House GOP defers to Senate Republicans on Keystone pipeline push

By Ben Geman - 12/09/11 01:02 PM ET

House Republicans are moving ahead with their push for expedited approval of the Keystone XL oil sands pipeline, but they're deferring to language backed by Senate GOP leaders.

"We wanted the best possible chance of the bill passing the Senate," said Michael Steel, a spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio).

House GOP leaders unveiled payroll tax cut legislation Friday that, as expected, would force a decision on permitting the proposed Alberta-to-Texas pipeline within months. The Obama administration intends to punt the decision until after the 2012 elections.

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