

**SLPSPI Post-Hearing Statement for the Record
From Senator Roland W. Burris**

**“Deep Impact: Assessing the Effects of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill on States,
Localities, and the Private Sector”
June 10, 2010**

Thank you Chairman Pryor and Ranking Member Ensign for inviting me to attend today’s hearing to examine the response efforts to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the impact it has had on states and localities. I share the concerns of the American public, the private sector, and my colleagues regarding the urgent need to cap and clean up the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Communities along the Gulf Coast are on the frontline as the effects of the oil spill continue to manifest themselves through oil covered coastlines and economic hardships. Although the full magnitude of the spill is not yet known, it is evident that it will take a collaborative effort for years to come to rehabilitate the Gulf Coast region.

Despite the dedication put forth from the public and private sector, coordinated response efforts have been complicated by the challenging logistics of the deep-water oil well combined with a lack of communication and transparency between stakeholders. We have all heard the frustrations voiced by coastal residents, small businesses, and the government, relating to the way our country prepares for and responds to disasters.

Recognizing the need for better public and private sector response plans, I applaud the efforts of the Chairmen of the Senate and House Homeland Security Committees to urge the Department of Homeland Security to step up its implementation of a voluntary program to help private sector companies develop preparedness, response, and business continuity plans. Working partnerships like these are crucial to an effective clean up.

I am pleased that our panelists could take the time out of their busy schedules to discuss these partnerships and provide insight on ways to improve our response efforts. After all, the coordinated efforts of federal, state, and local entities like you will ultimately contribute to the long-term recovery of the Gulf Coast.

I will close by saying that the Gulf Coast is not in this alone. On May 26th, five Illinois National Guardsmen along with their Blackhawk helicopter set off on a three week mission to assist in the Gulf Coast cleanup. It is efforts like these, paired with the commitment and innovation from the American public, which will bring this crisis to a halt.

The Gulf region will recover – but it will take a coordinated response from BP along with the participation of federal, state, and local entities across the nation to ensure its success.