

Anti-Vaxxer Robert F. Kennedy, Jr Joins Dakota Pipeline Protest



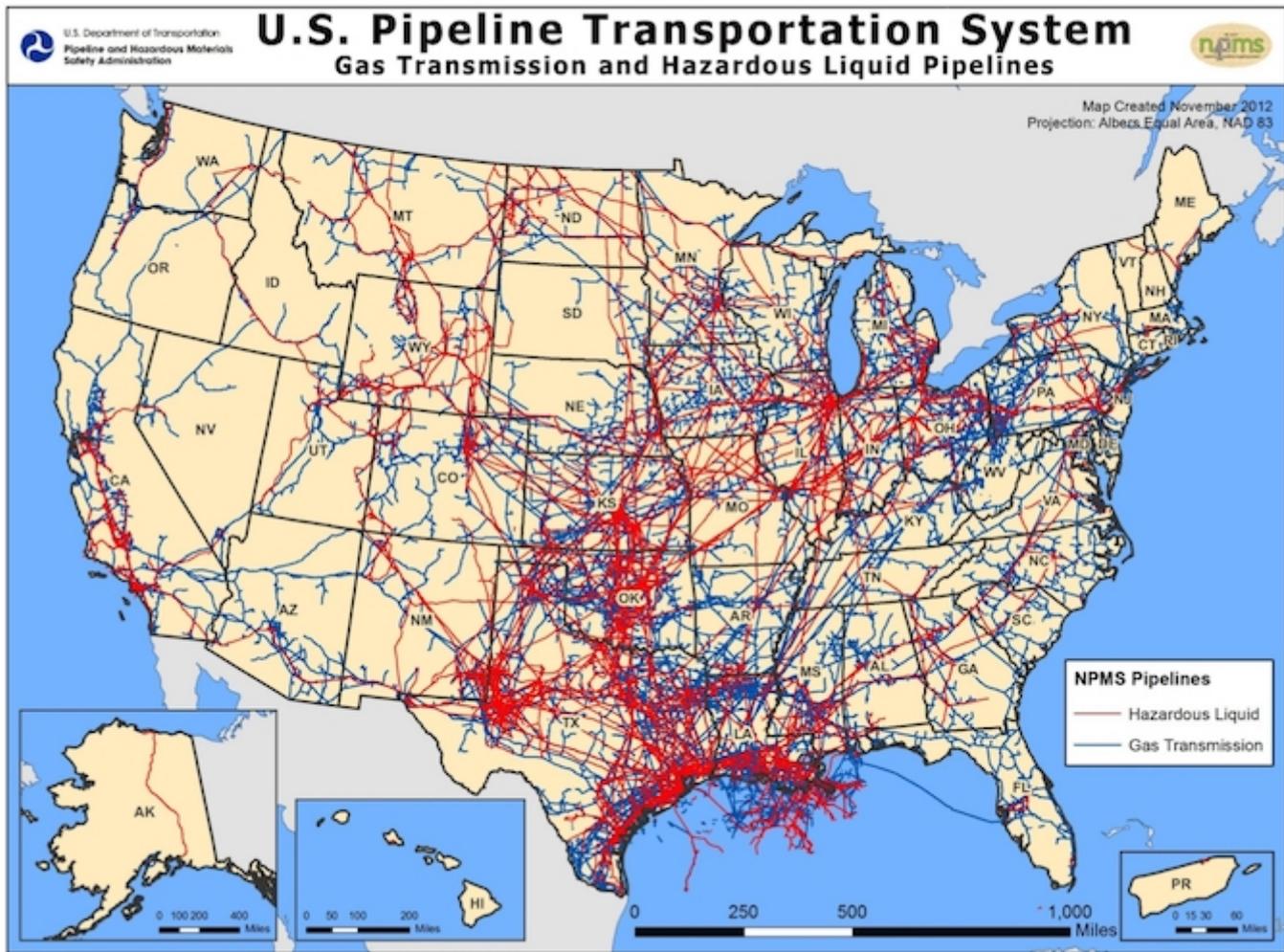
By Alex Berezow — November 18, 2016



Credit: RFK, Jr/Wikipedia [1]

There isn't a fringe movement that Robert F. Kennedy, Jr doesn't like. He [appears](#) [2] to subscribe to conspiracy theories involving the assassination of his uncle, JFK. Along with [Bill Maher](#) [3], he is one of the most prominent anti-vaxxers in America. He went so far as to compare vaccine manufacturers to [Big Tobacco](#) [4]. Now, Mr Kennedy is [joining the protesters](#) [5] at the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Every new pipeline in America has become the subject of controversy, despite the fact that the nation already has [2.5 million miles of pipelines](#) [6].



The [Dakota Access Pipeline](#) [7] is 1,172 miles long, which would extend our current network of pipelines by a measly 0.047%. This does not increase the risk of our existing infrastructure in a meaningful way.

Of course, pipelines aren't 100% safe. Nothing in life is. But, pipelines are far safer than rail, which is the other major transcontinental method of shipment. According to the [Fraser Institute](#) [8], a Canadian think-tank, there were 0.049 accidents or incidents ("occurrences") per one million barrels of oil equivalents transported via pipeline; for rail, it was 0.227 occurrences. That means, for oil and gas transport, pipelines are more than 4.5 times safer than rail.

Additionally, [73% of pipeline spills](#) [9] involved less than 1 cubic meter (~6 barrels) of oil.

So, why the opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline? It is purely ideological. Pipeline opponents are, in actuality, opposed to fossil fuels, and they want the immediate global implementation of solar and wind power. Unfortunately, this is not a viewpoint based in the real world. The necessary technologies (e.g., high efficiency, cost effective solar panels and high storage capacitors) don't exist yet. (Nuclear energy, which in theory could [power the planet within 25 years](#) [10], is opposed by environmentalists.) And of course, [many everyday products](#) [11], from plastics to crayons, are produced using petrochemicals.

The inconvenient truth is that we still need fossil fuels. One day, hopefully sooner rather than later, we no longer will. But, protesters like Robert F. Kennedy, Jr, who seem to believe that fossil fuels

are nothing more than a conspiracy to make the rich even richer, are simply in denial of reality.

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Links

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_F._Kennedy_Jr.#/media/File:RFKJr_Headshot.jpg

[2] <http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/opinion/2013/01/12/what-to-make-of-rfk-jrs-conspiracy-view-of-the-jfk-assassination>

[3] <http://www.acsh.org/news/2016/11/04/anti-vaxxer-bill-maher-preaches-importance-knowledge-10407>

[4] http://www.nbcnews.com/id/8243264/ns/msnbc-morning_joe/t/coverup-cause-autism/

[5] http://www.bostonherald.com/news/national/2016/11/the_latest_nd_gov_criticizes_delay_in_oil_pipeline

[6] <https://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/PipelineBasics.htm>

[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dakota_Access_Pipeline

[8] <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/file/pipelines-are-safer-than-rail-infographic.jpg>

[9] <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/safety-in-the-transportation-of-oil-and-gas-pipelines-or-rail-rev2.pdf>

[10]

http://www.realclearscience.com/journal_club/2015/05/15/we_could_get_rid_of_fossil_fuel_electricity_in_just_25_years

[11] <http://www.earthsciweek.org/classroom-activities/products-made-petroleum>