

WASHINGTON, DC –“ Congressman Joe Courtney issued the following statement after House Energy Committee Ranking Republican Joe Barton apologized to BP for their “shakedown” at the hands of the U.S. taxpayer. Barton called the \$20 billion escrow account created to compensate Gulf Coast residents for damages caused by BP a “slush fund.”

“Mr. Barton’s incredibly out-of-touch statement is unfortunately consistent with his party’s reflex response to the oil spill’s costs – standing up for an oil company instead of for the countless Americans who have been devastated by this disaster,” Courtney said. “Republican Leader John Boehner made a similar gaffe last week when he suggested that the U.S. taxpayer should be responsible for the clean-up. [Watch Congressman Courtney demand that BP be held accountable on the House floor.](#)”

“For decades, the Republican Party has pushed for policies that shift the risk of oil production onto the taxpayer, while preserving the benefits for Big Oil. It is clearly difficult for them to change their tune even in the context of the worst environmental disaster in U.S. history. All the spin and damage control in the world is not going to persuade a single person that Mr. Barton and Mr. Boehner really believe that BP should be held solely responsible. The hearing today was important for a lot of reasons, but more than anything else, it showed that Washington Republicans are still reflexively subservient to Big Oil.”