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For Immediate Release:

BENSON QUESTIONS WHY YOUNG DOESN'T QUESTION THE OIL INDUSTRY DURING HIS COMMITTEE HEARING

Washington, D.C. – Don Young, the At-Large Representative for the state of Alaska, left his committee's meeting which was investigating the BP's pipeline failure and corrosion issue. Rep. Young is the Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Today, starting at 11:00 am, the committee was holding an investigation hearing on the BP oil spill, shutdown and maintenance issues.

At 1:00 pm just as his opportunity to ask probing questions to Steve Marshall, President of BP Exploration (Alaska) Inc.; Don Young left his meeting and allowed a fellow republican to chair the committee.

The failure of BP to monitor its pipeline, the shut down of the Prudhoe Bay production and its effect on Alaska's economic future has made national news and is at the top of Alaska's priority list. This event and the investigation of who, how and why this host of incidents came about should be at the very top of the list of the only representative that Alaska has in the House of Representatives.

Representative Young continuously reminds the Alaskan people how important his seniority in the Congress is to Alaskans. Unfortunately, the time when Alaskans needed him most to represent the people of Alaska and the State itself, he is absent.

"Alaskans have to ask, 'What is more important to Don Young that he walks away from one of the most important issues to Alaska?'" , stated Diane Benson, Democratic Candidate for Alaska's At-Large Congressional seat.

Rep. Young did not take advantage of a supreme opportunity on behalf of Alaskans to ask questions and probe for answers why BP Corporation allowed this situation to get out of control.

He has at his availability a podium and chairmanship of a very strong oversight committee. His lack of action does a disservice to those he is sworn to serve.

“How can Alaskans continue to be satisfied with representation when that representation does not show up for the job when we need them most”, continued Benson.

Since the Exxon Valdez disaster in March 1989, according to The Center for Responsive Politics, a non-partisan, non-profit research group based in Washington, D.C. that tracks money in politics and its effect on elections and public policy, Rep. Don Young has received \$915,763 from the Oil and Gas Industry. In this current election cycle (2005 – 2006), according to the Center, the Oil and Gas Industry has contributed \$49,550.

Rep. Young's Top Contributor's, since the Exxon Valdez disaster are: #1 VECO Corp - \$125,650, #2 BP - \$114, 758, #6 VECO Inc. - \$74, 514 and #13 Exxon - \$60,300.

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