



Statement of Senator Feinstein on Efforts by the Administration
to Fund Nuclear Bunker Buster Research

February 1, 2005

“According to yesterday’s *Washington Post* Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld recently wrote to then-Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham expressing his support for funding in next year’s budget to resume the study of developing a Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP).

Congress made a strong statement opposing the RNEP study last year, eliminating \$27.5 million in funding from the Fiscal Year 2005 Omnibus Appropriations Bill. That legislation also eliminated \$9 million in funding for the Advanced Concepts Initiative, including the funding designated for development of low-yield nuclear weapons.

I sought to eliminate funding for these programs last year and will continue to in the future because I believe it sends the wrong signal to the rest of the world and encourages other nations to re-open the nuclear door.

In the past, Administration officials have argued that funding for RNEP is strictly for a study, however, last year’s five-year budget projection by the National Nuclear Security Administration estimated spending approximately \$485 million on the RNEP between 2005 and 2009. Clearly, the Administration is intent on moving forward with development upon completion of a study.

Moving forward with such a program would be a mistake. As nuclear weapons expert Dr. Sydney Drell of Stanford University has said, there is no casing known to man that can sustain driving a missile a thousand feet underground. The inevitable result would be the spewing of radiation that could threaten a much larger area than the intended target.

Instead of starting a new nuclear arms race, now is the time to reclaim our Nation’s position of leadership on nuclear nonproliferation efforts.”

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