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**ASSESSING THE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE: BALANCING ECONOMIC
ADVANTAGES AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

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The Keystone XL Pipeline, a proposed project aimed at transporting crude oil from Canada to the United States Gulf Coast, has ignited extensive debate due to its potential economic benefits and environmental risks. This article provides a comprehensive assessment of the project, examining its economic advantages, including job creation, earnings generation, and GDP contributions, as well as environmental concerns, such as greenhouse gas emissions, oil spill risks, and ecological disruptions. By presenting a balanced perspective, we aim to inform stakeholders and policymakers for more informed decision-making.

The Keystone XL Pipeline has been a contentious topic, exemplifying the ongoing struggle between economic development and environmental preservation. This article critically assesses the project's economic impact and environmental implications, aiming to offer a comprehensive understanding of its potential consequences.

This article's objectives are as follows: Evaluate Economic Benefits: Analyze and present the economic advantages of the Keystone XL Pipeline, including job creation, earnings generation, and GDP contributions to the United States and Canada.

Examine Environmental Concerns: Investigate environmental concerns surrounding the project, particularly greenhouse gas emissions, oil spill risks, and ecological disruptions.

Provide a Balanced Perspective: Present a balanced view of the project, weighing its economic benefits against environmental drawbacks.

Inform Decision-Making: Contribute to more informed decision-making for stakeholders, policymakers, and the public regarding the future of the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Economic Benefits:

Job Creation: The Keystone XL Pipeline is estimated to create approximately 10,400 jobs during its U.S. construction phase and around 2,800 jobs in Canada during construction [1].

Earnings Generation: In the United States, the project is projected to generate over \$2 billion in earnings during construction, with \$1.6 billion in Canadian earnings [1].

GDP Contribution: The pipeline would contribute roughly \$3.4 billion to the GDP of the United States and approximately \$2.4 billion to Canada's GDP [1].

Local Infrastructure Development: Property tax revenue generated by the pipeline would support local infrastructure development, including schools, hospitals, and roads, with over \$55 million in property taxes expected in the first year of operation [1].

Environmental Concerns:

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Transporting 830,000 barrels of oil per day through Keystone XL could result in 1 million to 27 million more tons of CO₂ emissions annually compared to other crude types [2].

Oil Spill Risk: Regulators predict up to 100 oil spills during the pipeline's 50-year lifetime, with potential toxic effects on ecosystems and communities [3].

Ecological Disruptions: Construction of the pipeline would disturb wildlife habitat and require new roads, leading to sediment impacts on streams and rivers [3].

Carbon Intensity: Tar sands oil, transported through Keystone XL, emits 17% more carbon than other crude types, potentially burdening the planet with additional greenhouse gas emissions [4].

The Keystone XL Pipeline epitomizes the challenge of balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability. Robust environmental impact assessments are essential to comprehensively understand its carbon footprint.

Preparedness for oil spills is crucial, and it underscores the urgency of exploring cleaner energy alternatives.

Public engagement and decision-making should involve diverse stakeholders to ensure informed choices align with broader interests. The project represents a pivotal moment in the energy and environmental policy dialogue, emphasizing the need for responsible resource management and sustainable energy solutions.

The Keystone XL Pipeline project presents a complex dilemma, offering significant economic benefits while carrying notable environmental risks. Stakeholders and policymakers must carefully weigh these factors to make informed decisions aligned with their priorities and values. This project's fate underscores the interconnectedness of energy, the environment, and society, emphasizing the need for long-term sustainability in energy choices.

Reference:

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