

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

20 December 2006

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairman Byrd and Ranking Member Cochran,

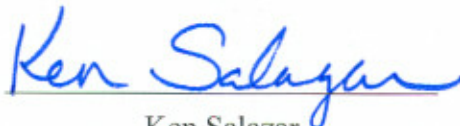
We are writing to draw your attention to the status of funding for the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles in Blue Grass, Kentucky and Pueblo, Colorado. These two stockpiles are slated to be destroyed under the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternative (ACWA) program. Destruction of these chemical weapons is a homeland security imperative, an arms control priority, and is required by United States law.

Under the Chemical Weapons Convention, all U.S. stockpiles of chemical weapons are to be destroyed by April 29, 2012. Furthermore, Section 921 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 states it is the Sense of the Congress that "the United States is committed to making every effort to safely dispose of its entire chemical weapons stockpile by the Chemical Weapons Convention extended deadline of April 29, 2012, or as soon thereafter as possible."

For Fiscal Year 2007, the President's budget request for Military Construction for the ACWA program was \$131 million dollars (\$42 million for Pueblo, \$89 million for Blue Grass). The Senate's Military Construction appropriations bill passed the Senate at \$141 million dollars for ACWA, increasing the President's request for Blue Grass by \$10 million. However, the recent continuing resolution (H. J. Res 102) only provides for ACWA military construction funding to continue at the 2006 level of \$50 million for FY 2007. Reducing funding to this low level will severely limit progress at both sites, and in direct contrast with the Sense of the Congress, will result in further delaying the destruction of these weapons.

We urge you to draft the next continuing resolution to incorporate full funding for this vital program.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar
United States Senator



Mitch McConnell
United States Senator



Jim Bunning
United States Senator



Wayne Allard
United States Senator