

Awkward! Keystone opponent to host Obama fundraiser in SF next week

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San Francisco billionaire Tom Steyer has made no secret of his opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline, a project President Obama is considering approving this year.

But the fact that Obama may sign off on a pipeline that would ship heavy crude from Alberta's oil sands to Gulf Coast refineries isn't stopping Steyer from hosting the president at his Pacific Heights home April 3, in an event to raise money for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. Steyer and his wife, Kat Taylor, will host the \$5,000-per-person cocktail reception before a \$32,500-per-person dinner to be hosted by fellow billionaires Ann and Gordon Getty at their home nearby.

During a climate rally in D.C. in February Steyer told the crowd, "For the last 30 years I've been a professional investor, and I've been looking at billion-dollar investments for decades, and I'm here to tell you one thing: The Keystone pipeline is not a good investment."

"Tom is honored to be hosting the President at an event to support Congressional Democrats," wrote his spokesman, Chris Lehane, in an e-mail Tuesday. "Tom's position on Keystone is well known and, given the urgency of climate change, is a position that he consistently expresses in public and private to anybody and everybody 24/7/365: a forty year commitment to a pipeline that will ship oil overseas does not make sense for our economy or for the future of our kids."

To make the whole evening a little more entertaining, between 1,000 and 2000 climate activists from 350.org plan to stage a rally outside the Gettys' home to highlight the administration's upcoming Keystone decision.

Daniel Kessler, a spokesman for 350.org, said the group's rally outside the Gettys' home is part of a "bird dogging" strategy members have adopted in which they will stage events at every public meeting the president holds before he weighs in on Keystone. They protested outside every public presidential event in the past three weeks, he said, including one last week in Israel and another the week before outside Chicago.

"We intend to do that for the rest of the year," Kessler said.

(Granted, the San Francisco fundraising tour is not a public event, but why nitpick?)

Kessler added that while the group will not target Steyer's home, he's still curious about what the two men will say to each other.

"Given Tom's outspoken opposition to Keystone, it would be interesting to see what he intends to say to the president," he said.

Fonte: The Washington Post, Washington, 26 Mar. 2013, International.