

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 31, 2008

Mr. Gene L. Dodaro,  
Acting Comptroller General of the United States  
Government Accountability Office  
441 G St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

In 2000, Congress passed the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) to provide compensation and health benefits to eligible Department of Energy nuclear weapons workers (including employees, former employees, contractors and subcontractors) and compensation to certain survivors of deceased workers.

Since its enactment, we and other Members of Congress have had many concerns about the way the law has been implemented, and it has been amended several times to try to make it more likely to achieve its purpose of "timely, uniform, and adequate compensation" of eligible beneficiaries.

So, we were dismayed to read a series of recent articles in the *Rocky Mountain News* of Denver, Colorado that detailed in considerable depth actions by the Department of Labor and other agencies that have created what the articles describe as a "quagmire of frustration and despair" affecting thousands of claimants. The text of the articles is attached. As you can see, they detail what is described as evidence of multiple instances in which the agencies responsible for implementing EEOICPA have found ways to circumvent the law and the intent of Congress and other instances in which that intent has been ignored.

Because of the seriousness of these allegations and our strong support for the purpose of the EEOICPA, we request the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to investigate not only these specific allegations but also the overall implementation of the law.

In addition, we request the GAO to determine whether in fact people who supported enactment of EEOICPA or who sought benefits (or their survivors or family members) have been subject to retaliation or other improper treatment. And we request the GAO to identify changes in the agencies' procedures that would make it more likely they will be able to achieve the "timely, uniform, and adequate compensation" of eligible claimants that is the purpose of EEOICPA.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Mark Udall  
Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress



Ken Salazar  
United States Senator