



Construction Industry Round Table

Business News

A force for positive change in the design/ construction industry

1/19/12 – Major Infrastructure Project Lost to Political Expediency

As has been widely reported, President Obama on Wednesday, January 18th, decided to reject the Keystone XL pipeline project on the advice of the U.S. State Department and in direct opposition to the general recommendations of his own Council on Jobs and Competitiveness that had just Monday released a report supporting “policies that facilitate the safe, thoughtful and timely development of pipeline, transmission and distribution projects . . . (necessary to deliver) America’s fuel and electricity and maintain the reliability of our nation’s energy system.” The Council’s report went on to state “regulatory and permitting obstacles that could threaten the development of some energy projects negatively impact[ing] jobs and weaken[ing] our energy infrastructure need to be addressed.”

It was the loss of potential jobs that most soured usually reliable and pro-Administration unions like the Laborers’ International Union of North America on the decision. LIUNA President, Terry O’Sullivan, observed: “Once again the president has sided with environmentalists instead of blue-collar construction workers.”

The decision will likely become a major political “hot potato” in the upcoming Presidential campaign – thus placing infrastructure needs at the top of the issues debate.