

# **DOES THE “ROYALTY MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE” SOUND LIKE SOMETHING WE’D FIND IN CHENEY’S DOI?**

Because today, on the eve of the WaPo’s revelations about Cheney’s first-hand intervention in Department of Interior policies, such a Subcommittee met in secret (how else!!) for the first time. Who ever said these thugs don’t have a sense of irony?

The actual mandate is not—as it might seem, given the title—to fulfill Cheney’s every need. Rather, it’s supposed to study:

- The extent to which existing procedures and processes for reporting and accounting for federal and Indian mineral revenues are sufficient to ensure that the Minerals Management Service receives the correct amount.
- The audit, compliance and enforcement procedures and processes of the Minerals Management Service to determine if they are adequate to ensure that mineral companies are complying with existing statutes, lease terms, and regulations as they pertain to payment of royalties.
- The operations of the Royalty in Kind program to ensure that adequate policies, procedures and controls are in place to ensure that decisions to take federal oil and gas royalties in kind result in net benefits to the American people.

In other words, it’s supposed to fix the processes that resulted in DOI giving away our

oil resources to the lowest bidder. (Who ever said these thugs don't have impeccable business sense?)

Given that the Subcommittee appears to be going to great lengths to avoid any kind of transparency, however, it's not clear the Subcommittee will really find the best solution to the problem. Every time this Administration's DOI has hidden its work, it has resulted in still more cronies walking away with our nation's resource wealth. Which, if you think about it, is almost the same thing as fulfilling Cheney's every need.