

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, August 01, 2012
[PERMALINK](#)

CONTACT: [Spencer Pederson](#), [Crystal Feldman](#), or [Jill Strait](#)
202-226-9019

Committee Approves Motion Authorizing Chairman to Issue Subpoenas to Compel Obama Admin. Witnesses to Appear to Answer Questions on Gulf Drilling Moratorium Report

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the House Natural Resources Committee [approved a motion](#) with a [26-17 vote](#) to provide the Chairman with authority to issue subpoenas to five Obama Administration officials and potentially others who have direct knowledge or involvement in the drafting, editing or review of the Department of the Interior Drilling Moratorium Report that was edited to appear as though the moratorium was supported by a panel of engineering experts when it was not.

The subpoena authority comes after a July 25th Full Committee [oversight hearing](#) was postponed because the Interior Department refused, less than 20 hours before the hearing, to confirm the attendance of the five invited Department officials. Prior to the announcement of the July 25th hearing, the Department refused requests, first made in February, to conduct on-the-record interviews of the five individuals by Committee staff. The oversight hearing has been postponed until a date to be determined in September.

The Committee has been investigating the Drilling Moratorium Report for two years, seeking answers to legitimate questions, without the full cooperation of the Department of the Interior, which has failed to comply with a subpoena for documents on this matter served in April to Interior Secretary Salazar.

“Taking steps to issue subpoenas is not the preferred option. In fact, I hope never to have to use this authority. We shouldn’t have to compel answers from an Administration that claims to be the most open and transparent in history. But if the Department continues to stonewall, we’ll be left with no other choice. We are here today as a direct result of the Department’s actions. The Department has chosen to go down this path by refusing to provide documents, refusing to comply with a Congressional subpoena, refusing on-the-record interviews and refusing to accept invitations to testify,” **said Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (WA-04).** *“This situation could have been easily avoided if the Department was simply willing to answer questions and turn over documents. The Department is choosing to do this the hard way. There is no excuse for the Department’s behavior. The American people deserve the truth and deserve to have a full account of the circumstances surrounding this matter. This Committee is committed to getting answers and we’ll continue to hold the Administration accountable for their decisions and actions.”*

[Click here](#) to read Chairman Hastings full statement.

Further specific details on the Committee’s investigation of the Obama Administration’s decision to include a Gulf Drilling Moratorium in the Department of the Interior report can be found [here](#).

###

<http://naturalresources.house.gov>

[Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Twitter](#)