

Wayne Allard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 13, 2004

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SENATOR ALLARD URGES INCREASE IN PILT FUNDING

Tells Interior Appropriations Subcommittee program should be funded at \$255 million

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) has sent a letter to the Chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, U.S. Senator Conrad Burns (R-Montana), urging an increase in funding for the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program.

The PILT program provides federal payments to local governments to help offset the property tax revenue they are unable to collect because there are nontaxable federal lands within their boundaries. These payments help local governments carry out vital services such as firefighting and police protection, construction of public schools and roads, and search-and-rescue operations.

“PILT payments make the federal government a good neighbor in local communities,” Senator Allard said. “This is especially important in the case of the Bureau of Land Management, (BLM) which oversees more public land in our state, and nationwide, than any other federal agency.”

In 2003 the state of Colorado received \$ 17.6 million in PILT payments. The total amount of payments for 2004 will not be calculated until the end of the current fiscal year.

“My letter makes a strong case for increasing PILT funding in 2005 from the \$226 million the Department of Interior is asking for to \$255 million.” Senator Allard said. “This is crucial to keeping many Colorado communities funded at a level that will permit them to meet the increasing demands for essential services they are experiencing.”

PILT payments are made annually for tax-exempt federal lands administered by the BLM, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all agencies of the Interior Department), the U.S. Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and for federal water projects and some military installations.

A copy of the letter is attached.

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