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**COLORADO SENATORS ALLARD AND SALAZAR,
CONGRESSMEN BEAUPREZ AND UDALL
SUPPORT ROCKY FLATS ENERGY WORKERS BID FOR JUST COMPENSATION**
Cold War heroes deserve to be included in program

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) and Ken Salazar (D-Colorado), Colorado 7th District Congressman Bob Beauprez and Colorado 2nd District Congressman Mark Udall have written to U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Michael Leavitt in support of a petition by Rocky Flats workers urging that they be re-classified as eligible for compensation under a program created specifically for energy workers at nuclear weapons production facilities.

“I am proud of the service of the men and women who worked at Rocky Flats,” Senator Allard said. “Many had jobs that brought them into contact with some of the most dangerous substances known to man and, as a result, contracted debilitating illnesses.”

“The workers at Rocky Flats have put an extraordinary amount of time and effort into their petition,” Senator Allard said. “I strongly believe that it deserves fair and impartial consideration, and you can be certain that I will be monitoring closely as the petition goes through the SEC approval process.”

“The men and women who worked at Rocky Flats and other nuclear production sites across the nation are heroes of the Cold War. Many knowingly and unknowingly risked their lives to help protect our country. Such heroism deserves to be acknowledged, respected, and remembered,” the delegation letter says. “Providing appropriate financial and medical compensation to these workers is a significant step towards these goals.”

“Therefore, we respectfully request that the Steelworker’s SEC petition receive full and fair consideration as soon as possible given the site has a projected early closure date of October 2005. We also request that the Department of Health and Human Services and NIOSH keep us informed of any developments pertaining to the petition,” the letter says.

“The men and women of Rocky Flats are the true warriors of the Cold War, and it’s a tragedy that their compensation and benefits are being held up because of poor government record keeping,” Congressman Beauprez said. “I join Senator Allard in hoping that Secretary Leavitt will give this matter the urgent attention it is due, and resubmit my commitment to these workers to see they are treated promptly and fairly.”

On February 15, 2005, the Rocky Flats United Steelworkers of America, Local 8031, submitted a Special Exposure Cohort (SEC) petition to the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) and the Office of Compensation Analysis and Support (OCAS). Their petition outlines the union's position that workers at Rocky Flats meet all the specifications and requirements for inclusion in the Special Exposure Cohort as specified in the Energy Employees Occupational Illness and Compensation Program Act of 2000.

Under the SEC petition procedures, the HHS Secretary and NIOSH are required to fully evaluate the Steelworkers petition and ultimately propose a decision for the petitioned class.

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