

Wayne Allard

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ALLARD APPLAUDS DOD AUTHORIZATION BILL STRATEGIC SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN SAYS FULL COMMITTEE DID "HEAVY LIFTING" ON MANY DIFFICULT ISSUES

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Strategic Subcommittee, praised the Department of Defense (DOD) Authorization Bill for Fiscal Year 2001 (FY01), which was released Wednesday by the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"Through bipartisan effort, the committee did a lot of 'heavy lifting' on some very difficult issues," Allard said during a press conference with other members of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "For the second year we have reversed the downward trend in defense spending by increasing this years funding by \$4.5 billion over the President's budget. I believe the committee did a very good job in setting budget priorities within a balanced budget while ensuring our future national defense needs will be met."

The FY01 Authorization recommends a funding level of \$309.8 billion in budget authority, allowing for a 4.4% increase in real growth from last years appropriated funding level. The bill increases funding for National Missile Defense programs, vital space programs, Department of Energy defense activities, the newly created National Nuclear Security Administration, and defense facilities closure projects. The legislation requires the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, to develop a long-range plan for the sustainment and modernization of United States strategic nuclear forces. In addition, it includes a provision which Allard introduced with Senators Bingham (D-NM) and Craig (R-ID) which amends the Wildfire Suppression Aircraft Transfer Act of 1996 to extend the authority of the Secretary of Defense to sell certain aircraft and aircraft parts for use in wildfire suppression.

Another key provision to the FY01 Authorization makes significant improvements to the TRICARE program for active duty family members. The provisions include expanding the enhanced benefits of the TRICARE Prime Remote program to active duty family members and eliminates co-payments requirements for those active duty family members who use care outside of the military treatment facilities.

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The bill also includes a provision providing a comprehensive retail and national mail

order pharmacy program for all eligible beneficiaries, including Medicare-eligible beneficiaries, with no enrollment fees or deductible. This provision, for the first time, provides a medical entitlement for the military Medicare eligible population. Also, the bill extends and expands a number of demonstration programs, including the Medicare subvention program to major medical centers and expands the number of sites for the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program demonstration program.

“This important bill addresses military health care, missile defense, modernization of our strategic nuclear forces, and upgrading our intelligence programs,” Allard added. “As Chairman of the Strategic Subcommittee, I am pleased that our work will ensure that the President has the necessary resources to make his deployment decision regarding our National Missile Defense system.”

Highlights of Colorado Projects and Legislative Provisions in the FY01 Authorization bill:

Rocky Flats:

- Fully funded their budget at \$673 million
- Fully funded the Worker and Community Transition budget at \$24.5 million
- Required that safeguards and security activities be managed by Rocky Flats, not an outside DOE Headquarters organization, ensuring that future security savings will be used for additional Rocky Flats cleanup.
- Required DOE to formulate a plan to ensure the long-term solvency of Rocky Flats employee pension funds.
- Encouraged DOE to utilize the special authority which Senator Allard introduced in last years Authorization Bill to automatically reprogram unobligated DOE funds to accelerate Rocky Flats closure activities.

Pueblo Depot

- Authorizes full funding for military construction - \$10.6 million
- Chemical Demilitarization Program - \$1.003 billion

Colorado Air National Guard

- Targeting pods for F-16 Aircraft - \$34 million

Peterson Air Force Base:

- Computer Network Defense Facility at US Space Command - \$7.44 million
- Operations Support Facility - \$2.6 million
- Dormitory - \$11.0 million

Schriever AFB

- Operations Support Facility - \$8.450 million

Air Force Academy

- Add to and Alter Athletic Facilities - \$18.9 million

Buckley Air National Guard Base

- Space Based Infrared Radar power connection - \$2.750 million
- Munitions Maintenance Storage Complex - \$6.5 million

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