

Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments

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May 21, 1999

Honorable Wayne Allard
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Allard:

We are writing to thank you for supporting for the continued authorization of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Worker and Community Transition Program, and for supporting DOE's budget request of \$30 million for FY 2000. This program is yet again under attack in the House of Representatives and your leadership on the issue is needed.

Earlier this week, the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Procurement set the authorization level for this program at \$20 million, \$10 million less than the President's request, and \$10 million less than the level set in the Senate Armed Services subcommittee. As I understand you are aware, as part of the FY 98 Defense Authorization Act, the Armed Services Committee inserted a provision requiring an independent audit of the Worker Transition Program. The September 1988 audit, conducted by Booz Allen & Hamilton, concluded this program, as administered by the Office of Worker and Community Transition, has "had a positive impact on mitigating the social and economic impacts of the DOE transition by helping to develop and create more than 22,000 jobs, providing a foundation for community economic development and providing leadership for site closure." So, we question further cutting this small but strategic program at a time when workers at Rocky Flats and other DOE sites remain in need of this program.

At home, local communities have been impacted by the closure of Rocky Flats. Many highly skilled workers have lost their jobs and will need to be retrained in order to find productive work in the existing job market. During this forthcoming year, numerous current and former Rocky Flats workers, our constituents, will again need the programs funded and administered by the Office of Community and Worker Transition, and any cuts will likely undermine the federal government's obligation to these veterans of the Cold War.

The seven local governments that neighbor or own open space adjacent to Rocky Flats have come together to form the Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments. The Coalition will soon be designated the DOE Community Reuse Organization for Rocky Flats, and among other things, will work together and with community members and workers on the range of issues facing the cleanup and future use of the Site. These funds also benefit Coalition programs and thus our communities.

The Coalition anticipates funding for this program will continue to be debated both in conference and throughout negotiations over the Energy and Water appropriations bill. Already twenty-seven House and Senate members signed letters both arguing against eliminating this important program, and supporting the President's budget request for funding the program at \$30 million in FY 00. The Coalition supports their actions, and respectively requests you do all you can to both maintain this program and ensure it is adequately funded.

The Coalition is prepared to provide any assistance it can, and welcomes the opportunity to work with you and your staff on this issue. If you have any questions, please call David Abelson, Coalition Executive Director, at (303) 940-6090.

Thank you for your help in this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Tom Brunner
Chairman