

**NATALIE ROSHTO  
WIFE OF SHANE ROSHTO,  
WHO DIED ABOARD THE *DEEPWATER HORIZON***

**HEARING BEFORE THE U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, & TRANSPORTATION**

**JUNE 30, 2010 AT 10:00 A.M.**

**RUSSELL BUILDING, ROOM 253**

## **STATEMENT OF NATALIE ROSHTO, WIFE OF SHANE ROSHTO**

**June 30, 2010**

Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Hutchison, and other Members of the Senate Commerce Committee, I want to thank you for allowing me to speak today on behalf of my husband, Shane Roshto, who was tragically killed in the Deepwater Horizon explosion April 20th, myself and our son Blaine.

In the early hours of April 21<sup>st</sup> when I received news of the explosion and fire I never thought that I would be sitting here. I never thought that I would go home to a bright eyed three year old and have to face the fact that his Daddy, my husband, would never come home to us. Every three weeks when Blaine and I would give Shane our last loves sending him off for three weeks I always feared the helicopter ride, but never did this kind of tragedy come to mind. Through God's grace, family and friends, Blaine and I are making it through.

After all the safety schools, meetings, fire drills and safety regulations I just knew he was safe. When the events of the Deepwater Horizon explosion started to unfold I asked myself will I ever personally recover; what if he's out there and they just didn't look long enough? As the days passed Shane's absence became reality.

My husband took great pride in his job, loved his work and all his Deepwater Horizon family, but most important he knew offshore work provided the life he wanted for his son. He loved us unselfishly and provided a lifestyle that allowed me to attend college and to be home with Blaine. During Shane's off weeks he spent time everyday with Blaine passing on his love for the outdoors, hunting and fishing and doing for others.

As the days pass I ask why? What happened? The life Blaine and I knew is over. My love story came to an end. Though he is a mirror image of his Daddy, Blaine now has a void that will never be filled.

There is no amount of money that Transocean or BP can pay to bring back my husband or return Blaine's father to him. However, because of this tragedy I have unfortunately learned that under current law, there exists a huge discrepancy in the way the death of a loved one is valued on the high seas. It is my understanding that the value of a loved one who dies at sea is valued far less than a loved one who dies on land. I am not a lawyer by any means, but the policy behind this law does not make any sense to me and does not seem fair. Under current law, because Shane died on an oil rig in federal waters, Shane's death is limited to pecuniary damages – which essentially limits his loss to the value of his paycheck and funeral expenses. If Shane had died on land, the law would have recognized that Shane's life was more valuable.

The whole concept of valuing someone's life seems very strange to me in light of everything that is happened. But since this is the remedy that I am left with to hold the party responsible for Shane's death accountable, I want to make sure that Congress acts quickly to change current law to ensure that all victims of maritime disasters are treated equally. It should make no difference in the eyes of the law where a loved one is killed because of the wrongful acts of another. It should also make no difference whether the person killed worked as a seamen, contractor, or was simply a passenger. The law should treat everyone the same.

I pray every day when I awake and at bedtime prayers with Blaine that I can sit him down one day and be able to tell him that his Daddy is a hero – a hero to all oilfield men and women because his death changed the heart and soul of those who place their business agenda over the importance of life.

In closing, I would like to ask that the next time you see a picture of the Deepwater Horizon in flames or hear about the oil spill that you think about this: The flow of oil will eventually be stopped, slowly the environment will recover, the Gulf I pray will continue to provide us with oil and gas and many other things that we all enjoy, but the lives of the 11 men, their survivors and heroes of the Deepwater Horizon will forever be changed. We can only hope that the legacy of this tragedy will be much more than a devastating oil spill, but an unfortunate tragedy that prompted changes in making the laws more equal for all maritime victims who die on the high seas. Thank you for your time and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.