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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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December 20, 2007

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The Honorable Samuel W. Bodman  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Bodman;

I am writing to respectfully request that the Department of Energy hold additional public hearings in Jackson County, Mississippi relating to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve expansion in the Richton, Mississippi salt domes.

Although the Department of Energy originally held their public hearing on October 18, 2005 at the Marriott in Jackson, Mississippi, the citizens of South Mississippi and state and local officials were largely unaware of these hearings because they were heavily involved with the recovery efforts in the wake *Hurricane Katrina*, which hit the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005.

The people of South Mississippi deserve to have their voices heard regarding this expansion. There are a number of questions that the citizens and public officials would like to have answered. Like me, they are concerned about the potential impact that this project may have on the Pascagoula River and the Gulf of Mexico. The ecological health of these bodies of water, are vital to the economy of the region and nation. This additional public hearing will give the citizens and state and local officials an opportunity to ask questions and hear first-hand the plans for the expansion.

Again, I strongly urge you to send the appropriate official from your agency to conduct additional public hearings in Jackson County, Mississippi on the Strategic Petroleum Reserve expansion in the Richton, Mississippi salt domes. Thank you for your consideration, I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



GENE TAYLOR  
Member of Congress

GT:emr