

Question arises after Harper says Canada won't "take 'no' for an answer" on Canadian export pipeline running through America

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 4, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Today, Tom Steyer, president of NextGen Climate Action, released a letter to Canadian Prime Minister

Stephen Harper

asking if a Canadian lobbying campaign unnecessarily injected the Keystone XL Pipeline into the U.S. congressional debate on the debt ceiling. These questions arose in light of Harper's September 26

comments about the inevitability of the Keystone XL Pipeline's construction and that he will not "take 'no' for an answer" from the President of the United States

about a Canadian pipeline running through the heart of America. The letter was also prompted by news that TransCanada will launch a new advertising campaign aimed at policy makers in Washington, D.C.

In the letter, Steyer asks Prime Minister Harper to answer the following key question:

Have your government, your government's lobbyist and/or agents representing TransCanada communicated with House Republicans about including Keystone in the original litany of demands put to President Obama?

The text of the letter to Prime Minister Harper can be found below:

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P. Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister:

We have become aware that TransCanada, the foreign oil company that is seeking to run the Keystone XL Pipeline *through* the United States in order to make sure billions of dollars flow to TransCanada is preparing to run a new advertising campaign this weekend that targets Washington, DC

News of this advertising campaign comes in the context of House Republicans having closed down the U.S. government as well as threatening to oppose the extension of the country's debt limit unless certain demands were met. Included in the original list of House Republican demands was that the Obama Administration grant approval for the building of the Keystone XL Pipeline.

We also took note of these developments in light of [your recent CNBC interview](#) regarding the Keystone XL Pipeline in which you said that when it comes to the possible rejection of the pipeline by the Obama Administration that you won't "**take 'no' for an answer.**"

These developments have occurred against the backdrop of an enormous lobbying campaign that your government and TransCanada have engaged in seeking to pressure the U.S. government to approve this pipeline. This effort includes \$3,920,000 spent by TransCanada since 2009 to lobby U.S. federal officials; another \$650,000 spent on lobbying by Canadian government agencies; and upwards of \$30 million spent on advertising in the United States by the Canadian government in 2012 and 2013.

Throughout this relentless lobbying campaign, the foreign supporters of the pipeline, led by TransCanada, have demonstrated a pattern of pushing the influence peddling envelope to secure approval of the pipeline. This includes making representations about the pipeline promoting U.S. oil independence when in fact that oil is going to be shipped overseas.

The combination of this advertising campaign being launched in the middle of the U.S. government shutdown, shortly after House Republicans injected Keystone into the debate about our country's finances, along with your comments – all in the context of a pattern of foreign supporters pushing the envelope when it comes to seeking to influence Congress – raises the question of whether your office is working hand-in-hand with TransCanada to try to exploit the current situation in Washington, DC, at the expense of the American people.

Given your CNBC comments making clear you are not going to take no for an answer, the American people deserve to have a basic question answered:

Have your government, your government's lobbyist and/or agents representing TransCanada communicated with House Republicans about including Keystone in the original litany of demands put to President Obama?

Putting aside the fact that your CNBC interview suggests that you believe it is your place to make a decision for America about whether our country will make a 40-year commitment to exporting some of the dirtiest oil on the planet to our foreign competitors, it is important for you to be able to answer this question with a very simple "yes" or "no," so the American people have full transparency as to whether you, your government or TransCanada have sought to exploit the current issues in Washington, DC.

We have a saying in the United States that I believe may also resonate in Canada: When you go to bed at night with no snow on the ground, and you wake up in the morning to find snow, you can safely conclude it snowed.

Similarly, when House Republicans propose the extension of a foreign pipeline that will benefit a Canadian oil company as one of a small number of issues holding up actions that led to the shutdown of the U.S. government and now threaten the entire U.S. economy, the American public has the right to ask the question of what TransCanada and/or the Canadian government knew about the role of the Keystone XL pipeline in this current crisis in Washington, DC, and when did either of you know it?

Yours sincerely,

Tom SteyerNextGen Climate Action

About NextGen Climate Action:

NextGen Climate Action was founded by investor Tom Steyer to act politically to avert climate disaster and preserve American prosperity. Learn more at <http://www.nextgenclimate.org>

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