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ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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September 1, 2010

The Honorable Kathy Castor  
U.S. House of Representatives  
317 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Castor:

At your suggestion, the Committee on Energy and Commerce and its Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations sent a letter to BP requesting information regarding the company's spending on corporate advertising following the April 20, 2010, explosion at the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig. On Monday, we received a response from BP relating to this request.

BP told the Committee that they have increased advertising expenditures for a number of reasons, including to keep Gulf Coast residents informed of issues relating to the oil spill and recovery and to ensure transparency during the recovery process. For the period covering April 2010 to the end of July 2010, BP spent \$93,429,175 on advertising. This is more than three times the amount the company spent on advertising during the same period in 2009. BP's increased spending was almost entirely targeted at national and local newspapers and magazines and national and local television advertising. A small portion of the increased spending was targeted at Internet advertising. With respect to television and radio spots, BP indicated that it aired fewer spots during the April-July 2010 time period than during the April-July 2009 time period, but a higher percentage were national and longer, 60-second spots.

BP also indicated that it significantly expanded the markets in which it ran local newspaper advertisements during the 2010 period. From April to the end of July 2009, the company ran local market newspaper advertisements in two states and the District of Columbia. In that same period in the 2010, the company ran local newspaper advertisements in 126 markets in 17 states, including the states directly impacted by the oil spill – Florida, Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi – as well as California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Texas.

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BP also provided \$89.5 million in grants to aid tourism promotion efforts in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana following the Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill. Some of these funds may have been used for advertising by each state or its tourism agency.

We appreciate your leadership on the issue of BP's advertising expenditures and hope that this information helps answer your questions.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman  
Chairman



Bart Stupak  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

cc: The Honorable Joe Barton  
Ranking Member

The Honorable Michael C. Burgess  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations