

Shelley Anderson's, wife of Jason Anderson, Testimony before
the Commerce, Science and Transportation

June 30, 2010

My name is Shelley Anderson. My husband is Jason Anderson. Jason, a tool pusher on the deepwater horizon, was killed in the April 20th explosion. We have a five year old daughter, Lacy, and a 17 month old son, Ryver. Our eight year wedding anniversary is next month.

Jason was a bit distant in his last few hitches when we talked on the phone. I would ask him what the problem was. He always said the same thing. *"...there is a bunch of stuff going on; I can't talk about it now. The walls are too thin. I will talk to you when I get home."* Only he never would because it would have made me worry even more. That was not the way he would take care of me. Jason also talked of his will and the things he wanted for us and our children. We talked of our future together and our children's future. Now, I have to plan for a future without my soul mate, without the love of my life, without my best friend. My children will never ever have their father back. Lacy's daddy will never walk her down the aisle at her wedding. Ryver's daddy will never throw him a football. Jason will never be able to teach them to drive a car, ski behind a boat, take them hunting, or the many other things a father teaches his children. Jason will never be here to put his arms around me to comfort me to let me know that everything is going to be alright and that I have nothing to worry about. Now nothing is right and all I do is worry.

I believe our damages should be considered under the same standards as if the deaths had occurred on land. Why would the damages to a family be different if a death occurs on the ocean as opposed to inland?

I am concerned that responsible parties will use every legal tactic and maneuver to delay justice. If the cases for those killed in this tragedy are lumped in with the other cases for the fishermen, landowners, businesses and units of government, it could be years before our cases are resolved. I think I should be able to decide if I want to pursue my case alone, or along with the hundreds of other claimants – who have lost income and had property damaged – but have not lost husbands and fathers. Our damages were sustained at the time of the explosion – the property damage claims with which BP wishes to

commingle and delay us are a result of a failure to control the spill and perhaps the dispersants being used in the ocean. These are separate and distinct cases from our husband's deaths and should be handled as such – separately.

We want you to prevent wives and families from ever being in our shoes. Just as I am trying to teach my five year old responsible behavior, we want to promote responsible behavior on the rigs. We may not be special; but we are survivors of our husband's and father's life and we want to be treated like any other survivor.

Finally, I urge you to act quickly. I know that the legislative process can be slow, but this simply cannot afford to wait.