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# Congress of the United States

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May 27, 2010

Mr. Lamar McKay  
Chairman and President  
BP America, Inc.  
501 Westlake Park Boulevard  
Houston, TX 77079

Dear Mr. McKay:

On May 25, 2010, BP officials, including the Group Vice President for Safety and Operations and the leader of BP's internal investigation, briefed Committee staff on the progress of the company's investigation of the causes of the blowout and explosion at the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico. Based on a post-incident review of data and witness statements, BP presented preliminary observations about multiple factors that could have contributed to the blowout and explosion. At this briefing, BP also provided the Committee with a 48-page document entitled "Washington Briefing: Deepwater Horizon Interim Incident Investigation." On May 26, BP sent the Committee a letter providing additional information about the well and the blowout.

We are concerned about issues that were omitted from BP's presentation and letter. In today's *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*, questions are raised about several decisions made by BP that could have led to well failure, including the decisions to use a type of casing that could allow gas to flow up the annular space to the wellhead, to limit the number of spacers centering the casing despite objections by Halliburton, and to curtail the length of time that drilling fluids were circulated to clean gas out of the well.<sup>1</sup> Neither BP's presentation nor its letter contains any discussion of these issues.

This raises the possibility that BP's internal investigation is not examining the consequences of BP's own decisions and conduct.

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<sup>1</sup> *BP Decisions Set Stage for Disaster*, The Wall Street Journal (May 27, 2010); *BP Used Riskier Method to Seal Oil Well Before Blast*, The New York Times (May 27, 2010).

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The Committee's investigation is examining all potential causes of the blowout, including those that are the responsibility of BP. To assist the Committee in this investigation, we ask that you provide the Committee with additional information about the issues raised by *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. Specifically, we request that you provide the Committee:

1. All documents related to BP's casing strategy for the Macondo well, including the decision to use a single casing line comprised of sections attached to one another from the sea floor to the oil reservoir;
2. All documents related to BP's decisions regarding the use and number of spacers centering the casing line prior to cementing; and
3. All documents related to BP's decision concerning how long to circulate drilling mud through the well on April 19, 2010, prior to cementing.

We ask that you provide these documents by Thursday, June 3, 2010. An attachment to this letter provides additional information on how to respond to Committee document requests. If you have questions regarding this request, please contact Meredith Fuchs or David Levis of the Committee staff at (202) 226-2424.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman  
Chairman



Bart Stupak  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight and  
Investigations

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Joe Barton  
Ranking Member

The Honorable Michael Burgess  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Oversight and  
Investigations