

## US House sends message on Keystone pipeline

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Environmental activists march through midtown protesting the proposed Keystone XL pipeline, May 13, 2013 in New York. US lawmakers agreed to a bill that would speed construction of a Canada-US oil pipeline and circumvent the need for President Barack Obama's approval for the \$5 billion project

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By a 241-175 vote, the House of Representatives passed the largely symbolic measure to end regulatory delays on the Keystone XL Pipeline, a project which House Speaker John Boehner noted is shown in polls to have the support of most Americans.

"The Keystone pipeline will create tens of thousands of American jobs and pump nearly a million barrels of oil to US [refineries](#) each day, helping to lower [gas prices](#), boost economic growth, enhance our [energy security](#), and revitalize manufacturing," Boehner said after the vote.

The Democrat-held Senate is unlikely to take up the bill, particularly after the White House released a statement Tuesday saying Obama would veto it if it reached his desk.

Republicans have long urged the president to greenlight the pipeline, claiming it would create jobs and help reduce US dependence on fuel from outside North America.

The project aims to build a 1,980-mile (3,200-kilometer) conduit for oil from Canada's tar sands region to the US Gulf Coast.

The project was proposed back in 2008, but after years of delays, operator TransCanada split the project in two, and construction began on a southern section that does not require presidential approval.

The US State Department is currently preparing its final review of the project; it concluded in a draft report earlier this year that it would have no major impact on the environment.

The White House has so far declined to rule, citing environmental concerns.

The oil would come from Alberta's [tar sands](#), considered to have "dirty"

oil that requires a complex extraction process, which critics say would further contribute to [climate warming](#).

There was significant opposition to the initial route because it passed through Nebraska's environmentally sensitive Sand Hills [wetlands](#), and over a huge and critical aquifer that serves eight US states.

Opponent Jerrold Nadler, a House Democrat from New York, cited the environmental threats posed by the project and said the law would be "short-circuiting the review process."

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