



April 17, 2014

An Open Letter from Thomas F. Steyer

I believe with all my heart that the Keystone XL pipeline is not in the best interest of our kids. By virtue of this letter, NextGen Climate is taking a Courage Pledge to support Members of Congress who are now being threatened with political attacks because they had the courage to stand up for our children by opposing the Keystone XL pipeline.

The Keystone XL pipeline is a gateway to some of the world's dirtiest oil that will significantly increase the amount of pollution in our air and water and endanger some of our most critical resources for generations to come. The Keystone XL pipeline would allow foreign polluters to rake in billions of dollars with no guarantee that the refined oil will even stay in the United States, and the State Department has determined that the Keystone XL pipeline will create just 35 permanent jobs in the United States—all together a historically bad trade for America.

Let us be clear: job growth is critical to our economy, and now is the time to focus our attention on wind, solar, energy efficiency, and other alternative energy projects. Clean energy has already created over one million construction and manufacturing jobs in the U.S. In 2013, the U.S. added 80,000 clean energy jobs and attracted nearly \$37 billion in investment. Rather than pursuing dirty energy sources like the Canadian tar sands oil, we should continue to invest in a clean energy economy that provides good paying, high quality jobs here in the U.S.

In California, we have seen firsthand how labor, business and the environmental community have worked together to create clean energy jobs. In 2010, [this group came together to defeat a ballot initiative sponsored by oil companies](#) that would have targeted the state's historic climate change laws and, in the process, undermine a clean energy economy projected to generate tens of thousands of jobs. And again in 2012, [we partnered with California's largest labor organizations to pass Proposition 39](#), which closed a tax loophole, funded much-needed energy efficient building retrofits, and will create thousands of construction jobs in the process. Additionally, we have worked with the IBEW in California to support a [clean energy apprenticeship program](#) to help train union electricians for clean energy related construction projects.

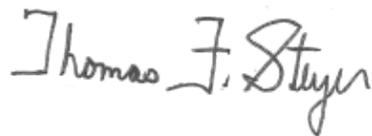
These experiences inform our approach at NextGen Climate. We fundamentally believe that those who want to do right by our children and working families must work together for America. We continue to take on powerful forces like TransCanada, the Koch brothers, and climate change deniers in Congress who are seeking to advance their own economic self-interests at the expense of our country. These are the same people who oppose health care reform; oppose raising the minimum wage; and oppose protecting the rights of working people to organize.

In fact, the Koch Brothers' operation is spending tens of millions of dollars to try to take control of the Senate, including running attack ads against Democratic Members of Congress—even those who support their agenda on issues like Keystone XL. Their only interest is seizing complete control of Congress.

It takes courage for our representatives to stand up and fight against such powerful interests. But climate change is a fact—the science is clear—and the latest U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report affirms that we can no longer afford to wait to address this very real threat. When the dangers of climate change are already being felt across the country and around the world—particularly among those who can afford it the least—the importance of bold leaders willing to take a stand and address these realities cannot be understated.

For these reasons, we are taking this Courage Pledge. We stand ready, willing and able to support those members who have been threatened because they had the courage to stand up for our children and oppose the Keystone XL pipeline.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas F. Steyer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Thomas F. Steyer
Founder and President, NextGen Climate