

TV + INTERNET + PHONE

\$139⁹⁹ a month

Get a \$150 gift card. 2 HD DVR Boxes. Showtime included.



TIME WARNER CABLE THE POWER OF YOU™

Get it now

Win tickets

To see Chemical Brothers at Sonar Festival in Barcelona

TIMES ONLINE



“Cable and Osborne resemble fractious Matthau and Lemmon in **The Odd Couple**” Martin Ivans

NEWS COMMENT BUSINESS MONEY SPORT LIFE TRAVEL DRIVING ARTS ARCHIVE OUR PAPERS SUBSCRIPTIONS

UK NEWS WORLD NEWS POLITICS SCIENCE ENVIRONMENT WEATHER TECH & WEB VIDEO PHOTO GALLERIES TOPICS MOBILE RSS

Where am I? Home News World News US & Americas News

Times Online SEARCH

From The Times

May 14, 2010

Barack Obama plans to punish BP with tax hike as Gulf spill worsens



Jacqui Goddard, Miami

164 COMMENTS | RECOMMEND? (29)

Oil companies face an immediate tax rise of 1 cent per barrel to help to pay for the clean-up in the Gulf of Mexico under proposed legislation rushed out by the White House yesterday.

The measure, unveiled as BP began a new attempt to contain the ruptured well that has leaked millions of gallons of crude oil into America's southern coastal waters, would put an extra \$500 million (£340 million) over ten years into the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, which covers damage caused by such disasters.

Under a \$118 million spending plan outlined in the package, people affected by the spill — such as fishermen who have lost their livelihoods because of the contamination — will be granted financial assistance, and federal agencies will get additional funds to monitor the slick and assess its impact.

President Obama, said by a spokesman to be “deeply frustrated” that the leak has still not been plugged three weeks after it erupted, intends that BP will pick up most of the cost of his new plan.

RELATED LINKS

- Clean-up chemicals 'lesser of two evils'
- Blame game intensifies at oil spill hearings

Hearings into the incident aboard the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig on April 20 continued yesterday in Louisiana and in the US Congress, where Democrat Henry Waxman blamed a “calamitous series of equipment and

TIMES RECOMMENDS

- Nashville flood takes toll on country music
- Thailand's expatriates confront grim reality
- New Dostoevsky Metro station 'too depressing'

WORLD AGENDA



Times experts go behind the headlines

- France's next President: the womaniser, the French Merkel or the excitable one?
- Benigno Aquino brings much-needed dullness to elections in the Philippines
- Medvedev projects a young Russia as past and future collide in Red Square

MY PROFILE SHOP JOBS PROPERTY CLASSIFIEDS

MOST READ MOST COMMENTED MOST CURIOUS

TODAY

- Movie depicts seamy life of Facebook boss
- Answer the lesbian question, Ms Legal Eagle
- Labour minister Liam Byrne left note on...
- 'Mummy' Merkel battered as...

A surprisingly low price.

TV + INTERNET + PHONE

\$139⁹⁹ a month

Get a \$150 gift card. 2 HD DVR Boxes. Showtime included.



TIME WARNER CABLE THE POWER OF YOU™

Get it now

FOCUS ZONE

Cool Camping:

Camping has emerged as one of the hottest holidays to book. Read our guide on how to make it cool



- Need to Know
- Mapping Business
- Discover Normandy
- Cool Camping
- More reports

Business city guides

Overseas contacts and local business information



Online Sudoku with daily prizes



Find an IFA

Find a local independent financial advisor



Crossword Club

Sign up today or try one of our free demo crosswords



Oil firms blame each other for disaster spill

MULTIMEDIA

IN PICTURES: Gulf Coast oil disaster

operational failures" for the disaster. "If the largest oil and oil services companies in the world had been more careful, 11 lives might have been saved and our coastlines protected," he said.

The way BP and its partners responded to the disaster, which began with an explosion aboard the Deepwater Horizon on April 20, will also be a matter for investigation.

Survivors have alleged that, after being rescued, they were held at sea while the rig's owner, Transocean, assembled its lawyers. After being brought ashore, traumatised and exhausted by two nights without sleep, they claim that they were taken to a hotel and "coerced" by Transocean representatives into signing liability waivers before being allowed to see their families.

According to Steven Gordon, of the Houston legal firm Gordon, Elias and Seely, the waivers are now being used against the workers as they attempt to seek compensation for emerging psychological problems that have left some too afraid to work at sea again.

"These people went through holy hell. They have probably just gone through the most traumatic period of their entire lives. They needed counselling — not 'Please sign here that you're not hurt' ," said Mr Gordon, who is representing Christopher Choy, a rig worker. "When they asked him to sign this, he hadn't been allowed to sleep and have his first nightmare."

Mr Choy, 23, teamed up with a firefighter on the rig to try to rescue a crane operator who was trapped by the fire. "They couldn't get to him because he was in flames. These guys watched their friends burning," Mr Gordon told The Times.

Alwin Landry, the captain of a cargo ship that was moored alongside the rig, told a hearing in New Orleans that mud began pouring down on him "like a black rain", followed by a thunderous hiss. "I saw the green flash on the main deck. Time kind of slowed down. I heard the explosion," he said, adding that minutes later came a radio call: "Mayday! Mayday! Mayday! The rig's on fire. Abandon ship."

Workers leapt eight storeys into the sea to escape the flames, but even the water was on fire. The last to climb from the rig on to Mr Landry's boat was the rig's captain, Curt Kuchta, who tried to hit the "kill" switch to shut the oil well. "He acknowledged he pressed it and didn't know if it worked or not," Mr Landry said.

THE TIMES Be the first Register here for an exclusive preview of our new website

SIGN UP NEWS BULLETIN BUSINESS BULLETIN FREE GAME Free news bulletin direct to your inbox

FINANCIAL BROCHURES Get free guides to saving and investing Saving for your child Online trading Money Guides Save for Retirement ISA Guides Investment Trusts

Find a Lawyer Cut your legal costs

POPULAR SEARCHES ON TIMES ONLINE 2010 movies | crosswords | election '10 | eureka | fashion | formula 1 | mortgages | movie trailers | obituaries | pensions | property | recipes | redundancy calculator | savings | sudoku | twitter | university guide | weather | wine

Shortcuts to help you find sections and articles

PRINT EMAIL SHARE

YOUR COMMENTS 164 Comments (Displaying 1-10) Order By: Newest first | Oldest first | Most recommended Limey 44 wrote: Francis Francis wrote: @ 12:14 PM Get your facts straight yourself before you call anybody a moron, or that claim could refer to yourself. When one is incapable of reading and understanding the contents of a simple story it shows low intellect and poor schooling. What was it secondary modern school, or the current, renamed comprehensive? The tax amounts to 1 cent per barrel of oil as reported in the first sentence, not 1% as you understood it. A barrel contains 34.9 imperial gallons and produces roughly 29 imperial gallons of fuel plus many other usable products such as plastics, chemicals, fibres, medicines etc. How do you think that 1 cent spread over all those products is going to raise the price of fuel 1%? Do try to do better next time Francis. May 16, 2010 1:38 PM BST RECOMMEND? (1) George Glasser wrote:

CLASSIFIEDS CARS PROPERTY TRAVEL CARS Stratstone, the No.1 Choice for Luxury Cars. Europe's largest independent Jaguar Dealer group with 23 locations across the UK. Mercedes Benz E-Class Cabriolet 2010 £43,850 Bedford Bleisure Travel: The Best of Both Worlds Land Rover Range Rover 4.2 V8 2006 £27,950 West Yorkshire Search for more cars and bikes Place your advert now Search Ad Reference: SEARCH

Acai Berry Exposed (Official Test) Want to use Acai berry? Do not use. Read this warning now. California Mom Lost 46lbs Following 1 Rule I cut down 46lbs of stomach fat in a month by obeying this 1 rule. DON'T Pay For White Teeth California Mom discovers one simple trick to turn yellow teeth white from home for under \$5

Well, if I were an advisor to Mother Nature, I would strongly suggest that She call in the exterminators and rid this planet of the most destructive, self-serving vermin that ever inhabited it - Human Beings.

May 15, 2010 7:39 AM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (1)

Tim McCarthy wrote:

@ Francis Francis and Hugh Colgan.....excellent.....

May 15, 2010 3:44 AM BST

👍 RECOMMEND?

Tarik Toulan wrote:

The problem is obviously beyond the capabilities of BP or any other oil company. I think the situation now necessitates a direct federal intervention to effectively contain the disaster, because it's ultimately the USA environment that is being ruined. And let the punishment or liability be discussed later on.

May 14, 2010 2:59 PM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (4)

Luke Bennett wrote:

What hypocrites!

The country that consumes the most oil in the world is punishing an oil company for drilling for the oil that they gulp down their greedy throats and because it is spilling onto their precious land. You fail to look at the big picture. Your insatiable demand for oil which caused Transocean to build this rig and BP to drill it. You yanks pay barely anything for a gallon of oil whereas the rest of the world gets shafted for it. How about raising the price of oil and get off your fat arses and walk the 10 metres to the shops rather than driving everywhere.

May 14, 2010 2:42 PM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (12)

Hugh Colgan wrote:

It's hard to believe that this idiot received the Nobel Peace Prize. Mr MegaMouth is a complete disaster!

May 14, 2010 12:56 PM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (6)

Francis Francis wrote:

Great plan Barack - all it'll mean is that the rest of us will have to pay 1 percent more for our fuel. Moron.

May 14, 2010 12:14 PM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (10)

Peter Sammons wrote:

It is to be hoped that key technical and risk management lessons are learned by the industry as a result of this terrible accident.

Whilst no fan of Mr Obama, a special tax on the industry seems appropriate given the extent of 'collateral damage' to local communities and the local economies. Consumers should pay as ultimately they are the users or petro-chem products.

But the urgent things is to learn lessons

May 14, 2010 10:51 AM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (3)

Chris Thompson wrote:

This is NOT going to be used for the "clean up" this will go directly into the general fund and vanish into some politicians pork project attached to the passing of the stalincare bill. Government isn't even involved in the clean up, except as a regulatory nightmare. BP is paying for the clean up, just like Exxon did. Let's not forget that government isn't going to let this go un legislated upon. You can bet that nationalization of petroleum is being pondered as we comment.

May 14, 2010 10:06 AM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (9)

Tarik Toulan wrote:

What a paradox! Oil which they were breathlessly trying to get yesterday, are unsuccessfully trying to stop today. It's nature saying "I am the stronger".

May 14, 2010 7:23 AM BST

👍 RECOMMEND? (9)

HAVE YOUR SAY

Would you like to post a comment? Please register or log in

Login | REGISTER

Submit

[Terms and conditions](#)

Ads by Google

Coast Guard GI Bill

We Make Using GI Bill Benefits Easy
Accredited Online & Campus Schools
www.Military.com/GI_Bill

Become A Coast Guard

Expand Your Job Opportunities
With A Military Degree. Get Info.
www.CriminalJustice-Info.com

Blood Pressure Discovery

Hugh Downs Reports: Artery clearing
secret from Nobel Prize Winner
www.bottomlinesecrets.com

ALSO IN US & AMERICAS NEWS

- ▶ Lebanese immigrant crowned Miss USA
- ▶ Obama's 'illegal' Kenyan Auntie wins the right to stay in America
- ▶ BP chief Tony Hayward flies home after promising to stay in US until spill stops

ALSO IN WORLD NEWS

- ▶ Engineer accuses BP of ignoring damaged oil well safety gear
- ▶ South Korean climber's 14-peaks claim is backed by mountaineering great

Where am I? ▶ Home ▶ News ▶ World News ▶ **US & Americas News**

NEWS | COMMENT | BUSINESS | MONEY | SPORT | LIFE | TRAVEL | DRIVING | ARTS | ARCHIVE

Times Online

SEARCH

Contact our advertising team for advertising and sponsorship in Times Online, The Times and The Sunday Times, or place your advertisement.

Times Online Services: [Dating](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Property Search](#) | [Used Cars](#) | [Holidays](#) | [Births, Marriages, Deaths](#) | [Subscriptions](#) | [E-paper](#)
News International associated websites: [Milkround](#) | [Globrix](#)

Copyright 2010 Times Newspapers Ltd.

This service is provided on Times Newspapers' [standard Terms and Conditions](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#). To inquire about a licence to reproduce material from Times Online, The Times or The Sunday Times, click [here](#). This website is published by a member of the News International Group. News International Limited, 1 Virginia St, London E98 1XY, is the holding company for the News International group and is registered in England No 81701. VAT number GB 243 8054 69.

ACAP ENABLED