

# MERRILL LAND COMPANY

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(Facsimile)

July 7, 2011

United States Senate  
Committee of Small Business & Entrepreneurship  
Committee's Hearing Clerk  
Washington, DC 20510-6350  
c/o Monisha Smith

Dear Monisha Smith,

I am writing in response to Mary Landrieu's letter inviting me to testify at an upcoming hearing titled, "A Year After the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill: The Status of Recovery Efforts In Florida." I have enclosed a short biography and statement as requested.

If you have any questions or require additional information please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Collier Merrill".

Collier Merrill

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United States Senate  
Committee of Small Business & Entrepreneurship  
Washington, DC 20510-6350

Re: Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

Dear United States Senate,

I have provided a synopsis of my statement to the Senate Committee on Monday, July 11, 2011.

BP must be held accountable for making timely payments. They continue to miss deadline after deadline with no repercussions. BP's explanation is that they are overwhelmed by the number of claims submitted; however, they have had ample time to hire additional staff for processing. For example 1.6 million claims were submitted in Mississippi and Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina, 93% of those claims were handled in the first year. The significant difference is that the insurance companies handling Hurricane Katrina hired over 15,000 adjusters to accommodate the demand. BP has taken no such actions to adjust to the overwhelming demand.

The State of Florida passed the Oil Spill Economic Recovery Act a bill to diversify our economy by providing us with \$10 million a year for the next 3 years and also direct 75% of any additional fine money to the effected counties.

The federal government must help ensure the fine money received is used to aid the counties that had oil on their beaches.

Thanks for your time and attention on this matter. If you have any questions or require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Collier Merrill

## **J. Collier Merrill**



Mr. Merrill is the President of Merrill Land Company, a real estate development company, which specializes in condominium development along the Northwestern Gulf Coast. He is also the president of the Great Southern Restaurant Group, Inc., which owns and operates three restaurants; The Fish House, The Atlas Oyster House, and Jackson's Steakhouse. Mr. Merrill is a graduate of the University of West Florida with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management.

Merrill is an active participant in the community, currently serving on the board of trustees for the University of West Florida and the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation. He serves on the board of directors of the Sacred Heart Health System and the West Florida Historic Preservation Board. Merrill is chairman of the Community Maritime Park Associates, Pensacola-Escambia County Promotion and Development Commission, and the chairman of the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce. He is also chairman of the Tocqueville Society for United Way, a trustee emeritus of the Pensacola Museum of Art, a member of Christ Church, and a member of the Pensacola Downtown Rotary Club.

Previously, Merrill has served in a number of community leadership roles; chairman of the board of trustees for University of West Florida, chairman of the Legislative Affairs Committee for the Florida Board of Regents, chairman of the Florida Arts Council, and president of the Pensacola Museum of Art. He has also served as a member of the boards of the Pensacola Junior College Foundation, Catholic Social Services, and the Pensacola Chapter of the American Red Cross.

In addition Merrill served as a member of Leadership Florida/Florida Chamber of Commerce, he is also a past president and chairman of economic development for the Home Builders Association of Northwest Florida and served as a mentor for Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

Merrill has been recognized and named Art Education Hero by the Florida Cultural Alliance, an Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser by the National Society of Fund Raising Professional, and a Paul Harris Fellow of Rotary International, named the University of West Florida's Distinguished Alumni of the Year. In addition, Merrill was a past recipient of the Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce's awards for Emerging Community Leader and Community Leader.