WASHINGTON—Today, U.S. Representative Mike Quigley (D-IL) passed an amendment as part of the Consolidated Land, Energy and Aquatic Resources (CLEAR) Act that will require oil and gas companies to pay royalties on all oil that is leaked from a well—including spilled oil.

“This legislation will ensure that what happened in the Gulf never happens again,” said Quigley. “It will force oil companies to take responsibility for the decimation and destruction they have caused, and my amendment goes further by closing loopholes that often let them off the hook.”

Royalties on oil drilled at offshore locations are paid to Minerals Management Services (MMS) in an effort to compensate taxpayers for the use of publicly owned resources. Under the current regulations, lease holders like BP are only obligated to pay royalties on gallons of oil sold.

The CLEAR Act sets standards for offshore drilling rigs, to ensure they are using the best available safety technologies, including blowout preventers and emergency shut off systems. Additionally, the bill removes the statutory limitation on companies’ financial liability for offshore oil spills to ensure that responsible companies are held fully accountable for their disastrous spill, and any future spills, and bars new offshore oil and gas leases and drilling permits to BP or any other company with a significant history of violating worker safety or environmental law.

Quigley proposed two additional amendments earlier this week, which would clarify that protection of our environment is of primary concern, rather than extraction, and that science should be the basis of our extraction decisions before we begin the process of drilling.