

Yankton Sioux Tribe Applauds North Dakota Regulators in shutting down Carbon Pipeline.

Tribe asks South Dakota Regulators to follow same.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The Ihanktonwan

Nation stands committed to protecting the land and people of the Oceti Sakowin. From our fierce Water Protectors that stood at Standing Rock to the brave warriors who stood at Tunkasila Sakpe Paha to defend it from more defacing, our way has always been to protect life and to ensure all that connects us is secure. The proposed Carbon Pipeline has not been validated as environmentally safe, and though it does not go directly through our legally controlled lands, a leak could still have major impacts on our people. In addition, we also stand for the right to oppose forced acceptance of a government/business decision on owners of property, we stand with the ranchers and farmers who see this pipeline as an unjust taking by the government for business interests.

"Over the past years, especially since Standing Rock, South Dakota's Government has passed legislation to enable pipeline expansion, restrict free speech at protests, expand police authority to stop protests, and has increased penalties for protesting. These actions were taken for the Keystone Pipeline.

Why hasn't the Governor or the legislature pushed special legislation to ensure those who pull guns on surveyors are stopped?

Why haven't Carbon protesters been threatened or arrested for protesting in public spaces? Why is the Carbon Pipeline different from Keystone? Because it impacts non-tribal citizens negatively! In 2019, the Yankton Sioux Tribe proposed a bill introduced that would have protected farmers and ranchers, along with Tribal Areas, from environment harm by requiring a state pipeline fund, paid for by the companies based on length of pipe, to compensate for any damages that could occur in the event of spill. Though this bill was based on oil at the time, the concept could be applied to any pipeline that carries dangerous products. The bill was killed. Now, these same legislators and farmers are concerned and want a Special Session to pass a bill that would change state law to protect them from a pipeline. The time has come for the State with Tribes to address the Pipeline issue and develop uniform standards with all parties involved. We don't want to believe that the State has one standard for Tribal Citizens and another for non-Tribal,"



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said Vice Chairman Jason Cooke.

Thus, the Tribe requests that South Dakota PUC follow North Dakota and hold the pipeline project until environmental concerns are adequately addressed. The Tribe further supports the call for a Special Session of the South Dakota legislature to address the issues of pipeline construction in South Dakota.

"Tribal Members are South Dakota Citizens equally and all South Dakota Laws should be applied equally, to hold one to riot boosting but another to peaceful protest is not consistent. Pipelines are known to spill. To protect our land and our lives should not be looked at any differently. We are all one form," said Derek Marks, Yankton Sioux Business Committee Member.

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