



# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

**Statement of the Honorable Rahm Emanuel  
Honoring Bobby L. Maxwell  
January 29, 2007**

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Bobby L. Maxwell. Mr. Maxwell may not be familiar to you or to most of America, but on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, he accomplished something that the Bush Administration has failed to do for the last six years: hold oil companies accountable.

During recent consideration of H.R. 6, the Creating Long-term Energy Alternatives for the Nation or CLEAN Act, our Democratic majority called attention to the fact that the Minerals Management Service (MMS) at the Department of the Interior has failed to collect millions of dollars of royalties from oil and gas companies drilling in public waters. The Administration has largely ignored this problem and possible negligence by top officials at Interior, but last week's federal court decision that the Kerr-McGee Corporation has underpaid the government by approximately \$7.5 million should serve as a wake up call on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.

Unlike the Director of the Minerals Management Service and others at Interior, Bobby Maxwell did not turn a blind eye to the problem of oil companies underpaying or refusing to pay royalties for the use of public lands. Mr. Maxwell used to serve as a top auditor at MMS, but while he was doing his job investigating royalty underpayment by Kerr-McGee and others, senior Interior Department officials ordered him to drop his case. Additionally, Mr. Maxwell lost his job due to a "re-organization" shortly thereafter.

Bobby Maxwell did not give up, though. He knew that Kerr-McGee and others were

cheating the federal government and the American taxpayers out of millions of dollars, so he became a whistleblower. Despite having lost his job, Mr. Maxwell continued to stand up to the oil companies by bringing suit under the False Claims Act.

The jury found what Mr. Maxwell and many of us already knew: Kerr-McGee had indeed failed to pay the federal government approximately \$7.5 million they owed for oil production from publicly owned coastal waters. I regret that Mr. Maxwell had to lose his job to expose the greed of this company and the failures at MMS, but his story is a positive one. Both he and the federal government will benefit from his diligence and service. Kerr-McGee will have to pay significant penalties as a result of underpayment and false statements in their royalty reports. Additionally, Mr. Maxwell is not alone—three other auditors from MMS have filed whistleblowing cases against companies that the Interior Department blocked them from investigating.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Maxwell and these other dedicated public servants deserve our recognition and gratitude. They have stood up and declared that the public's trust and money both deserve our attention, respect, and protection. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Maxwell and congratulating him on a job well done. Let us follow his example by continuing to put accountability ahead of corporate profits.