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December 3, 2008

Honorable John J. Young, Jr.
Under Secretary of Defense
Acquisitions, Technology, and Logistics
3010 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-3010

Dear Mr. Young,

I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the recent announcement of further delays in the timeline for weapons destruction at Pueblo Chemical Depot.

Let me first acknowledge that there has been real progress at Pueblo Chemical Depot in the past year, and this is much to the credit of those doing work on the ground in Colorado and within the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program. However, Section 8119 of Public Law 110-116 requires the Department of Defense (DoD) to destroy its chemical weapons stockpiles by 2017 and to fund the ACWA program at a level that allows it to meet this objective. Section 8119 also requires a semi-annual update detailing the projected annual funding expenditures necessary to meet that deadline.

Recently, DoD announced a 23-month delay to its operations at the Pueblo Chemical Depot and cited a lack of funding among the reasons for the delay. Such a delay would preclude the weapons stockpile in Pueblo from being destroyed before the 2017 deadline. Given the DoD's obligations under Public Law 110-116, this is unacceptable and must be corrected. I fully expect the funding profile to be remedied with your Fiscal Year 2010 budget submission, and I fully expect that submission will restore the 2017 deadline for Pueblo Chemical Depot. To be certain these requirements are met, I request that you provide me with an updated funding profile that will allow the Department to meet its 2017 deadline.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar
United States Senator