



**Washington, D.C. – Mark Ayers, President of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO and Jack Gerard, President and CEO of API released the following statement following today’s meeting between President Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper:**

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“Our Labor-Management Committee was founded on the premise that seeking common ground is the best way to advance an energy agenda that creates jobs, boosts our economy and increases our national security. Today’s meeting between President Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper presents an opportunity to pursue that common ground with regard to one of North America’s most important energy infrastructure projects, the Keystone XL Pipeline. The shovel ready project will immediately create 20,000 new American jobs.

“The United States and Canada share the strongest partnership between any two nations in the world. Furthermore, the unions that have been asked to apply their world-class levels of skill, productivity, safety and environmental knowledge and stewardship maintain strong memberships in both nations. The Keystone XL Pipeline would not only benefit from that history of collaboration but also strengthen it by allowing us to share our energy resources in a more effective, efficient and environmentally sound manner. The American public recognizes this fact, which is why over 60% of them support the construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline.

“Opponents of the Keystone XL Pipeline have advanced their cause by presenting false choices and trying to pit one group against another. This approach is never in the best interest of the American people, but it is particularly short-sighted at a time when our economy remains in peril, working families continue to suffer from record unemployment and energy security is still a top priority.

“In addition to the well-timed meeting between the leaders of the United States and Canada, progress is being made on Capitol Hill as Democrats and Republicans work to find common ground on the best way to expedite the approval process for the Keystone XL Pipeline. We commend Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana for initiating that process with his introduction of the North American Energy Security Act, we encourage him to continue to work with members of both parties to move this bill and we offer our combined support in helping to educate the American people about its benefits.”

The Oil and Natural Gas Industry Labor-Management Committee is a partnership of the companies in the oil and natural gas sector and the unions who represent their workers. This organization works to create and protect jobs in the industry by promoting public policies that encourage innovation, exploration and economic growth. In addition to the positions on the Labor-Management Committee, Mark Ayers is president of the Building and Construction Trades Department of the AFL-CIO and Jack Gerard is president and CEO of the American Petroleum Institute.

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