

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM  
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**June 18, 2009**

**Statement of Rep. Jim Jordan**  
**Ranking Republican Member**  
**Subcommittee on Domestic Policy**

*“After Injury, the Battle Begins: Evaluating Workers’ Compensation for Civilian Contractors in War Zones”*

Thank you, Chairman Kucinich, for holding this hearing. I would like to especially thank the contractors here with us today for their service to our country. I look forward to their testimony.

As the battlefield has evolved, contractors are indispensable. Without contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan our troops would not have the food, shelter, supplies, or technology necessary to complete the 21<sup>st</sup> century missions. Defense Base Act or DBA insurance is statutorily mandated for contractors working on U.S. government contracts overseas. In recent years we have seen costs increase as claims have increased. In a program as vast as DBA there are going to be failings. We need to do everything we can to correct those failings.

I hope this hearing will provide us an opportunity to survey the DBA program as a whole. It would be preferable to bring all parties—the Department of Labor (DOL), the employees, the contractors, and the five insurance providers—to the table discuss where reforms are needed. Today, however, we will hear from only two of the five providers and none of the employers.

It’s Congress’s job to ensure the DOL has the resources and statutory authority to: educate contractors about DBA, facilitate information sharing between the contractors and the insurance companies, answer questions of statutory interpretation, adjudicate disputes in a timely manner, and oversee employee rehabilitation programs. I look forward to hearing what initiatives DOL has in place to make the DBA program more efficient.

Finally, I would like to express my disappointment that the investigation leading up to this hearing has not been conducted in a bipartisan manner. The Republicans on this Committee were *not* included in any of the preparations or deliberations leading up to this hearing. Consequently, as we sit here today, we are not well positioned to educate our Members about this topic and certainly not in a position to pass judgment on either the legitimacy of the contractors’ claims or the propriety of the insurance providers’ decisions. I hope we can work more closely together in the future.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to the testimony.