



## Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7  
 2180 Milvia Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704  
 PHONE 510-981-7170 FAX 510-981-7177 [kworthington@ci.berkeley.ca.us](mailto:kworthington@ci.berkeley.ca.us)

### CONSENT CALENDAR

April 2, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington  
 Councilmember Max Anderson  
 Councilmember Jesse Arreguin

Subject: Berkeley City Council Members Jointly Sign the CREDO Action Keystone XL Pledge of Resistance

### RECOMMENDATION

For the Berkeley City Council members to jointly sign the CREDO Action Keystone XL Pledge of Resistance.

### BACKGROUND

Around the country thousands are gathering to voice their concern over the Keystone XL Pipeline expansion. Over a two week period in August of 2011, 1,253 people were arrested for participating in a peaceful and civil protest opposing the construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline that “effectively stopped what was considered a virtually guaranteed presidential approval of the pipeline”. On February 13 the president of the Sierra Club, Allison Chin, broke the club’s century long tradition of not participating in civil disobedience by allowing herself to be arrested during a protest outside of the White House. Chin, along with dozens of environmental, civil rights, and community leaders are calling for national action in the form of dignified and peaceful protests.

If all 9 members jointly signed the pledge it would send a strong message of the importance of this issue. We would not expect such a strong and unified reaction to everyday concerns. Berkeley standing up in this unique and strong way is consistent with our Climate Action Plan and Berkeley’s strong commitment to reducing green house gasses.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Minimal, if any.

### CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Kriss Worthington 510-981-7170

### Attachment:

1. Pledge of Resistance

## **The Keystone XL Pledge of Resistance**

Last Friday was one of those days that remind us of just how steep a hill to climb this fight against climate change is.

Even with a president who recently professed a lofty goal of getting all cars off of oil, even with one of our stronger climate hawk senators as the new secretary of state, the State Department still released a joke of an environmental assessment of the Keystone XL pipeline, taking us one big step closer to approval of this project that should be a no-brainer of a rejection.<sup>1</sup>

Obliviously ignoring the consensus among oil executives, bankers, and environmentalists, who all agree that Keystone XL is central to speeding the extraction of tar sands,<sup>2</sup> the State Department found the project is "unlikely to have a significant impact" on tar sands development. This is coward's logic.

This assessment was a vehicle for the White House to test the waters and see if the public will stand by, and buy this false and cynical argument that the tar sands will just get burned anyway. That while NASA's chief climate scientist's assertion that Keystone XL will spell 'game over' for the climate may be true,<sup>3</sup> it is essentially irrelevant. That we should let the bankers and the oil companies profit while the planet inevitably burns.

**Well, we won't.** And so, last Friday reminded us of something else, too: Those two weeks in August of 2011, when the peaceful and dignified arrest of 1,253 people over two weeks at President Obama's front door effectively stopped what was considered a virtually guaranteed presidential approval of Keystone XL.

## **There is still time to convince President Obama to change his mind and reject Keystone XL...**

That's why CREDO is joining with Bold Nebraska, The Other 98%, Hip Hop Caucus, Rainforest Action Network, 350.org and Oil Change International to launch the Keystone XL Pledge of Resistance.

**It is time for us to pledge to resist. That is, we are asking you to commit - should it be necessary to stop Keystone XL -- to engage in serious, dignified, peaceful civil disobedience that could get you arrested.**

**Will you join us in pledging resistance to the Keystone XL pipeline, including - if necessary - pledging to participate in peaceful, dignified civil disobedience?**

If tens of thousands of people stand up as President Obama mulls his final decision, and commit to participate in civil disobedience if necessary, we can convince the White House that it will be politically unfeasible to go forward. That is, our goal is not to get arrested. Our goal is to stop the Keystone XL pipeline -- by showing enough opposition to Keystone XL that President Obama will reject it. But if he shows clear signs he that he is preparing to approve it, we will be ready.

It goes without saying, this isn't a usual ask. It is not for everyone. So we want you to carefully consider if this is something you can commit to be a part of.

Here's exactly what we have in mind: With the release of Friday's Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, we will have 45 days to submit formal comments. And comment we will. We will petition, rally, make phone calls, and comment through official channels. But that may not be enough.

**The moment of truth will come later, at some point likely in the summer, with the release of the draft National Interest Determination. If the Obama administration issues a draft finding that Keystone XL is in our national interest, that will trigger action on our pledge to resist.**

So we are asking you to pledge, if necessary after the release of the draft National Interest Determination, to join with others in your community and risk arrest in acts of dignified, peaceful civil disobedience, all over the country.

**Will you join us in pledging resistance to the Keystone XL pipeline, including - if necessary - pledging to participate in peaceful, dignified civil disobedience?**

Most events will be outside Washington, D.C., because this decision will affect all of us, where we live. So we want to see the beautiful sight of actions across the nation -- including a wide variety of symbolic targets like State Department offices, TransCanada corporate lobbies, Obama Organizing for Action meetings, banks that are financing tar sands oil development, areas ravaged by Superstorm Sandy, and along the pipeline route. Some brave souls have started this work already. We need to support their efforts and make them much, much bigger.

**You can pledge to participate or you can pledge to help organize an action in your community. We'll need tons of volunteers. And soon, we'll announce organizer trainings so local leaders and activists who want to can get the tools they need to organize an action near them.**

You shouldn't make this pledge lightly. We certainly don't ask lightly. We ask in the belief that there are tens of thousands of people out there who feel as strongly about this as we do; who believe that these circumstances call for extraordinary action, and want to be part of that action in their community. And we ask with the faith that those who commit to participate and organize actions will participate only in the most dignified manner. After all, we are the conservatives, standing up for a safe and secure future for our families. It is those we protest, those who profit from radically altering the chemical composition of our atmosphere -- and the prospects for survival of humanity - that are the radicals.

**But what is more frightening than asking you to join us in committing to acts of civil disobedience across the nation, is the prospect of coming up short in the fight against Keystone XL...**

We do not know how many people's pledges, and how many pledged actions, it will take to convince President Obama to resist the big money, dirty energy, inside-the-beltway pressure and take a stand to protect our nation from the greatest threat of all.

**So we need you. Literally, you might tip the balance.**

We hope you can join us. If you are so moved, make the pledge. And share this pledge with friends and family so that those who are ready and willing to be arrested can be counted in the pledge to resist. We'll send you more information soon.

1. "[Keystone XL pipeline would have little impact on climate change, State Department analysis says](#)" Washington Post, 3/01/13
2. "[Keystone XL: In their own words](#)" 350.org
3. "[Game over for the climate](#)," James Hansen, the New York Times, 5/9/12

## **Sign the pledge**

**"I pledge, if necessary, to join others in my community, and engage in acts of dignified, peaceful civil disobedience that could result in my arrest in order to send the message to President Obama and his administration that they must reject the Keystone XL pipeline."**