

Dear Secretary Gates:

The disastrous oil spill from the BP leased offshore drilling platform known as Deepwater Horizon is an urgent wake up call for the federal government. As we continue to learn of BP's disregard of worker and environmental safety rules, we have also realized the extent to which this company has significantly increased its profits. One such source of profits is a lucrative federal contract with the Department of Defense, Defense Logistics Agency. In 2009 alone, BP was paid \$1,564,689,758 for petroleum based liquid propellants and fuels.

Considering the largess of this contract, we strongly believe that it is incumbent upon the Defense Department to give BP's safety and environmental record significant consideration in determining whether or not to extend or continue a contract with them. We are confident that the Department of Defense can find an alternative fuel supplier that meets our needs for military readiness but also does not damage the U.S. environment and economy.

Unfortunately, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill is only the most recent example of BP's long history of blatant disregard for safety and environmental protection. According to the New York Times, the Minerals Management Service reports that between 1996 and 2009, BP-operated rigs spilled 7,000 barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Instead of learning from its mistakes and adopting measures to prevent future industrial disasters, BP continued to put its workers, the public, and the environment at risk in favor of higher profits. Indeed, BP's record may indicate a worsening and devolving culture of profit-motivated negligence.

In March of 2005, an explosion and fire at the BP Texas City refinery resulted in 15 deaths and 180 injuries. Investigators from the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) believe this explosion could have been avoided had it not been for the "organizational and safety deficiencies at all levels of the BP Corporation." Since safety does not appear to be a valued part of their mandate, BP refused to change its practices.

In 2009, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) fined BP \$87 million for hundreds of safety violations at the Texas City refinery, many of which were originally identified after the 2005 explosion but never addressed. As recently as March 2010, BP was fined another \$3 million dollars for violations at a Toledo, Ohio refinery similar to those that contributed to the 2005 Texas City refinery explosion. Again, just like in 2005, no steps were taken to correct the safety violations.

In 2006, failure to conduct necessary pipeline maintenance resulted in spills of over 200,000 gallons of crude in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska. Once again, BP did not follow established safety regulations, ignored warning signs, and was reluctant to make the necessary fixes once the problem was discovered. Major problems continued in 2008 and 2009 in the region, some of which resulted in major gas leaks, oil spills, injuries, and

deaths. All of this following a \$500,000 fine in 2000 for failing to report illegal dumping of hazardous materials by one of its contractors between 1993 and 1995.

Given BP's abysmal record on worker safety and environmental protections, we do not believe that BP meets the Federal Acquisition Regulation standards of an "affirmatively responsible" contractor and we strongly urge you to cancel the Defense Department's contracts with BP until such a time as they are able to demonstrate a significant overhaul of their safety and environmental procedures and practices.

The federal government and the American people should not continue doing business with a corporation determined to flout the law so that they can continue to risk the safety of American workers and recklessly endanger our environment to increase their profits.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this urgent matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,