



Committee Action

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN DOC HASTINGS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, July 18, 2012
[PERMALINK](#)

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*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

Interior Dept. Officials Called to Publicly Answer Questions on Gulf Drilling Moratorium at Full Committee Hearing

Action follows Dept.'s failure to comply with subpoena for documents and refusal to schedule private on-the-record interviews with officials

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Wednesday, July 25th the Committee on Natural Resources will hold an [oversight hearing](#) on “Investigation of President Obama’s Gulf Drilling Moratorium: Questioning of Key Department of the Interior Officials.”

Due to the Department of the Interior’s failure to comply with an official Congressional subpoena issued in April for documents on the decision to impose the drilling moratorium and report recommending the moratorium that falsely stated the action was supported by independent engineer peer reviewers, and the refusal since February to arrange private on-the-record interviews with relevant Department officials known to possess information relating to this matter, Chairman Hastings has invited the five Department officials to testify and publicly answer questions at a meeting of the Full Committee. [Click here](#) to read the letter of invitation sent to each Department official.

The officials are specifically asked to be prepared to testify to and answer questions regarding:

- 1) How a decision was made by the Obama Administration to impose a drilling moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico that put thousands of people out of work and caused widespread economic harm and decreased American energy production, 2) whether the Obama Administration intentionally misrepresented the views of engineering experts in order to justify the unilateral moratorium decision, 3) how the Administration responded to complaints by the engineering experts following the misrepresentation of their views, and 4) an investigation by the Department’s Office of Inspector General into these matters.

“Every effort to hold the Administration accountable for how and why this decision was made, which included falsely stating the action was supported by independent engineer peer reviewers, has been met by stonewalling. The Department claims they want to be forthcoming, but for well over a year they’ve refused to provide documents in response to legitimate Congressional oversight and to have officials privately answer questions on the record. The Obama Administration pledged to be the most transparent in history, but they

have repeatedly defied that promise and flouted a Congressional subpoena on this serious matter,” said Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04). “Answers are expected from these Interior Department officials who have direct knowledge of the events leading up to the moratorium decision and the editing of the report that caused thousands of job losses, widespread economic harm, and significant reductions in our nation’s energy production.”

WHAT: Full Committee [Oversight Hearing](#) on:
“Investigation of President Obama’s Gulf Drilling Moratorium: Questioning of Key Department of the Interior Officials.”

Witnesses invited:

- Steve Black, Counselor to the Secretary
- Neal Kemkar, Special Assistant to Mr. Black (currently on detail to the White House Council on Environmental Quality)
- Mary Katherine Ishee, former Deputy Administrator, Minerals Management Service (currently serving as Senior Advisor, Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement)
- Walter Cruickshank, former Deputy Administrator, Minerals Management Service (currently serving as Deputy Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management)
- Kallie Hanley, former White House Liaison & Special Assistant (currently serving as Senior Advisor, Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs)

WHEN: Wednesday, July 25, 2012
10:00 A.M.

WHERE: 1324 Hearing Room in the Longworth House Office Building

Visit the [Committee Calendar](#) for testimony and additional information, once it is made available. The hearing is open to the public and a live video stream will be broadcast at <http://naturalresources.house.gov/live>.

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