REPLY TO:

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United States Senate

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510–1501

May 16, 2011

REPLY TO:

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☐ 131 WEST 3RD STREET
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☐ 307 FEDERAL BUILDING
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The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary, U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

In recent weeks and months, consumers in Iowa and across the nation have been burdened by ever-increasing prices at the fuel pump. With crude oil prices near or above $100 a barrel and prices at the pump near $4, gas prices are hurting American families and are threatening to undermine the fragile economic recovery. The Obama Administration must take action to increase the supply of energy and reduce prices at the pump for consumers.

On September 19, 2008, TransCanada submitted to the U.S. State Department an Application for Presidential Permit to construct, operate and maintain the international Keystone XL pipeline project. While the Canadian National Energy Board approved the pipeline more than a year ago, it appears that State Department approval is tied up in bureaucratic and regulatory red tape and remains many months away.

The approval of this pipeline from an unwavering ally of the United States is in our nation's economic and national security interest. While speaking at Georgetown University earlier this year, even President Obama reaffirmed the need to import energy from neighbors like Canada, who he referred to as "stable and steady and reliable sources."

The Keystone XL pipeline, when approved, will provide 830,000 barrels of crude oil per day. As the draft Environmental Impact Statement states, the Keystone XL pipeline "would counteract insufficient domestic crude oil supply while reducing U.S. dependence on less reliable foreign oil sources. Surely you can agree that dependence on Canadian crude oil is preferable to further dependence on crude oil from Venezuela, Libya or members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in the Persian Gulf. The pipeline project is critical. In fact, without the pipeline, it's very likely that the oil will still be produced, but the U.S. will not be the recipient. If the pipeline is slow-walked or denied, China will likely be the beneficiary.

I recognize the need to ensure that the pipeline be constructed and operated in the safest and most environmentally responsible way. The Department of State's draft Environmental Impact Statement and the recently released supplemental draft Environmental Impact Statement have confirmed that the proposed pipeline would have little impact on the environment during construction or operation.

I understand that the current public comment period is scheduled to close on June 6, 2011. It's my hope that once the comments are reviewed, the State Department will take quick action to release the final environmental impact statement. In addition, it's critical that a decision to grant the National Interest Determination be made as expeditiously as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chuck Grassley

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator

This letter is important because consumers need action on high gasoline prices!