

1. Good morning.
2. First I want to thank Representative Miller and the entire Committee for inviting me to speak today on the tragedy at the BP Texas City oil refinery.
3. For me and many others, tomorrow will be a solemn day in Texas City, Texas, as it marks the second anniversary of that horrible blast that ripped apart my life and the lives of so many others. The explosion at BP's oil refinery killed 15 people – including my parents, James and Linda Rowe – and injured hundreds more. The true tragedy is that it was a needless and completely avoidable explosion.
4. At approximately 1:20 p.m. that day, BP initiated a dangerous procedure at the refinery, using outdated and faulty equipment that sent 7,600 gallons of highly flammable liquid hydrocarbons – the equivalent of a tanker truck full of gasoline – into the air. Dozens of workers were in trailers as close as 100 feet away and were not warned of the imminent danger, when an idling truck ignited the devastating chain-reaction explosion.
5. I personally believe that BP, with its corporate culture of greed over profits, murdered my parents, denying my brother Jeremy and me, along with the families of the 13 others, the joy of the love of our fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, and the warmth of their smiles and embraces forever. It is of little comfort to us, but we hope that, through legislation to ensure more stringent worker health and safety standards, that their deaths won't be in vain.
6. Today, I ask Congress to carefully review the report issued this week by the U.S. Chemical Safety Board and act with great speed on its recommendations. I ask that you create an environment of safety for all workers who risk their lives each day, in already dangerous jobs that contribute so much to our great country and its economy.
7. Today I come to Congress asking that you mandate by law a change in corporate culture, by requiring that all corporations place worker safety before profits.

*Testimony of Eva Rowe to the Congressional Committee on Education and Labor hearing,
"BP-Texas City Disaster and Worker Safety", Thursday, March 22, 2007 at 10:00 A.M.*

8. Today, I come to Congress to ask that you require OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, to increase safety and inspections of all U.S. oil refineries, as the Chemical Safety Board has recommended.
9. In Austin tomorrow, we will gather on the steps of the state capital to announce the "Remember the 15" bill in the Texas State Legislature. It is a first step in seeking to mandate that those running the petrochemical industry create a safe working environment for its workers.
10. Today I come to Congress asking that you join with the great state of Texas and change the laws of our land so that no other family will have to feel the pain and sadness I felt hearing of my parents death.
11. Thank you all so very much for your time and for this opportunity.