

Wayne Allard

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ALLARD SPONSORS BILL TO COMPENSATE EMPLOYEES MADE SICK FROM WORKING AT DOE SITES COLORADO SENATOR SAYS BILL WILL FIX FAILINGS OF 2000 BILL

Washington, D.C. – Colorado U.S. Senator Wayne Allard today signed on as an original co-sponsor of the bi-partisan Energy Workers Compensation Act of 2002, to ensure employees made ill by past Department of Energy failings are fairly compensated.

The new legislation addresses implementation barriers and new illnesses that have emerged since the passage of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act(EEOICPA) in 2000.

“Department of Energy workers and their families have suffered enough,” said Allard. “This bill will correct technical mistakes and cover additional illnesses so that compensation can be given in a fair and timely manner.”

The legislation will amend and add many provisions including:

- Set time limits for DOE to make determinations regarding claimant’s employment record and whether the illness is work related. Processing of claims would be expedited under these new rules hastening payments to deserving workers;
- Add mercury disease, lung cancer, and renal disease to the list of covered illnesses;
- Authorizes National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health(NIOSH) to recommend to Congress additional radiogenic cancers and provides for public review and comment;
- Establishes the Department of Labor as the willing payer of benefits approved by DOE and authorizes payments to made from the permanent fund established under EEOICPA;
- Establishes an ombudsman to help claimants with the administrative process: and

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- Allows individuals otherwise eligible for compensation under EEOICPA, but who previously received Radiation Exposure Compensation Act awards, to be compensated at levels equal to EEOICPA.

“It is my hope that this legislation will fulfill the original objectives of congress, address unforeseen obstacles and assure just compensation to these brave cold war workers,” added Allard.

Earlier this year, Allard held a town meeting for sick workers and has held several meetings with employees of the former Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons site. He joins Senator Jeff Bingaman(D-NM), Senator Jim Bunning(R-KY), Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton(D-NY), Senator Harry Reid(D-NV) and Tom Harkin(D-IA) as an original co-sponsor.

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