

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN DOC HASTINGS

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Chairman Hastings Presses Secretary Salazar to Comply with Committee Oversight, Document Requests

WASHINGTON D.C. –House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04) today questioned Secretary Ken Salazar on the Interior Department’s lack of compliance with legitimate oversight requests from the Committee on actions and policies that directly impact American jobs and the economy.

The Committee is investigating the Department’s rewrite of coal regulations and the White House’s editing of a peer-reviewed report that recommended imposing a drilling moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico. It’s been over a year since these investigations began and the Department continues to withhold an untold number of documents.

At the hearing, Chairman Hastings specifically noted the Department’s efforts to block the Committee from obtaining 13 documents about an Office of Inspector General investigation into the White House’s edits of the drilling safety report.

“While I appreciate Secretary Salazar’s commitment to work with the Committee on our oversight efforts, I remain deeply concerned and frustrated over the Department’s inability to comply with our document requests,” said Chairman Hastings following the hearing. “In our January 25th letter, Chairman Lamborn and I very clearly stated our intent to move to compel production if the deadline were not met. We are very serious about his because thousands of American jobs are at stake.”

Background

Obama Administration’s Efforts to Rewrite Coal Regulations

For the past year, the Committee has conducted an investigation into the Obama’s Administration’s rewrite of coal regulations. The Administration has failed to fully comply with repeated requests for documents from the Committee looking into why this rewrite was initiated, whether the rewrite of the rule is being properly managed, whether political implications of the new regulations are unduly influencing the process, and the economic impacts of the new regulations. The Administration’s sweeping new rewrites could cost thousands of American jobs and decrease American energy production. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Obama Administration’s Decision to Include Gulf Drilling Moratorium in DOI Report
The Committee is conducting an extensive investigation into how and why an Obama

Administration report that recommended a six-month drilling moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico was edited to make it appear as though the moratorium was supported by a panel of engineering experts. The Administration has failed to comply with repeated requests from the Committee for documents that would explain the decision to include the drilling moratorium in the report – including how the decision was made and who within the Administration was involved, including White House officials – and whether the misrepresentation of the experts endorsing the moratorium was intentional, a question that the Office of Inspector General report did not directly answer. The moratorium cost thousands of jobs and caused widespread economic harm throughout the Gulf. [Click here to learn more.](#)

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