

## Homeland Security Summit Explores Progress, Challenges

Governor Announces Increase in Federal Funds

Jaclyn Allen, 7NEWS Reporter

July 28, 2008

DENVER – With just four weeks to the Democratic National Convention, Congressman Ed Perlmutter, (D) District 7, and Congressman Mark Udall, (D) District 1, Governor Bill Ritter and first responders from across the state met to talk about whether they will be ready.

The Homeland Security Summit took place this morning at the state Capitol, where leaders described the DNC as a test run of the overhauled security system.

Since a blistering audit released early this year criticized millions of dollars in state homeland security spending in fiscal year 2003-2004, Colorado has made some major changes.

"It was clear that we needed to really reorganize our efforts around homeland security," said Gov. Bill Ritter. "What we did is say these are the most important capabilities we have to have as a state to be able to say we're protecting the people and the infrastructure."

Ritter spoke about the development of a Governor's Office of Homeland Security, headed by retired National Guard Major General Mason Whitney.

"The message is the governor and the state are on the case," said Congressman Mark Udall. "We have a strong leader in General Whitney, and with a lot of teamwork and we're going to make sure this is done right."

Perlmutter said the DNC will put the much-touted interagency coordination to the test.

"This is a huge undertaking that we have here in Colorado, and we're going to see if that teamwork really is in place. What we heard today gave me confidence that teamwork is in place," said Perlmutter.

Ritter announced that the state will be getting more homeland security money in the coming fiscal year -- \$20.8 million, which is up about 4.5 percent.

He said the increase is a good indication the reorganization is working and that the federal government trusts the state to use the funds wisely.

Source: [www.thedenverchannel.com/politics/17017976/detail.html](http://www.thedenverchannel.com/politics/17017976/detail.html)