



Many Voices Working for the Community

Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board

June 12, 2003

Mr. Steve McCracken
Assistant Manager for Environmental Management
U.S. DOE Oak Ridge Operations
P.O. Box 2001, EM-90
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Mr. McCracken:

ORSSAB Endorsement of the City of Oak Ridge's Application for Renewed Annual Assistance Payments Pursuant to the Atomic Energy Communities Act

In its meeting on Monday, April 7, 2003, the Oak Ridge City Council unanimously approved an action to send an application to the United States Secretary of Energy requesting renewed annual assistance payments.

Please be advised that the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) strongly supports this initiative. ORSSAB believes the restored annual assistance payments being requested by the Oak Ridge City Council are justified for the following reasons:

DOE Program Decisions Concerning Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) Land Resources? Some fifteen years ago, DOE negotiated a lump-sum buy-out with the City of Oak Ridge and the two counties that host the ORR. The agreement suspended the payments in lieu of taxes (PILT) and annual assistance payments that were being made at that time. This agreement was predicated on a commitment from DOE to release a significant amount of ORR land to the City of Oak Ridge over a defined period of time as part of an economic self-sufficiency initiative. Although some parcels were subsequently transferred, much of the previously identified land has been retained by DOE for its own uses, designated by the Environmental Management (EM) Program to be long-term storage locations for radioactive and/or chemically toxic wastes, or turned over by EM to other government agencies to be managed as wildlife refuge areas. Such actions by DOE limit the ability of local governments to establish a sustainable tax base, and have seriously impaired the implementation of the economic self-sufficiency program.

Equity Issues Associated with EM's Long-Term Storage Location Designations for Radioactive and/or Chemically Toxic Wastes? Ad hoc citizen's working groups, focus groups, and other local citizens have been organized by local DOE officials to formally review and comment on land use and on decision documents for long-term waste storage on the ORR. However, at no time have the citizens of Oak Ridge been given an opportunity to reflect on the broader socioeconomic impacts associated with all of the DOE EM, Environmental Protection Agency Region IV, and Tennessee

Mr. Steve McCracken

June 12, 2003

Page 2

Department of Environment and Conservation waste management land-use decisions taken together. As a matter of practical reality, commercially productive uses for land that has been designated for long-term storage of radioactive and hazardous chemical wastes are, and will remain, quite limited. Reinstatement of annual assistance payments would help balance the socioeconomic inequities that will have to be borne by local governments forced to serve as hosts for such facilities.

We appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to receiving your written response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman A. Mulvenon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Norman Mulvenon, Vice Chair

cc: David Adler, DOE-ORO
U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander
David Bradshaw, Mayor, City of Oak Ridge
U.S. Representative John J. Duncan, Jr.
U.S. Senator Bill Frist
Pat Halsey, DOE-ORO
Connie Jones, EPA Region 4
John Owsley, TDEC
Jessie Roberson, DOE-HQ
Sandra Waisley, DOE-HQ
U.S. Representative Zach Wamp