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Pelosi Blocks Oil Spill Investigation

by [Connie Hair](#)

07/28/2010

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The latest version of the CLEAR Act is slated for a floor vote in the House this week as Democrats look for ways to use the Gulf oil spill as a means to pass elements of their unpopular energy agenda.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) stripped out authorization for an independent investigation into the Gulf disaster.

The Natural Resources Committee unanimously passed the amendment in committee markup July 14 offered by Rep. Bill Cassidy (R-La.) that would establish a bipartisan, independent, National Commission on Outer Continental Shelf Oil Spill Prevention.

Unlike the commission set up by President Obama -- packed only with environmental activists and no petroleum engineers -- the commission unanimously approved by the Natural Resources committee would be comprised of technical experts to study the actual events leading up to the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

Not a single member of the committee voiced opposition at the bill's markup. The Senate has also approved an independent commission.

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"To investigate what went wrong and keep it from happening again, the commission must include members who have expertise in petroleum engineering. The President's Commission has none," Cassidy, the amendment's author, told HUMAN EVENTS after the announcement. "It defies common sense that this amendment passed unanimously in committee, only to be deleted in the Speaker's office."

Rep. Doc Hastings (R-Wash.), top Republican on the Natural Resources Committee said the Obama's administration's commission was set up to protect the President.

"By deleting the bipartisan, independent oil spill commission that's received bipartisan support in both House and Senate committees, Democrats have shown they are more interested in protecting the President than getting independent answers to what caused this tragic Gulf spill. Some of the biggest failures that contributed to the Gulf disaster are the direct responsibility of the federal government and by deleting this bipartisan, independent commission, Democrats ensure that only the President's hand-picked commission will be digging into any failures of his own Interior Department appointees. There is widespread agreement that no member of the President's commission possesses technical expertise in oil drilling, and several are on the record in opposition to offshore drilling and support a moratorium that will cost thousands of jobs," Hastings said.

The bill also sets up myriad regulations and new standards and laws for drilling that have nothing to do with offshore drilling.

"Even more outrageous is this bill's attempt to use the oil spill tragedy as leverage to enact totally unrelated policies and increase federal spending on unrelated programs by billions of dollars. What does a solar panel in Nevada, a wind turbine in Montana, uranium for nuclear power, or a ban on fish farming have to do with the Gulf spill? Nothing -- but the spill is a good excuse to try and pass otherwise stalled or unpopular new laws," Hastings said.

Another member of the committee, Rep. John Fleming (R-La.), pointed out the hand-picked Obama commission is just getting underway with no findings or recommendations made.

"This 'fix it' bill is being rammed through without an accurate and full understanding of what actually went wrong. The Presidential Commission is just barely beginning its work, no investigations are yet concluded, and the failed [blowout preventer] still on the ocean floor, yet we are voting on a bill without knowing what went wrong," Fleming said.

"Furthermore, at a time when Washington should be focused on creating jobs, this bill will do just the opposite by hampering future energy development and stifling job creation along the Gulf Coast," Fleming added. "This knee-jerk legislation -- coupled with the Administration's damaging Moratorium on offshore drilling -- will worsen, not help, the situation."

Yet the House is poised to vote this week on the CLEAR Act, likely Friday.

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"This bill has less to do with preventing another spill than it does preventing domestic energy production," Cassidy said.

UPDATE: House Republicans released bullets on the CLEAR Act this morning breaking down some of the measures included in the bill, including:

- Imposes job-killing changes and higher taxes for onshore natural gas and oil production. It fundamentally changes leasing onshore by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, which affects not just leasing for natural gas and oil, but also for renewable energy including wind and solar. Forest Service and BLM leasing are shoved into the three new agencies that are replacing the former Minerals Management Service (MMS).
- Creates over \$30 billion in new mandatory spending for two programs that have nothing to do with the oil spill (the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Historic Preservation Fund). In the version of the bill headed to the House floor, Democrats added brand new language that expressly allows this \$30 billion to be earmarked by the Appropriations Committee.
- Raises taxes by over \$22 billion in ten years – with the taxes eventually climbing to nearly \$3 billion per year. This is a direct tax on natural gas and oil that will raise energy prices for American families and businesses, hurt domestic jobs, and increase our dependence on foreign oil. This tax only applies to U.S. oil and gas production on federal leases – giving an advantage to foreign oil and hurting American energy jobs.
- Requires the federal takeover of state authority to permit in state waters, which reverses sixty years of precedent. The mismanagement, corruption and oversight failures of the federal government are being used as justification to expand federal control by seizing management from the states.
- Allows 10% of all offshore revenues – an amount possibly as high as \$500 million per year – to be spent on a new fund controlled by the Interior Secretary to issue ocean research grants (ORCA fund). There is no requirement that the fund is used for the Gulf region or anything related to oil spills or offshore drilling. These funds can be earmarked.

More [at the link](#).

Connie Hair writes daily as HUMAN EVENTS' Congressional correspondent. She is a former speechwriter for Rep. Trent Franks (R-Ariz.) and a former media and coalitions advisor to the Senate Republican Conference. You can follow Connie on Twitter @ConnieHair.

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condoned by us, and we reserve the right to remove abusive posts.

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Of course Pelosi blocked it. Why should she care about this issue when she DOESN'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING EXCEPT GETTING MORE DEMOCRATS ELECTED. I believe each of these wealthy politicians, on both sides of the fence, should contribute their earnings towards cleaning up a mess of probably their own creation. I am sick, sick, sick of these Democrats and all of their phony ideals.

suzanne morse, clayton,nc

Jul 28, 2010 @ 09:16 AM

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Don't we have the best government money can buy? You bet! Government of the elite, for the lawyers, and by the rich. Corruption must be hidden and protected, else Obama and his gang may not achieve their rightful place in history. Their rightful place truly is Hell.

Orf, Pennsylvania

Jul 28, 2010 @ 09:34 AM

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I think Pelosi is hiding something bigger than anyone knows in connection with the BP oil spill per Rep. Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) top Republican on the Natural Resources Committee comment: the Obama's administration's commission was set up to protect the President.

Hopefully the CLEAR Act doesn't pass...that's all we can hope for now.

Lee Rech, Salt Lake City

Jul 28, 2010 @ 10:54 AM

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Typical government bull crap

Vicki, PA

Jul 28, 2010 @ 10:56 AM

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This is a prime example of liberals and the wicked witch of the west taking advantage of a crisis in order to force an agenda. Solving the problem or preventing another disaster is not important. What's ruining the Gulf Coasts economy got to do with the bigger goal of Socializing America. What's killing a whole industry and tens of thousands of jobs got to do with the "Grand Plan". To make an omelet you have to break a few eggs. Ask Russa or China. Hey, the ends justify the means.

Don, Texas

Jul 28, 2010 @ 11:25 AM

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THE "US CONSTITUTION" IS LIKE THE "US 7TH FLEET"
AND
THE DEMOCRATS ARE THE REENACTING DEC 7TH 1941
and we have done nothing
WE SHOULD HAVE SEEN THIS ONE COMING!!!!THEY BEGAN PLANNING IN 2006

anpetu waste sni
anpetu sapa

sunkgleska, Gun and Bible Country

Jul 28, 2010 @ 11:37 AM

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What kind of dirty little secrets are they trying to hide whats are they doing and what ar they up to and is the greenpeace freaks happy now?

Flu-Bird, Etna,CA USA

Jul 28, 2010 @ 12:09 PM

