



GARY E. JOHNSON  
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico  
**ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**  
Office of the Secretary  
Harold Runnels Building  
1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110  
Telephone (505) 827-2855  
Fax: (505) 827-2836



PETER MAGGIORE  
SECRETARY

PAUL R. RITZMA  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
August 9, 2000

**Contact: Peter Maggiore**  
Phone: (505) 827-2855  
(505) 660-1637

**Environment Department Can No Longer Require Financial Guarantee for Closure  
and Cleanup of WIPP**

Environment Department Secretary Peter Maggiore announced today that he is withdrawing the WIPP permit condition under which the Department of Energy's contractor, Westinghouse Electric Company Waste Isolation Division (Westinghouse), has posted 20 million dollars as part of the guarantee for cleanup at the WIPP site when it is closed. The legislation signed by the President on July 13, 2000, renders the permit conditions requiring financial assurance unenforceable. "Congress has enacted controlling legislation which states that a financial guarantee cannot be required of a federal contractor at WIPP. Therefore, earlier today I advised both the United States Department of Energy and Westinghouse that the permit condition requiring financial assurance in the WIPP permit is withdrawn and will not be enforced. The withdrawal of financial assurance provisions should once and for all remove any impediments to the State of New Mexico receiving the promised 20 million dollars in economic assistance, in the form of highway funds, that the Federal government has been withholding", said Maggiore.

###

000816

