



# Senator Eliot Shapleigh

District 29

Press Release

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## For Immediate Release

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### SENATOR SHAPLEIGH RESPONDS TO ASARCO LLC'S DECISION NOT TO REOPEN THEIR EL PASO SMELTER

*"Now, we can move to a new era of better jobs, clean skies and healthier neighborhoods. Winning this battle with ASARCO is as important to our future as creating the medical school. Since the 1880's, ASARCO has defined our past—now our talent and aspirations will define our future."*

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EL PASO – Today ASARCO LLC informed the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) that it will not reopen its copper smelter in El Paso, citing the nation's economic downturn. In February 2008, ASARCO was granted permission by the TCEQ to put more than 7,000 tons of pollutants into our air, including 2.59 tons of lead and 6,673 tons of sulfur dioxide. Senator Eliot Shapleigh (D- El Paso) issued the following statement on ASARCO's decision:

"Now, we can move to a new era of better jobs, clean skies and healthier neighborhoods. Winning this battle with ASARCO is as important to our future as creating the medical school. Since the 1880's, ASARCO has defined our past—now our talent and aspirations will define our future," Senator Shapleigh said.

ASARCO has left taxpayers from 75 communities in 16 states—from Tacoma, Washington to Corpus Christi, Texas— with billions in environmental remediation and clean-up costs. In El Paso, the smelter has contaminated at least 1,097 homes and businesses with lead and arsenic.

ASARCO was fined \$5.5 million and ordered to conduct \$15 million in environmental projects by the Environmental Protection Agency for allegedly illegally transporting, storing, and processing hazardous waste in El Paso. Senator Shapleigh said he will work to make sure those cleanup commitments are honored.

For more information on Asarco in El Paso, please click [here](#).

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