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## **Governor Crist, Attorney General McCollum Call for Oil Spill Legal Advisory Council**

*~ Former Attorneys General Bob Butterworth and Jim Smith to chair legal advisory team ~*

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Charlie Crist and Attorney General Bill McCollum today called on former Attorneys General Bob Butterworth and Jim Smith to chair a Legal Advisory Council to explore options relating to the Deepwater Horizon incident and oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The legal advisory team will bring together private-sector attorneys and other experts who will use their expertise to begin assessing the impact the potential disaster could have on Florida.

“Many of Florida’s communities, businesses and even entire industries could be affected by this disaster,” Governor Crist said. “We are wise and prudent to gather the best legal minds in our state together to begin preparing today for any future legal action we might need to take.”

The Legal Advisory Council will work with state agencies to prepare for any future litigation, enforcement, or regulatory action that may be needed. The group will focus on gathering information and strategies relating to the following:

- Protection of the rights of Florida consumers and businesses.
- Actions that the State of Florida can initiate now.
- Data and information collection and preservation.
- Prompt compliance to information requests by BP, Transocean, Halliburton and other companies.
- Strategies and theories for future legal action.

“Floridians need our help now, and it is never too early to tap into the best legal resources available,” said Attorney General McCollum. “By taking this step now, we will be in the best position possible when moving forward with any litigation or other resolution on behalf of Florida and its citizens.”

Governor Crist expressed confidence in the ability of Generals Butterworth and Smith to assist Florida in the early stages of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. They will begin identifying Legal Advisory Council members as soon as possible.

Floridians with questions about the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Legal Advisory Council should call the Attorney General's toll-free hotline at 1-866-966-7226.

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