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Subpoena Issued to Interior Dept's Inspector General Office for 13 Documents on Report Recommending Drilling Moratorium

Subpoena issued day after Obama Interior Dept fails to comply with subpoena seeking same documents; political appointees have withheld from Committee for months

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) today issued a [subpoena](#) to the Department of the Interior's (DOI's) Office of the Inspector General (IG) for 13 documents that DOI has intervened and blocked the IG from releasing to the Committee. The subpoena comes after DOI yesterday failed to provide the same 13 documents in responding to the deadline for the Committee's April 3, 2012 [subpoena for documents](#) related to the drilling moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico.

In issuing today's subpoena, Chairman Hastings made the following statement:

"The Obama Administration will be held to account for their actions related to the drilling moratorium and falsely stating in an official report that it was supported by independent engineers. Yesterday, instead of complying with a subpoena and disclosing documents on its actions, the Interior Department sent a three-page letter providing excuses under a façade of cooperation. These exact same delaying tactics have been used for months and further stonewalling is unacceptable. The President pledged unprecedented transparency and the Interior Department is duly warned that I intend to hold it to this standard. Today's subpoena is directed at the Inspector General with friendly intent. The Office of the Inspector General was previously willing to cooperate with this investigation until it was ordered by Interior Department political appointees to withhold vital documents, and I hope the Inspector General will respond appropriately to this document request. It is highly unusual, if not unprecedented, for Interior Department political appointees to interfere with an Inspector General's independence as the Obama Administration has done and after many months it's time that it ends. Further action will be taken soon to address the Department's refusal to comply with the subpoena for communications and documents on the drilling moratorium and report. The American people have a right to know why and how the Obama Administration put tens of thousands of people out of work, sidelined crucial American energy production and caused millions of dollars in lost economic activity."

The subpoena to the IG seeks the same 13 documents that DOI [failed to provide](#) in response to the Committee's original April 3, 2012 [subpoena](#). The Interior Department has intervened to block the Acting Inspector General from providing the 13 documents to the Committee.

The items sought should be readily available and capable of being promptly produced. The deadline for responding to this subpoena is one week.

Background:

The original subpoena to the Interior Department sent last Tuesday, April 3, 2012, sought two very clearly defined sets of documents: 1) communications involving five officials on a specific topic over a two month period; and 2) thirteen documents that DOI intervened and blocked the IG from providing to the Committee.

Of the thirteen documents that DOI has blocked the IG from providing to the Committee, six documents were first attempted to be provided by the IG to the Committee in May 2011. The Department blocked the IG from providing seven additional documents in August 2011.

For more information, on the Committee's oversight investigation, visit <http://naturalresources.house.gov/oversight/moratorium>

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