

## Canadian ambassador urges OK on pipeline

### Diplomat touts Keystone in Phoenix visit

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As a Senate vote on the Keystone XL pipeline looms, Canada's ambassador to the U.S. made a pitch in Phoenix favoring construction, arguing that environmental problems cut both ways.

Speaking to the Phoenix Committee on Foreign Relations and the Canada Arizona Business Council on Friday, Ambassador Gary Doer said every year of delay requires more oil to be shipped by rail. That's a less-economical mode of transportation that results in more emissions and carries greater safety risks, he said.

"We think it should be approved," Doer said of the pipeline project, which would run from Alberta to the Gulf Coast near Houston but which has been stalled for four years. "Some of the debate is irrational."

In a CNN poll of more than 1,000 Americans conducted in December and released in mid-January, 57 percent of the respondents said they favor the pipeline, compared to 28 percent opposed and the rest undecided.

Doer said he met with Arizona's new Governor, Doug Ducey, earlier in the day and discussed trade opportunities with Arizona, tourism and "pre-clearance," or the processing of travelers in Canadian airports by U.S. customs officials. "This is an economic and security priority for us," Doer said, adding that pre-clearance helps Canadian tourists visiting Arizona.

Canada is America's largest trade partner and the second-biggest buyer of Arizona exports behind Mexico. Canadians also are frequent visitors to the state, and many have purchased homes here.

But in his talk, Doer spent little time on Arizona-specific trade, instead focusing largely on energy.

He said the U.S., Canada and Mexico have been blessed by huge hydrocarbon reserves but that the North American nations don't always utilize their resources in an optimal fashion. "We've won the lottery but don't how know to cash the ticket," he said.

Doer criticized the Obama Administration for opposing the pipeline and called out the president for what he said was a remark indicating that only Canadian oil would flow through it. In reality, the pipeline also would transport oil from northern-U.S. border states. "I want to thank the president for giving Canada North Dakota and Montana," Doer quipped.

Opponents object to constructing the roughly 1,200-mile pipeline through an environmentally sensitive wetlands area in Nebraska, and they say burning of relatively dirty tar sands from Alberta would worsen emissions and global warming.