

Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments

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April 12, 2001

The Honorable Mitchell Daniels
Director
Office of Management and Budget
OEOB Room 252
17th and Pennsylvania, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Daniels:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Rocky Flats Coalition of Local Governments (Coalition), we are writing to express our opposition to Secretary Elaine Chao's recommendation to have the Department of Justice (DOJ) and not the Department of Labor (DOL) administer the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOIPA).

The Coalition consists of elected officials from the seven local governments that surround the Department of Energy's Rocky Flats site. Collectively we represent approximately 800,000 people, including the majority of current and former Rocky Flats workers. We are concerned that one of the unintended consequences of transferring the program to DOJ would be to delay implementation of the program.

We believe Congress' decision to have DOL administer the EEOIPA should be followed. As Reps. Mark Udall (D-CO), Zach Wamp (R-TN), Ted Strickland (D-OH), Ed Whitfield (R-KY), Jim Gibbons (R-NV), Tom Udall (D-NM), Paul Kanjorski (R-PA), Ken Lucas (D-KY), and John LeFalce (D-NY) stated in their March 21, 2001 letter to you on this subject, the reason DOL was selected is that this agency has administered a number of other federal worker compensation programs, including the Longshore & Harbor Workers Act, Coal Miners Black Lung Disease Act, and the Federal Employee Compensation Act.

The EEOIPA set July 31, 2001 as the date for commencing the payment of claims. We believe there is no reason to delay compensation for those who have served their nation. We therefore respectfully request you support maintaining DOL as the principal agency implementing the EEOIPA.

Sincerely,

/s/
Paul Danish
Chairman

/s/
David Abelson
Executive Director

cc: Senator Wayne Allard
Representative Mark Udall
Representative Tom Tancredo
Governor Bill Owens
Tony DiMaiori, Steelworkers Union
Dan Chesshir, Guards Union