

HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA  
CHAIRMAN

JOHN D. DINGELL, MICHIGAN  
CHAIRMAN EMERITUS  
EDWARD J. MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS  
RICK BOUCHER, VIRGINIA  
FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY  
BART GORDON, TENNESSEE  
BOBBY L. RUSH, ILLINOIS  
ANNA G. ESHOO, CALIFORNIA  
BART STUPAK, MICHIGAN  
ELIOT L. ENGEL, NEW YORK  
GENE GREEN, TEXAS  
DIANA DEGETTE, COLORADO  
VICE CHAIRMAN  
LOIS CAPPS, CALIFORNIA  
MIKE DOYLE, PENNSYLVANIA  
JANE HARMAN, CALIFORNIA  
JAN SCHAKOWSKY, ILLINOIS  
CHARLES A. GONZALEZ, TEXAS  
JAY INSLEE, WASHINGTON  
TAMMY BALDWIN, WISCONSIN  
MIKE ROSS, ARKANSAS  
ANTHONY D. WEINER, NEW YORK  
JIM MATHESON, UTAH  
G.K. BUTTERFIELD, NORTH CAROLINA  
CHARLIE MELANCON, LOUISIANA  
JOHN BARROW, GEORGIA  
BARON P. HILL, INDIANA  
DORIS O. MATSUI, CALIFORNIA  
DONNA CHRISTENSEN, VIRGIN ISLANDS  
KATHY CASTOR, FLORIDA  
JOHN SARBANES, MARYLAND  
CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, CONNECTICUT  
ZACHARY T. SPACE, OHIO  
JERRY McNERNEY, CALIFORNIA  
BETTY SUTTON, OHIO  
BRUCE BRALEY, IOWA  
PETER WELCH, VERMONT

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

MAJORITY (202) 225-2927  
FACSIMILE (202) 225-2525  
MINORITY (202) 225-3641

[energycommerce.house.gov](http://energycommerce.house.gov)

JOE BARTON, TEXAS  
RANKING MEMBER

ROY BLUNT, MISSOURI  
DEPUTY RANKING MEMBER  
RALPH M. HALL, TEXAS  
FRED UPTON, MICHIGAN  
CLIFF STEARNS, FLORIDA  
NATHAN DEAL, GEORGIA  
ED WHITFIELD, KENTUCKY  
JOHN SHIMKUS, ILLINOIS  
JOHN B. SHADEGG, ARIZONA  
STEVE BUYER, INDIANA  
GEORGE RADANOVICH, CALIFORNIA  
JOSEPH R. PITTS, PENNSYLVANIA  
MARY BONO MACK, CALIFORNIA  
GREG WALDEN, OREGON  
LEE TERRY, NEBRASKA  
MIKE ROGERS, MICHIGAN  
SUE WILKINS MYRICK, NORTH CAROLINA  
JOHN SULLIVAN, OKLAHOMA  
TIM MURPHY, PENNSYLVANIA  
MICHAEL C. BURGESS, TEXAS  
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE  
PHIL GINGREY, GEORGIA  
STEVE SCALISE, LOUISIANA

May 19, 2010

Admiral Thad W. Allen  
Commandant  
United States Coast Guard  
2100 Second Street, SW Stop 7101  
Washington, DC 20593-7101

Dear Admiral Allen:

Recent news reports and congressional testimony indicate that efforts to stop the BP oil spill, which is occurring 5,000 feet beneath the ocean surface, are being monitored in real time by ongoing video feeds from the numerous robots and other submarine vessels that are being deployed around the area of the blowout preventer and the broken riser pipe. Although the accident occurred nearly a month ago, and remotely operated vehicles arrived soon thereafter, BP did not release any video until 23 days after the accident. To date only a small fraction of the video has been released to the public, primarily in response to requests from Congress.

I am writing to ask that you make these ongoing live feeds publicly available. Although BP argues that these video feeds belong to BP, the American public has a right to the information that they contain and to be able to see for themselves BP's progress in containing this ongoing environmental disaster. I understand you have access to this feed. Allowing the public to view this video could provide our best scientists and engineers with information that could be helpful in developing much needed solutions to the ongoing oil spill, both in terms of subsea operations and surface spill response.

For instance, Dr. Steve Wereley of Purdue University has used a video-based method for calculating the rate of flow from the broken riser pipe and additional video would assist him in developing a more precise estimate of the rate of oil flowing from that pipe. Dr. Wereley estimates that approximately 70,000 barrels of oil a day are flowing out of the pipe, however his estimate is based on only a very short video sample. Other scientists have conducted similar video-based efforts. An ongoing live feed would provide him

with ample opportunity to obtain representative video samples and to then provide an updated estimate.

There are many other first class scientists and engineers who could apply their talent and expertise toward solving this disaster if they were able to view the ongoing efforts in real time and/or review and analyze large segments of the video as it is collected.

Congress and the American public has a right to know what is happening in real time, so that they can understand and react to the situation as it develops. Accordingly, I am asking that you allow relevant Congressional Committees to link to the live video feeds coming from the ocean floor. We will be happy to host such live feeds on our websites, and stream it free of charge to the world. I believe it is in all our interests, including BP's, for there to be transparency in all aspects of the response to this unfolding catastrophe. That way, we will see BP's spill response efforts and activities as they actually happen, and we will be able to judge for ourselves their efficacy, wisdom and ultimate environmental impact.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
Chairman

Subcommittee on Energy and  
Environment  
Committee on Energy and  
Commerce

Cc: Honorable Henry Waxman, Chairman,  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Honorable Joe Barton, Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Honorable Fred Upton, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and  
Environment