



# Houma-Terrebonne

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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April 14, 2014

Mr. Steve Van Andel  
Chairman of the Board of Directors  
Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America  
1615 H Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20062-2000

RE: Support of BP

Dear Mr. Van Andel:

Terrebonne Parish is located along the Louisiana coast, directly northwest of where the Deepwater Horizon oilrig exploded and sank leaking 210 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. More than 1000 of the businesses and organizations in our parish were affected including the Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce, which has had a 21% drop in membership. As a result, we are amongst the most affected communities in the entire country.

It came as quite a surprise when one of our members pointed out the article by Weissman detailing the U.S. Chamber's filing of a brief in support of BP's request to change how claims are paid. This member expressed his extreme dissatisfaction with the U.S. Chamber's actions. It is disappointing that we were not contacted prior to the U.S. Chamber taking action concerning the world-renowned disaster that occurred in our backyard.

As a member of the U.S. Chamber, we take exception to the way in which the support of the BP legal settlement appeal to the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals was handled. As mentioned before, our members brought this issue to our attention, but we were also surprised to find out that other chambers in our area were also not contacted before the U.S. Chamber took a stand on this issue. Dissemination of talking points, after the matter has been decided, does little good in creating understanding and trust between the U.S. Chamber and chambers of the Gulf Coast.

Our Chamber is a partnership of businesses and professional people working together to build a healthy economy and to improve the quality of life in our community. Our position is that all individuals and businesses that were harmed by the BP oil spill should be compensated.

In the future, we would appreciate consideration for your members when taking action on matters that effect your members, most of which are made up of small businesses. We have a deep concern and commitment to our great community and the people who live and work here.

Sincerely,

Donald A. Hingle, II  
Chairman of the Board

Cc: Thomas J. Donohue

*The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce's mission is to be a member-driven, volunteer organization dedicated to improving the quality of life by building a strong economy through promotion of services to members, partnerships and alliances, legislative advocacy, economic development, and programs of action and value to sustain a prosperous and vibrant community.*