canadians who have a stake in outcome, from first nations to local residents, from small business to industry. To declare opponents to a project "radicals" or try to slander them as representing foreign interests is anti-democratic and patently out-of-touch. It is hypocritical that Mr. Harper considers foreign oil interests his friends while branding people who care about our shared global environment as his enemies.

It is particularly concerning the level of disrespect this government has show towards the First Nations whose traditional territory this pipeline would cross. Instead of defending the rights of the First Nations, which have been affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada, the government has chosen instead to damage the development of healthy and fair relationships with the first peoples of Canada.

Climate change will not respect international borders and since per-barrel emissions in the oil sands are rising, and will continue to do so, all nations have an interest in how Canada develops this resource.

There is nothing radical or un-Canadian about wanting to pass on a healthy environment to future generations and for having an expectation that our precious natural resources be developed in a sustainable manner with maximum benefits for Canadians. What is radical is the short-sighted evisceration of the laws meant to protect Canada's environment, the firing of government scientists and pulling out of international efforts to fight catastrophic climate change.

The hypocrisy of the government's statements regarding opponents of Northern Gateway is clear. In many cases the companies that are profiting from oil-sands development are themselves partially foreign-owned.

New Democrats will continue to oppose the government's moves to abrogate its duty to ensure fulsome environmental assessments for major projects, and we will continue to ask why this government is interfering with what it had assured Canadians would be an arms-length and independent joint review panel process?

Thanks again for writing.

Sincerely,

Andrew Cash, Member of Parliament for Davenport / Député de Davenport

NDP Deputy Critic for Housing

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