

WASHINGTON, DC (May 21, 2010) – Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) joined 77 other House Democrats in sending a [letter to President Obama](#) calling on him to ensure that Shell Oil’s plan to drill five exploratory wells in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve this summer—as early as July 1—will be delayed. The leases to drill in the Arctic’s Chukchi Sea were sold by the Bush Administration to Shell in 2008. The Obama Administration has said no permits for drilling new wells will proceed until a 30-day safety and environmental review is completed.

Schakowsky and the other House Democrats urged the President to halt Shell’s plan until the *Deepwater Horizon* disaster and catastrophic BP oil spill are fully investigated and the Administration puts “rigorous prevention technology requirements in place.”

“Big Oil has to be held fully accountable for this tragic event that killed 11 workers in the *Deepwater Horizon* explosion and becomes more horrific by the day. Unchecked irresponsibility and negligence on the part of BP, Transocean and Haliburton has not only cost human life, it has caused extensive damage to our oceans, sea life, coasts, wetlands and economy,” Schakowsky said. “These consequences will be felt for decades. And in the wake of such an awful event, we can not reward the oil industry with greater access to our oceans or to our protected wildlife reserves.”

At an Energy & Commerce Subcommittee hearing this month, Schakowsky pressed Steve

Newman, CEO of Transocean, Ltd. which owns the rig and blowout preventer that failed, and other involved parties to acknowledge their responsibility in the catastrophic event. [Listen to Schakowsky and National Public Radio's coverage of the hearing](#)