

HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD

A Site Specific Advisory Board, Chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act

Advising:

US Dept of Energy
US Environmental
Protection Agency
Washington State Dept
of Ecology

November 2, 2001

Spencer Abraham,
1000 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C.20585

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Todd Martin

Dear Secretary Abraham,

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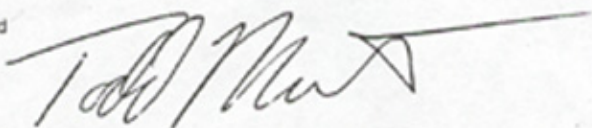
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The Hanford Advisory Board has for years been a forum where many diverse stakeholders have come together to provide the Department of Energy with Hanford cleanup advice and values that have broad public support. This letter is to bring to your attention one such issue: obtaining vitrification for Hanford's tank waste.

Hanford has 177 underground storage tanks containing 53 million gallons of high-level waste. This is nearly 2/3 of the nation's high-level waste. The great majority of these tanks are well beyond their design life, and 67 of them have leaked almost one million gallons into the ground already. All of them may eventually leak. These aging tanks are just a few miles from the Columbia River. This waste represents both an immediate and long-term threat to the people of the Northwest and the environment. Yet, Hanford has no treatment capacity for this waste. Time and again, various tank waste treatment projects have begun and then been cancelled.

Once again, we have baselines laid out and design work in progress for a tank waste treatment facility. We would like to emphasize to you in the strongest possible terms that any delays or possible cancellations of this project will be unacceptable to the Board and the citizens of the Northwest. Hanford must have an operational vitrification plant as soon as is technically feasible.

Sincerely,



Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

Cc: Jessie Roberson, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
Harry Boston, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of River Protection
Keith Klein, U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office
Martha Crosland, U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters
John Iani, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Tom Fitzsimmons, Washington State Department of Ecology
Wade Ballard, Deputy Designated Federal Official

Hanford Advisory Board
Subject: Vitrification Plant
2002O-02

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