

# Kearl project a missed opportunity for Albertans

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Re: "Imperial to 'revisit' foreign input; Kearl project hit by logistical problems and protests over shipments of upgrader modules by road to Fort McMurray," The Journal, March 31.

As an Alberta tradesman, I felt I needed to respond to this article regarding the problem the Kearl oilsands project is having shipping 33 modules from South Korea, up through Montana and Idaho.

Bruce March said the reason that this work was awarded to a South Korean contractor wasn't because of cost, it was because Esso could not get a time frame to build them in Alberta.

This is totally false. I work in the pipe fabrication industry through the building trades, and I know this work could easily have been done here because the majority of fabrication and modular shops are presently very slow.

Worse yet, this work March is involved in was not even put up for tender. Alberta contractors, union or non-union, did not have the opportunity to even bid on this work.

Now he's complaining because they have pay up to \$500,000 per module to dismantle and transport through Idaho and Montana.

Why is our Alberta government or the federal government allowing these big oil companies to go elsewhere to manufacture a product when it can be done right here?

How can this be cheaper? South Korea is a very industrialized country. It is not a third-world country paying its tradesmen a minimal wage.

So Esso builds these in South Korea, ships them to a port in the U.S., transports them by barge to Lewiston, Idaho, then transports them by truck to Fort McMurray.

In the meantime they have agreed to fix the roads in Montana to handle the big loads.

They want us to believe this was cost effective.

I hope other big oil companies that are planning on doing the same thing for some future projects rethink their planning.

Leave the work in Alberta. We have a long history in the oil and gas industry. We are quite capable of building whatever they want, on time and on budget.

As far as Esso goes, I'm sorry, but it looks good on you.

Rick Roth, New Sarepta

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