

**BEN CHANDLER**  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS  
SIXTH DISTRICT, KENTUCKY

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

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October 19, 2007

The Honorable Ike Skelton  
Chairman  
House Armed Service Committee  
2120 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Duncan Hunter  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2340 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Skelton and Ranking Member Hunter:

As you move forward with the Senate on the FY 2008 Defense Authorization Bill, we ask that you support the Senate adopted McConnell/Allard language setting a December 31, 2017 deadline for the destruction of chemical weapons at Bluegrass Army Depot in Kentucky and Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado.

In November 2006, the Pentagon released a budget projection for the disposal project at these two sites, which if adhered to would extend Kentucky's weapons disposal end date from 2015 to 2023 and Colorado's from 2016 to 2020.

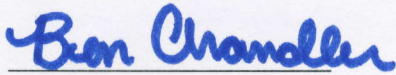
The 523 tons of nerve and blister agent at the Blue Grass depot, and the 2,611 tons of mustard agent at the Pueblo depot pose serious risks to surrounding communities as the Cold War-Era weapons continue to age becoming less stable and serve as terrorist targets. Not only would a shorter deadline help protect these communities, but it would also save taxpayers about \$3.3 billion.

The Chemical Weapons Convention treaty, signed by the United States requires us to dispose of the weapons by 2012. Although we are unable to meet that deadline, getting as close as possible will protect our citizens, help us comply with international law and save taxpayers billions of dollars. The final FY 2007 Defense Authorization bill included language stating that it is the sense of 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, and will carry out all of its other obligations under that Convention.*

The Senate version of the FY 2008 Defense Authorization Bill includes the 2017 deadline which is absolutely essential for the safe disposal of dangerous chemical weapons on American soil. We are urging Conferees to include this critical language in the final bill.

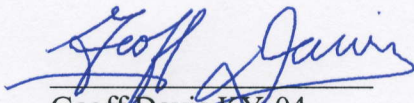
Sincerely,



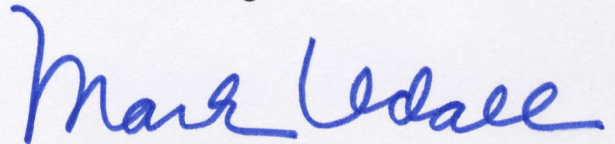
Ben Chandler KY-06  
Member of Congress



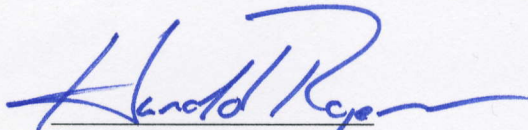
John Salazar CO-03  
Member of Congress



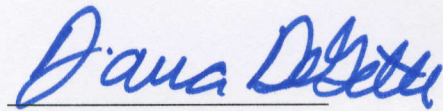
Geoff Davis KY-04  
Member of Congress



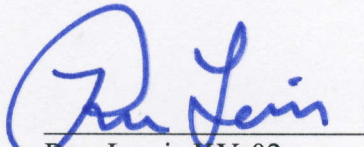
Mark Udall CO-02  
Member of Congress



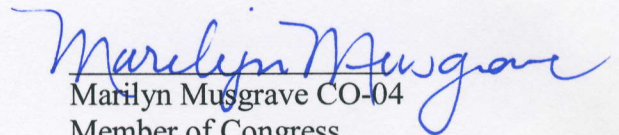
Harold Rogers KY-05  
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette CO-01  
Member of Congress



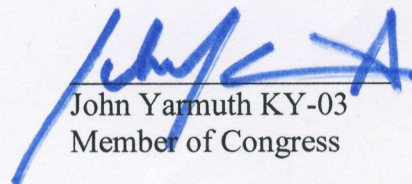
Ron Lewis KY-02  
Member of Congress



Marilyn Musgrave CO-04  
Member of Congress



Ed Whitfield KY-01  
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth KY-03  
Member of Congress