

WASHINGTON - U.S. Congressman Allen Boyd (D-North Florida) today [sent a letter](#) to Doug Suttles, Chief Operating Officer of BP, calling on him to ensure that the next round of funding allocated for promoting tourism is sent directly to North Florida communities. To see that this objective is achieved, Congressman Boyd urged Suttles to create the Panhandle Advertising and Tourism Council, a body comprised of local elected officials, business leaders and county tourism councils that will oversee the coordination and distribution of all BP funds designed to promote tourism throughout the Panhandle.

“Since the start of this disaster, I’ve heard nothing but complaints and frustrations expressed by our local officials on the ground, all of whom are fighting every day to protect their land and their livelihoods. Clearly there’s a fundamental problem with the way BP has been addressing this disaster,” said Congressman Boyd. “Rather than developing solutions that start at the top, BP needs to embrace a bottom-up approach and work more closely with our local communities as they bear the brunt of a disaster they did nothing to create, and they can start by ensuring that the next round of advertising dollars will be given directly to our local counties. By involving our local officials and leaders in these decisions, I believe the next round of funding will do a far better job of drawing people to our beaches than the previous funding.”

BP had previously allocated \$25 million to support a statewide advertising campaign to boost Florida tourism, but that money was allocated directly to the state and many North Florida counties did not see any of this funding.

Congressman Boyd concluded: “No one understands the effects the BP oil spill is having on North Florida more than the men and women whose livelihoods have been endangered by this catastrophe. I will continue looking for opportunities to speed aid and relief to the victims of this tragedy, and I will continue pushing BP to be more active partners in solving the problems they’ve created for North Florida.”

More information on the BP oil spill crisis and a full account of Congressman Boyd’s efforts to protect North Florida can be found at [www.boyd.house.gov/oilspill](http://www.boyd.house.gov/oilspill) .

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

July 15, 2010

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