

Kimberly Chauvin

Owner of Mariah Jade Shrimp Company, LLC., A.J. Horizon, Inc., Captain David Chauvin, LLC and Dusty James, LLC

“Gulf of Mexico: A Focus on Community Recovery and New Response Technology.”

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My name is Kimberly Chauvin. I’m the owner of a seafood dock called Mariah Jade Shrimp Company and I own three other companies –A.J. Horizon, Inc. which owns the vessel the Mariah Jade—Captain David Chauvin, LLC which owns the vessel the Capt. David and Dusty James, LLC which owns the vessel the Dusty James. My husband and I have been in business for 25 years. My husband is a fourth generation fisherman and both of my boys have been deeply involved in our business by captaining two of our vessels and working our dock when they were on land. They were in training to one day become the owners of what we have built over the years when the BP disaster occurred.

On April 20, 2010 we had no idea the day would weigh on the commercial fishing industry so heavily. Looking back on how this tragic event unfolded, I’m amazed at the ineptness of those who made the decisions on the Deepwater Horizon rig. I am amazed as well at those who made the decisions in the cleanup effort and those who are making the decisions on how to pay those affected.

We have been working our way through this nightmare that caught the commercial fishing industry and many other industries totally unaware with the BP oil spill. At the beginning of this tragedy, BP was issuing checks to those who had made claims. Although, we did not collect much of anything with BP we had hopes that the Mr. Feinberg and the GCCF would correct that. Nothing much has changed with the President’s appointed pay czar. Matter of fact, I was worried about how this would turn out since there would be no way to hold President Obama’s pay czar accountable. As it turns out, I had every reason to worry. With Mr. Feinberg at the helm, there is no transparency nor is there rhyme or reason to his methods of paying individuals and businesses their emergency funds. We have expressed through many different meetings with Mr. Feinberg the need for

transparency. I have been to many of his town hall meetings and handed paperwork over with claim numbers and issues. We all get the same answer, "I'll have someone call you within 48 hours to work with you." The phone call comes for some, but the working it out part never happened for us and many others like us.

We have sent in all of our documentation (tax papers, documentation of our vessels, commercial fishermen's licenses, vessel licenses, wholesale/retail licenses, P&L statements, trip tickets..etc. The only thing I haven't given them is my birth certificate and my blood type) no less than ten times through GCCF claims center and the computer. In addition we have spent over \$25,000 in getting all the paperwork ready and in order with our CPA. Altogether we have sent in over 13 years of taxes to the GCCF claims center to show that we have viable companies. GCCF has sent 4 separate investigators down to our place. We had no problem with the first one, the second one we were seriously wondering what was happening, by the third set of investigators we understood that this is a stall tactic and by the fourth we were in no mood to begin giving him the same information that we had given to the others. With the third set of investigators, we spent more than two hours of our time explaining each one of our businesses. We had them show us what paperwork they had in their folders. Sad to say some of the paperwork wasn't ours and the rest looked like they had taken the information that we had given separately for each business and shuffled it up with little of what we had given them. I went to my office and pulled out each one of my files for each business to show them exactly what they should have in the files. They weren't surprised and said this happens all the time. Their job was to make sure that we were not trying to file fraudulent claims which we satisfied with showing them our business and explaining what we do. We were hoping that would produce an emergency payment from the GCCF claims center, but that never materialized. What did materialize was another phone call from the fourth investigator asking for more paperwork. I inquired as to what he already had in the system. It's no surprise that he was missing more than half of the paperwork that should have been there. With this call, my frustration was very clear and I explained to this person all that we had been through. It was obvious that the

man didn't care nor did he try to work with us. Matter of fact, his answer was to insinuate fraud. I asked him how I could commit fraud after showing 10 years of taxes with this company. His answer was that my corporation name didn't line up with my vessel name. I was astounded and stupefied that this man was this incompetent. I then had to write a letter to him explaining why they weren't one in the same. That was over two weeks ago. I was told I should be receiving a substantial emergency payment. That payment has yet to show up.

We have now hired a public adjustor to have someone who is in direct contact with the adjustors within GCCF in which I will have to pay this public adjustor 5% of what I have coming to me. I find this appalling that the GCCF adjustors will speak to these people, but not to those who have a stake in this issue. At this time we have had to obtain a line of credit to get back to work for this coming season and we have worked through our savings account due to nonpayment from the GCCF. We have yet to receive even an emergency payment for A.J. Horizon, Inc., and Mariah Jade Shrimp Company, LLC. We are in dire straits at this time with no payment in sight.

We have two other companies that have received very little payment. Captain David Chauvin, LLC has received 36% of the claim amount for the emergency payment and Dusty James, LLC has obtained 11% of the claim amount for the emergency payment. We have inquired into these two claims with no one being able to answer any of our questions.

The dismaying part of this whole experience is that when you call the Ohio office there's no one that can answer your questions still. We've been asking for help in this matter for months now. We can't call and speak to the person who's made the decision on what we should get in a check. The frustration levels are at an all-time high within our communities with the Pay Czar's antics. It's frustrating knowing that no matter what you do there is no accountability for what is happening to us.

I can tell you in all of my life I have never sued an individual or a company. It goes against what I believe. The horrible part of this is that Obama's pay czar is pushing us to do that very thing. And this will put 25% of what should come to me in the

hands of the lawyers. Disgusted with this whole process. I can tell you within our communities people have been dealing with anxiety, helplessness, frustration, despair and aggravation.

In our case we have worked in the commercial shrimping industry since we graduated high school. We have 25 years into this industry. In 2001 when the imports almost tore apart our industry, we decided that we would change things up in the way we do business. At that time we only owned one vessel and worked it with our family aboard it. When we began changing things, I took many business classes to work through the process of what we needed to accomplish. From the year of 2002 till 2010, we adapted in many different ways with the imports, hurricanes, and government regulations. We did so well that we acquired two more vessels, built a seafood dock and had just finished building a processing plant when the Deepwater Horizon blew up. Now I have GCCF claims adjustors and investigators questioning whether we have viable businesses. We have worked 7 days a week in many instances to be where we were in 2010. I don't understand how these people who are looking through our records can be so callus and cold. We have persevered through so much, but the oil spill is not one we can adapt to. We have issues of perception in which the pay czar, Ken Feinberg, will not even address. These things are real. All one has to do is read Face book, blogs and other things on the internet. Ken Feinberg had Dr. Tunnel give an opinion in which Feinberg must have glossed over and put his rose colored glasses on to read it. He came out with a conclusion that in 2 years everything will be okay. Even the scientific community came against this statement of Feinberg's, but he won't relent. So I ask you to tell me, how is this man helping the people who have been crushed financially by BP?

Feinberg's opinion of our future is sugarcoated. We shake our heads and roll our eyes thinking, "even he can't be that ignorant to think that we are going to fall for this rhetoric". Our future is uncertain. We will need years to know how well the gulf will heal. More information must be gathered during future seasons for a judgment on how well things will ultimately pan out. It galls me as I think about my future losses when I have yet to even be paid for my past losses which I have

already incurred. It makes me nauseous to watch Feinberg's arrogant attitude as people suffer without knowing where to turn.

We have learned many hard lessons during this extended tragedy. One is that we cannot trust the oil industry to make things right when things go wrong. We learned that the Coast Guard can turn a blind eye to the needs of the fishing industry in favor of the oil industry and its needs. We, also, truly cannot depend on our president in light of all that has taken place with his decision to use Ken Feinberg.

In closing we come back to the fact that here we sit as I wait for payment from a person who's nit picking through my documentation to make sure that I get paid as little as possible. Do you think it's fair that BP made horrible decisions yet they get to decide how much a business gets paid? If I had done this to BP, do you really think that they would stand back and wait a year while I pick apart their documentation to pay them as little as possible? How is this fair to the "small people" of the gulf coast as Chairman Carl Henric-Svanburg stated? The Chairman of BP stated that they cared about the "small people" and they are definitely showing how much they care by shafting those "small people".

Chairman Svanburg stated:

"What I was trying to say -- that BP understands how deeply this affects the lives of people who live along the Gulf and depend on it for their livelihood -- will best be conveyed not by any words but by the work we do to put things right for the families and businesses who've been hurt.

As Tony Hayward said, "I want my life back", well gentleman and ladies the people of the gulf coast want their lives back as it was before the BP oil spill, before the havoc of having to deal with Obama's pay czar, and before our president turned a blind eye on what was happening to the people of the gulf coast. . Since we can't have our old lives back, it's time for Feinberg to quit stalling and make those payments to begin putting things right. It's time for Feinberg to understand that it's only the people of the gulf coast who stand to lose anything while he sits in his cushy home with no worries of how he's going to pay the bills.

