

Wednesday October 05, 2016

[The Buffalo News.com \(/\)](#)

# Opinion

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## Letter: Kudos to Lakota Nation for trying to halt pipeline

Updated: October 4, 2016, 03:04 PM Published: October 5, 2016, 12:01 AM

### Kudos to Lakota Nation for trying to halt pipeline

An extraordinary gathering of about 100 Native American tribes continues to protest the Dakota Access pipeline. Over 1,000 miles long with a \$4 billion budget, the pipeline is designed to carry Bakken shale oil from North Dakota to Illinois. It would traverse sites sacred to the Standing Rock Sioux (Lakota) Nation and would cross the Missouri River, a source of drinking water for the 10 states. Bakken crude is a highly volatile oil that has caused massive fires and air and water pollution from pipeline ruptures and train crashes.

The original pipeline site near Bismarck was moved for safety concerns. Instead, the Standing Rock Sioux Nation was selected to tolerate this fossil fuel infrastructure, while many people on the reservation lack the basic infrastructure most Americans take for granted, such as plumbing and electricity, and have per capita annual incomes of \$4,000. They are holding the line for clean water and air with indigenous people and allies from throughout North America. Their peaceful gathering has been threatened and attacked by oil company security forces.

The federal government temporarily halted this pipeline, similar to the Keystone XL pipeline that received far more attention and was stopped in 2015 by President Obama. Bakken crude is also shipped by rail (including through Buffalo), but rail versus pipeline is a false choice. For the future of our climate and human life, this oil must be left in the ground and replaced with clean renewable energy.

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