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ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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May 4, 2010

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bart Stupak  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Waxman and Chairman Stupak:

We strongly support the Committee's rapid efforts to investigate the unfolding events in the Gulf of Mexico. Questions as to what caused the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig and the currently spreading oil spill off the Gulf Coast deserve the Committee's close, thorough scrutiny so that Congress has full information as it considers these troubling events.

In light of this, we believe the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations hearing, planned for May 12, properly seeks initial information from key companies involved in the incident. We also believe, given the integral role of federal oversight on offshore drilling operations, that it is critically important to hear from the appropriate federal authority. The Subcommittee followed this approach on the hearings concerning Toyota (February 23, 2010, at which the Department of Transportation Secretary testified) and crib safety (January 21, 2010, at which the Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission testified).

Considering the issues under review, and these precedents, we respectfully ask that you invite the Secretary of the Interior to provide such information necessary to enable the Committee to examine the agency's role in permitting and in performing inspections prior to the

incident. In addition, should the investigation turn to incident response or environmental impacts, then hearing from the appropriate federal authorities on those issues would also be critical for the investigation.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you during this investigation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Barton". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and "B".

Joe Barton  
Ranking Member

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael C. Burgess". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Michael C. Burgess  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations