

Regarding the Standing Rock Sioux and the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL)

Whereas Energy Transfer Partners (ETP) is constructing DAPL, a 1,72-mile pipeline to transport up to 570,000 barrels of crude oil per day from the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota to a river port in Illinois; and

Whereas there have been more than 2,000 “significant accidents” with oil pipelines in the United States since 1995; and

Whereas ETP originally considered a pipeline route crossing the Missouri River north of Bismarck, ND, a city with predominantly white, middle class residents. To avoid the potential threat to Bismarck’s water, the pipeline was planned to be rerouted under Lake Oahe, a half mile north of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe’s major source of drinking water; and

Whereas the Great Sioux Reservation was established by the Treaty of Fort Laramie of 1868. In violation of this treaty, Congress significantly reduced Reservation lands in 1877 and 1889, splitting the Great Sioux Reservation into nine smaller reservations, including the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. In 1958, US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) took an additional 56,000 acres from the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation to construct the Oahe dam without the Tribe’s consent; and

Whereas the USACE is the government body responsible for the DAPL permitting process. The USACE is required by the National Historic Preservation Act to consult with interested tribes before approving projects in order to preserve cultural, historical, and archeological sites. The USACE failed to appropriately engage the Standing Rock Sioux and other tribes in the required consultation, asserted that DAPL would affect no historic properties, and issued a fast-track permit for DAPL; and

Whereas the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe stands by its right to self-govern as a sovereign nation and to assert treaty rights. The Tribe has been fighting the construction of DAPL in federal court since July 2016. Tribe members and hundreds of other people (water protectors) have also been physically blocking construction sites since August 2016; and

Whereas ETP private security, the North Dakota National Guard, the Morton County Sheriff’s Department, and militarized police forces from across several states have engaged in unacceptable brutality against unarmed and peaceful water protectors. These “less lethal” police tactics have included the use of water cannons in subfreezing temperatures; extensive use of pepper spray and tear gas; projectiles including rubber bullets and concussion grenades; and attack dogs; and

Whereas the Standing Rock Medic and Healer Council estimated that one particularly brutal police assault on water protectors on November 20 resulted in approximately 300 injuries. At least 26 people were seriously injured by projectiles, including the destruction of Sophia Wilansky’s arm; the severing of Vanessa “Sioux Z” Dundon’s retina; and multiple cases of lacerations, internal bleeding, and fractures; and

Whereas, on December 4, 2016, the USACE halted construction of DAPL near Lake Oahe. USACE will be undertaking an environmental impact statement and considering alternate routes for the pipeline. In response, ETP stated they “are fully committed to ensuring that this vital project is brought to completion... without any additional rerouting in and around Lake Oahe;” and

Whereas President-elect Donald Trump invested over \$500,000 in ETP and has voiced his support for completing DAPL. Additionally, the CEO of ETP donated over \$100,000 to elect Trump in the 2016 election cycle; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the 45th District Democrats of Washington strongly oppose the Dakota Access Pipeline, stand in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux, and follow their lead. In particular, we (1) call upon President Obama and our entire Congressional delegation to permanently stop the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline by any means necessary, up to and including declaring Standing Rock a national monument, before the 115th Congress and Donald Trump take office. We also (2) urge police, the National Guard, and private security forces to cease the use of militarized weapons and tactics on unarmed people at Standing Rock and across the country. Finally, we (3) ask all Democrats to put pressure on Energy Transfer Partners by divesting from banks financing DAPL and contacting executives of ETP and all associated companies.

Adopted 12/7/2016 by the 45th District Democrats of Washington State