

BP'S OWN INTERNAL DOCUMENTS PROVE IT KNEW ITS OIL LEAK ESTIMATES WERE BOGUS

In today's Natural Resources Hearing on the BP Disaster, Ed Markey brought out proof that BP knew it was lying about the flow of oil from its disaster. He brought two BP documents showing that even when their Chief Operating Officer Doug Suttles was giving low-ball estimates of 1,000 BBL/day, BP's own internal documents showed that their best guess was 5,758 BBL/day.

The fact is BP has not been entirely candid and open with the American people about this disaster. Mr. Secretary, initially, BP estimated that 1,000 barrels of oil per day were leaking into the Gulf. On April 28, 2010, a new leak was discovered and Coast Guard officials pushed BP to increase the estimate to at least 5,000 barrels per day. However, BP's Chief Operating Officer Doug Suttles was initially quoted that day—April 28—saying that he believed that the flow rate of 1,000 barrels per day was accurate and that “Due to its location, we do not believe that this new leak changes the amount currently believed to be released.”

Yesterday, BP provided me with an internal document dated April 27, 2010, and cited as BP Confidential that shows a low estimate, a best guess, and a high estimate of the amount of oil that was leaking. According to this BP document, the company's low estimate of the leak on April 27 was 1,063 barrels per day. It's best guess was 5,758 barrels per

day. It's high estimate was 14,266 barrels per day. BP has also turned over another document dated April 26 which includes a 5,000 barrel per day figure as well. So when BP was citing the 1,000 barrel per day figure to the American people on April 28, their own internal documents from the day before show that their best guess was a leak of 5,768 [sic] barrels per day and their high estimate was more than 14,000 barrels that were spilling into the Gulf every day. [my emphasis]

As Markey goes on to point out, BP's intentional low-balling might have been designed to help them argue for a \$5-15 million penalty per day as opposed to a \$14-42 million penalty.

Secretary Salazar promised several times during the hearing that the government would release its own estimate of the flow sometime today.