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**Committee:** Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions





**Title:** EEOICPA: Is the Program Claimant Friendly for Our Cold War Heroes?

**Date:** Tuesday, October 23, 2007-10:00 am

[http://help.senate.gov/Hearings/2007\\_10\\_23/2007\\_10\\_23.html](http://help.senate.gov/Hearings/2007_10_23/2007_10_23.html)

(THIS WILLPLAY THE SENATE HEARING VIDEO!)

### Witness Testimony

- The Honorable Harry Reid, *Majority Leader of the United States Senate, Washington, DC*
- Shelby Hallmark, *Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, Washington, DC* 
- Dr. John Howard, *Director, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Washington, DC*   
" DOL reported that the program has paid more than \$869 million"..." *Dose Reconstructions*, As of October 16, 2007, DOL has referred 25,492 claims to NIOSH and NIOSH has returned 17,280 of these claims to DOL"....
- Malcolm Nelson, *Ombudsman, Energy Employees Compensation Program, Department of Labor, Washington, DC*   
"Claimants have been quite blunt in telling us that they fear that if they are made to wait too long, they will not be around to receive benefits.
- Dr. Ken Silver, *Assistant Professor, Environmental Health Sciences, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN*   
Mr. Ben Ortiz, a former Los Alamos worker made ill by toxic chemical exposures,"..." "Why wasn't he been compensated" .....  
"Chairman John Hostettler summarized the oversight committee's findings: "Backroom manipulation" had occurred in a program which was "supposed to assure workers the deceit was over and their government was finally going to do right by

them." He said "those tasked with implementing the program" "need to be exposed for what they've done."...." Outside of Washington, we had an "Ah-ha" moment upon learning of the pass-backmemo."...."DOL got its way: none of this language is in the final public version. Because DOL's role in the program is supposed to be that of a neutral adjudicator of claims, I must ask: When did DOL become known for its specialized expertise in health physics or the histories of DOE facilities?"....." **claimant must sign the OCAS-1 form.**"....." Decisions to award or deny compensation can hinge on the close-out interview.".....TO BE CONTINUED!

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*Gary S. Vander Boegh*  
*Vice President*  
*Commonwealth Environmental Services, LLC.*