

February 8, 2002

Spencer Abraham, Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy, Headquarters
1000 Independence Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20585

Jessie Roberson, Assistant Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20585

Keith Klein, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations office
P.O. Box 550 (A7-50)
Richland, WA 99352

Harry Boston, Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection
2440 Stevens
Richland, WA 99352

Re: FY 2003 Budget

Dear Messrs. Abraham, Klein, Boston, and Ms. Roberson,

For the last seven years, the Hanford Advisory Board (Board) has worked to ensure Hanford cleanup is an efficient, credible effort. Contract reform, performance-based contracting, management for results, alternative technical approaches, and worker health and safety have all received significant Board attention. The Board's efforts, in conjunction with the Tri Party Agreement (TPA) agencies, have resulted in a TPA that is credible, comprehensive, and outlines an efficient risk-based approach to Hanford cleanup. The TPA is being further strengthened by ongoing negotiations (River Corridor, Central Plateau, and Constraints to Cleanup and Challenges Team (C3T)).

That said, the Board objects to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 Base Budget Request for Hanford. The Administration's FY 2003 request is short of meeting the risk-based cleanup requirements of the TPA, Hanford's cleanup agreement, by at least \$350 million. Notably, the request is \$262 million less than FY 2002 funding, which also was not fully compliant with the TPA.

We agree that acceleration of the cleanup program is desirable, however, the Board believes that accelerated and uncompromised Hanford cleanup may require additional funding above current levels. Further, the Board fears that even if more funds are allocated from the U.S. Department of Energy's proposed set-aside fund of \$800 million, the additional allocation to Hanford is unlikely to be adequate to meet our existing TPA compliance requirements. Linking a significant fraction of the required cleanup funding to the recommendations of the top-to-bottom review is premature, as the review has not yet received broad and careful examination.

Based on a preliminary look, it appears the TPA is aligned with the stated goals of the top-to-bottom review by addressing high risks first and accelerating cleanup. It also appears, contrary to the stated goals of the top-to-bottom review, the concept of the set aside fund of \$800 million frustrates the process of basing cleanup decisions on the best available science and technology, by forcing decisions prematurely. The Board anticipates further discussion regarding the top-to-bottom review and will likely offer advice in the coming months.

We advise that FY2003 funding for the DOE-Richland Operations Office and the DOE-Office of River Protection be adequate to meet existing TPA requirements. We look forward to your early response.

Sincerely,

Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

This advice represents HAB consensus for this specific topic. It should not be taken out of context to extrapolate Board agreement on other subject matters.

cc:

John Iani, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Tom Fitzsimmons, Washington State Department of Ecology
Michael Wilson, Washington State Department of Ecology
Michael Gearheard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Martha Crosland, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
Site Specific Advisory Boards
The Oregon and Washington Congressional Delegations

U.S. Senators (OR)

Gordon H Smith
Ron Wyden

U.S. Senators (WA)
Maria Cantwell
Patty Murray

U.S. Representatives (OR)
Earl Blumenauer
Peter DeFazio
Darlene Hooley
Greg Walden

U.S. Representatives (WA)
Norm Dicks
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