



U.S. Senator Wayne Allard
U.S. Senator Ken Salazar



For Release:
February 9, 2005

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SENATORS ALLARD, SALAZAR URGE DOD TO START CONSTRUCTION OF PUEBLO DEPOT PILOT PLANT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators from Colorado Wayne Allard and Ken Salazar urged Undersecretary of Defense Michael Wynne to begin construction on the Pueblo Chemical Agent Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP) in a letter sent on Wednesday.

“It is unconscionable to me that the Department of Defense (DoD) wants to delay this project when the Congress has provided ample funding during the past two appropriations cycles,” Senator Allard said. “Further delay will not only increase the eventual cost of destroying the chemical munitions at the depot, but will also jeopardize our ability to meet international treaty obligations and the safety of Pueblo’s citizens.”

For the last two fiscal years, the DoD budget request has omitted funding the Pueblo project. But Senator Allard was successful in getting \$50 million restored to the project in the FY 2005 defense appropriations bill, and \$122 million in the FY 2004 defense appropriations bill.

“The people of Pueblo deserve better than to be strung along like this,” said Senator Salazar. “The funding is available right now to fulfill the commitment to the people of Pueblo and ensure the safe and expedient destruction of these chemical munitions – it makes no sense for the Department of Defense (DoD) to continue to stall any longer than they already have.”

Senators Allard and Salazar sent Wednesday’s letter in response to a long-delayed clarification of the Department of Defense’s (DoD) position on the PCAPP by Undersecretary Wynne. The undersecretary indicated that the DoD intends to halt all progress on chemical agent destruction plants in the design phase, including the Pueblo Depot.

“You can be certain that we will oppose any attempt to shift this funding to other chemical weapons demilitarization sites,” Senator Allard said. “We will need every dollar, and then some, to complete this project without further delays.”

“We remain fully committed to quickly and safely moving forward with destruction of chemical agents on-site at the Pueblo chemical weapons stockpile and we will keep a careful watch on and closely review any decision to re-allocate funding already identified for that purpose,” said Senator Salazar.