Republicans plot next step on Keystone oil pipeline

By Richard Cowan

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(Reuters) - Republicans in Congress are considering using upcoming payroll tax cut or highway construction bills in order to force quick approval of the Keystone XL oil pipeline but have not yet settled on a strategy, lawmakers said on Friday.

Having failed so far to get President Barack Obama to approve TransCanada Corp's application for the $7 billion Canada-to-Texas pipeline, Republicans who control the House of Representatives are discussing Keystone during a three-day retreat in Baltimore that focuses on the 2012 legislative agenda and their prospects in the November elections.

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