

July 11, 2011

To: Senate Committee on Small Business Entrepreneurship

One concern of coastal communities relating to the disastrous BP oil spill is that continuing poor stewardship by governmental entities in the planning and protection of our society has been a disappointment to most Americans. Also the news media in America blatantly exaggerated some of the damages and should at least morally, bear some of the blame.

BP and the other companies involved have created a resolution process that has helped many people recover losses and move on. There also have been abuses in the claim process by some. It seems true however that many businesses and individuals have not been able to resolve legitimate BP claims. That should not be acceptable!

I believe my business is representative of most in the Perdido Key, Orange Beach, and Gulf Shores area. We all were in a recovery phase from Hurricane Ivan in 2004. Our income analysis projected 10-15% growth for 2010 and 2011. We were up over 15% in the first four months of 2010. After April our gross income was down 15%. In the current year our income for 2011 is recovering but still up only 6 to 8% over 2009, about 15% under the trend lines. Since most net income comes from the last 20-30 % of gross income, we have all been severely effected. Our real estate, construction,

and recreation communities were, and are, struggling with the after effects of the spill, adding to current economic challenges.

I would propose that an independent ombudsman organization should be formed immediately to assist in resolving claims that have not been resolved by Mr. Feinburg's efforts. A truly independent review of disputed claims could only help. I also believe that a five year program of assistance to the most affected areas would more truly "make our communities whole."

As a new storm season approaches who can predict what may happen to our shores because of a storm event ? What will be the long term environmental consequences to the Gulf ?

As clear as it is that BP and it's partners did not act responsibly, the government of the United States also has failed it's responsibility.

Finally at what point in this process should the average person or business feel that a just solution is in sight?