

I thought one of the most audacious political stances I'd seen in many years was the Republican position — [dreamed up](#) by GOP pollster Frank Luntz — that a tax on big banks was actually a big bank bailout. Converting a tax to a government bailout was pure political chutzpah, and some sick form of genius.

Now it's the Democrats' turn to cry bailout. Several Democratic Senators — Lautenberg and Menendez from New Jersey, Nelson from Florida — [have proposed](#) raising the amount of liability insurance an oil company must carry for spill coverage from \$75 million to \$10 billion. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), a huge supporter of oil drilling, has apparently blocked the bill. She's instead proposed charging an additional penny a barrel of oil to provide increased funding for the federal oil spill response fund. So aren't the Republicans now in favor of a big bailout for big oil?