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On September 18, the House passed two legislative packages that would approve the Keystone XL (KXL) pipeline and increase domestic energy production. Each omnibus package of bills includes legislation on small business and medical device taxes, as well as energy and environment bills. Both packages passed on a near-party line vote with limited support from Democrats. The first package, the American Energy Solutions for Lower Costs and More American Jobs Act (H.R. 2), includes the bill approving a cross-border portion of the KXL pipeline and a bill intended to block the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from power plants.

The second package, the Jobs for America Act (H.R. 4), focuses on the economy and includes regulatory changes to natural resource-related industries. One bill included in H.R. 4 would require approval from Congress for any new major regulation from a federal agency, with special focus on rules concerning taxes on carbon emissions.

Some Democrats have stated that the bills will not pass the Senate, and many have criticized the move as an attempt to increase conservative voter turnout in the midterm elections.

Sources: Congress.gov, E&E News

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