



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

For immediate release
July 18, 2005

Contact: Billy Sparks
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2299

Governor Richardson Cautions Implementation of Overskei Report

Santa Fe - Governor Richardson today issued the following statement on the report issued today by a DOE advisory task force, the so-called "Overskei Report," on reorganizing America's nuclear weapons complex.

“While I welcome discussion on these issues, I do not agree with the report's emphasis on total streamlining of the complex, and worry that in this fiscal environment DOE would not receive the funding it would require to properly implement its recommendations. If this were to occur, America could easily find itself with a nuclear complex that was incapable of properly supporting our nuclear deterrent, thus undermining its power as a deterrent against war. I also am concerned that hasty implementation of the proposals could seriously impair the scientific and technological strength of our two great New Mexico laboratories, Los Alamos and Sandia, which are such an integral part of America's scientific infrastructure.

I would urge Secretary Bodman and the Administration, as well as the Congress, to think these issues through fully before embarking on a course that could undermine the world's confidence in the safety, security and reliability of America's nuclear deterrent, as well as weaken America's scientific and economic strength.

I am pleased that Senators Domenici and Bingaman have cautioned against going forward with some of these recommendations until their consequences can be better understood.”

The Overskei report, written in the past 6 months by an independent 6-person advisory group chartered by former Energy Secretary Abraham, has proposed an ambitious set of ideas for modernizing the complex.

That report is now available for DOE to review and for public comment.