

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

BY SENATOR MORRELL

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request BP P.L.C. to institute medical monitoring and treatment, and to publish advisory medical protocols to all Louisiana residents and clean-up workers who were exposed to chemicals related to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

WHEREAS, fishermen, oystermen, shrimpers, firemen, police officers, members of the United States Coast Guard, the Louisiana National Guard, animal clean-up workers, various other public health workers, countless public servant professionals, as well as private citizens and residents of Louisiana all came out to defend the state's coast, our way of life, and our coastal economy, as a result of the highly toxic effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster; and

WHEREAS, during the response to the disaster, Louisiana residents were exposed to the chemicals related to the spill, including petroleum, arsenic, benzene, dangerous heavy metals, and dispersants such as Corexit, a chemical banned in Britain, which were used in unprecedented amounts and these chemicals were forced upon all residents and those involved in the clean-up efforts of the oil spill, in never before seen quantities; the effects of which are becoming readily apparent with the passage of time and are now proving to have devastating effects on human health and wildlife, as has already been seen and proven by scientific studies; and

WHEREAS, there has been an alarming and distinct uptick in the number of cancer cases since the oil spill for workers involved in the response to the disaster, and scientists expect that number to dramatically increase in the next two years; and

WHEREAS, there has also been an alarming and distinct uptick in the number of cancer cases in the last few years of Louisiana residents who lived in areas near the oil spill and exposed to toxic chemicals in the water and air; and

WHEREAS, the number of Louisiana residents who were exposed to toxic chemicals and who will potentially develop cancer is unknown; and

WHEREAS, there has been an alarming number of chronic conditions that people are suffering from, including but not limited to dermal, ocular, respiratory, nasal conditions, neurological problems as well as depression, PTSD, and memory loss; and

WHEREAS, to date, BP has compensated only forty-two people for their chronic medical conditions but has not compensated anyone from a diagnosis of cancer related to the oil spill; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana has been and will continue to be burdened with covering the costs of astronomical and growing medical bills for these BP victims; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana should take steps to protect its people and prevent more of its citizens from continuing to suffer such dire and drastic consequences; and

WHEREAS, it has been almost a decade since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and Louisiana citizens are still suffering severe medical and financial hardships due to increasingly high medical bills and loss in their quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the financial strain that diagnosis and treatment has already and will continue to place on the Louisiana healthcare system is incalculable; and

WHEREAS, the total compensation paid out by BP for losses to businesses and property through the economic class action settlement is over thirty-three billion dollars, but the total compensation paid out by BP for medical conditions in the medical class action settlement to citizens across Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida is approximately sixty-five million dollars; and

WHEREAS, action must be taken, and BP should be held responsible for the toxic chemicals they have released that caused so many Louisiana citizens and workers to contract chronic and life-threatening illnesses, extreme suffering, and even death; and

WHEREAS, BP should, since it has specifically acknowledged exposure of these chemicals to our citizens, give a public advisory and protocols and/or medical monitoring on how to seek early detection and early diagnosis and treatment to save medical costs and lives for the citizens of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, BP should implement an independent study and discovery process into the particular reasons why Louisiana citizens are suffering from cancer and chronic conditions; and

WHEREAS, BP should implement an independent medical monitoring program and treatment for Louisiana citizens suffering from cancer and other chronic conditions due to their exposure to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Louisiana Legislature does hereby urge and request BP P.L.C. to institute medical monitoring and treatment, and to publish advisory medical protocols to all Louisiana residents and clean-up workers who were exposed to chemicals related to the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the governor, to the secretary of Louisiana Department of Health, and to BP P.L.C.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE