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Black Business Leader Calls on Obama Administration to Approve Keystone XL

NBCC president highlights importance of pipeline project to African American community, economic recovery and energy security

WASHINGTON, DC – With the U.S. State Department hosting today its final public meeting concerning the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline, [Harry C. Alford](#), president and chief executive officer of the [National Black Chamber of Commerce \(NBCC\)](#), is urging the Obama administration to take a real stand for the nation's economic recovery by quickly approving the project. In the midst of crippling unemployment and turmoil in the Middle East, Keystone XL represents an excellent avenue for creating jobs, decreasing our reliance on unstable oil-producing nations, and helping low-income families.

"The Keystone XL Pipeline gives President Obama a prime opportunity to show our nation that he is serious about job creation and economic growth. The unemployment rate is still over nine percent across the country; and for the African American community it remains a disgraceful 16.7 percent. Keystone XL will create tens of thousands of construction jobs primarily throughout six states, and has the potential to create thousands more across the country. This is important for the African American community, as blacks account for more than 490,000 members of the nation's construction workforce. And the pipeline will inject more than \$20 billion into our economy. We don't need any more jobs speeches; we need infrastructure projects like these," Alford stated.

“This proposed pipeline will also go a long way in ensuring a reliable, safe, and, most importantly, affordable supply of energy. Upon completion, Keystone XL would supply nine percent of all U.S. oil imports. That’s roughly half of all the oil we get from the Middle East. And with revolutions continuing to jeopardize oil-exporting countries, approving this pipeline is an easy, common-sense solution to shield the U.S.

from overseas developments out of our control. And for low-income earners in the black and other minority communities, having this security is crucial. Citizens in these communities spend a disproportionate amount of their income on gas and other staples affected by energy prices. It’s unacceptable, therefore, to turn our backs on this project.”

Alford concluded, *“Long story short, if we as a nation are to realize a brighter economic future and have the energy we need, Keystone XL is a must. President Obama should quit his anti-oil rhetoric and approve this pipeline post haste. The State Department and countless federal agencies have had more than enough time to review it; the State Department indeed has concluded it’s environmentally safe. Let’s build Keystone XL so our country can get back to work and out of the red.”*

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The [National Black Chamber of Commerce \(NBCC\)](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nonsectarian 501(c)3 organization, founded in 1993, dedicated to the economic empowerment of African American communities. With 190 affiliated chapters throughout the United States, and international affiliate chapters in the Bahamas, Brazil, Colombia, Ghana and Jamaica, NBCC represents 95,000 Black-owned businesses and provides advocacy and education efforts that reach more than 1.9 million Black-owned businesses in the United States (US Census Bureau).