

-----Original Message-----

From: Kim & Mary Armatis

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 11:26 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding

The Department of Energy is seeking public comment regarding the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites. Why is DOE only now concerned with this?

I work at the Hanford Reservation in Washington State. I've been here for twenty eight years. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. DOE-Headquarters approved the plan and, although the workers suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, the plan was accepted by the unions and the workforce. It appears now that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous environments in the world. The workforce have dedicated their lives to cleaning up the federal governments environmental legacy. Each day, they put themselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America. Their dedication should not go unnoticed. They should expect from their government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for their service.

If DOE is so worried about how to fund benefits plans, they need to start within their own ranks. Their pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is 1.6 x high 5 wages X years of service. For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 X high 3 wages X years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund themselves. In fact, by eliminating the workers pension plan, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case.

In closing, I adamantly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honor their commitments to the workforce and abandon any plan, now and in the future, to systematically erode worker benefits.

Thank you,
Kim Armatis

-----Original Message-----

From: Wagner, Suzy R

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 5:45 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Health Care Suggestions from a Sandia National Laboratories Employee

For efficient, high-quality care please read the Wall Street Journal's Perverse Incentives in Health Care by John C. Goodman on April 5, 2007 and replicate the excellent health-care provided by the Mayo Clinics.

"Research by John Wennberg and his colleagues at Dartmouth Medical School suggest that if everyone in America went to the Mayo Clinic, our annual health-care bill would be 25% lower (more than \$500 billion!), and the average quality of care would improve."

Fortunately, I am a Mayo patient and can testify to the above.

Mr. Goodman is president of the National Center for Policy Analysis.

Suzy R. Wagner

-----Original Message-----

From: Richard Tansky

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 4:56 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Comment on DOE Contractor Employee Pension and Medical Benefits

My comments are simple and straight forward. I don't believe that DOE contractor employees should be treated any differently than DOE federal employees.

What ever changes are deemed appropriate for DOE contractor employees should be extended to federal employees. To do otherwise implies that one category of employee is more valuable or makes a more significant contribution than the other.

I believe that current contractor employees should have their current benefits and pensions sustained.

Richard Tansky
Aiken, SC

-----Original Message-----

From: sandra.hightower

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 4:33 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: DOE Pension/Health Benefits

It is critical the DOE protect and maintain the health and retirement benefits of the long term contractor workforce (over age 40 or senior citizens).

Many contractor employees have sacrificed their health and well being dealing with highly hazardous radioactive materials and chemicals for over 25 or 30 years service at some of the DOE sites. The average median age of this workforce has reached forty nine (49) in age, and many have sacrificed their entire lives to the success of the DOE missions throughout the years. It is now, that these same employee's have or are experiencing adverse health effects. Taking the good health and well being of these employees during their youth, and leaving these same employees without adequate health care as senior citizens should not be a consideration as a viable option.

These same employees have contributed through their dedicated years of service to the contractor retirement/pension plans (25+yrs.). This pension plan money is required to be protected by law. The existing funds must be protected for those employees who have earned their pension contributions. Existing long service employees should be given the benefits they have earned by their dedicated service to the DOE mission and to the country. There should not be a shortfall for these long service employees; since the necessary contributions to the pension plan are made throughout the employee's work history based on service time.

-----Original Message-----

From: Gillette, Ronald S (Ron)
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 3:51 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: benefits

The Department of Energy is seeking public comment regarding the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites. Why is DOE only now concerned with this?

I work at the Hanford Reservation in Washington State. I've been here for twenty seven years. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. DOE-Headquarters approved the plan and, although the workers suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, the plan was accepted by the unions and the workforce. It appears now that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous

environments in the world. The workforce have dedicated their lives to cleaning up the federal governments environmental legacy. Each day, they put themselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America. Their dedication should not go unnoticed. They should expect from their government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for their service.

If DOE is so worried about how to fund benefits plans, they need to start within their own ranks. Their pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is 1.6 x high 5 wages X years of service. For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 X high 3 wages X years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund themselves. In fact, by eliminating the workers pension plan, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case.

In closing, I adamantly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honor their commitments to the workforce and abandon any plan, now and in the future, to systematically erode worker benefits.

Thank you,
Ronald S. Gillette

-----Original Message-----

From: cliff.thomas

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 3:50 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: DOE Contractor Pension and Medical Benefits

The press release incorrectly states that contractor pensions are greater than that of government workers. The government worker pensions provide retirement benefits of 80% of base salary versus a 30-40% base salary pension for most contractor employees. Government workers have considerably more retirement compensation to apply to health care cost than do most contractor employees. The increases in health care costs are a direct result of the Congress' incompetency in handling the illegal immigration crisis. Federal law requires that hospitals receiving federal funds must treat everyone entering the emergency rooms regardless of coverage (less than 10% of emergency room visits are emergencies). Health care costs paid by Americans with health coverage are 3 times what they should be due to this unfunded mandate of the federal government and illegal immigrants receiving free health care. This is the crisis that the DOE is seeking to place on the backs of contractor employees rather than addressing the root cause of the problem. If the DOE wishes to address the problem, rather than Congress doing the job that it was elected to do, then the solution should be across the board reform including government workers. Why is DOE seeking to single out contractor employees rather than addressing the issue globally? The health coverage is the only reason I continue to work as a DOE contractor employee and if it ends, so does my employment. It will be interesting to see how DOE rebuilds the nuclear industry without the contractor employees who have the knowledge to carry-out the task. Are you going to hire the

French to do it for you?

-----Original Message-----

From: Gray, Everett W Jr
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 3:11 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: Hanford Pension and Medical funding

To whom it may concern,

I am a Health Physics Technician working at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. I've been working on the site for the past 15 plus years and have been involved in the Decontamination & Decommissioning of DOE nuclear production facilities, used for our national defense. When I hired in, we were told of the importance of our mission and that importance had justified the way we had to work with all the hazards (radiological/chemical) of our job. We did our jobs as instructed because we believed in our government and that they would look after the safety and well being of the work force at present and for years to come. Our Union leaders at the time had negotiated a multi-employer plan that was designed to save DOE money. We accepted the plan although we had to take a cut in pension benefits. I am told now that DOE wants to cut our pension program again and leave it in the hands of our contractors. This is totally unacceptable. The contractors on our site come and go as contracts are written and bid on. This burden placed on the contractors turns into a major cost concern in times of Union/Employer contract negotiations that was not a big issue when DOE committed to ensuring our pension and some health care benefits. If DOE is so concerned about cutting benefits, they need to start by lowering their own to that which is paid out to the very workforce that "straps on a mask" and works every day in the trenches of the radiological and chemical waste dump they created here in the desert of Washington.

Please help us workers that have dedicated their working careers to the DOE and to the cleanup mission that is so urgently needed here at Hanford by stopping any plan to diminish what benefits we have left.

Thank you,
Everett Gray
Health Physics Technician

-----Original Message-----

From: McRee, Susan R
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 2:58 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: FW: Comment on Pensions

I was reading my AARP bulletin this weekend. It stated there will be an employee shortage beginning around 2010 due to baby boomers retiring and not enough of the

younger generation for replacing us. One would think employers would be planning for the long term and doing what it takes to not only retain current employees, but attract new employees as well. I don't see this happening with cutting benefits.

Susie McRee

-----Original Message-----

From: McRee, Susan R

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 2:59 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: FW: Comments on pension/medical benefits

Interesting that I know someone that works for a company that employs only 400 people yet they have better medical benefits than Sandia does these days.

I know this has been brought up in the past. Even though Sandia's salaries may be at market level, in order to protect our Great United States of America, we do need the best and brightest. There is not the same level of loyalty as in years past so it is harder to hire and retain the best and brightest at just market salaries. But, given that, we must at least be better than average in benefits to hold on to a little hope of hiring the quality staff needed to protect our country, and contribute in the many other areas.

Another note. For a number of Sandians (the personality types of staff hired), we put a lot of stress on ourselves to do our jobs to the best of our ability. I am one of those. My stress level was so high that it caused health issues, which cost ~ \$2,000/month for medication. I wound up with pre-cancerous cells and was taken off all hormone drugs, including this one. I actually thought I would whither away and have to take a medical retirement. Due to acupuncture, switching to a less stressful job, I am doing OK. Not great, but OK. I suspect stress is a major health issue for Sandians. Maybe including a massage therapist and acupuncturist at medical would reap huge benefits. I believe in doing whatever possible to help reduce medical costs per individual, not in continuing to pass the costs along to the individuals.

Another suggestion. Sandians, like myself, pay money for memberships to gyms, exercise equipment, running shoes, health food stores, etc. Then we are still faced with decreasing medical benefits. Years ago, we had to have physicals, provided by Medical. We should go back to that. One every x # of years. For those that don't do what is recommended to increase their health levels, they are the ones that should pay the increasing health costs. Not those of us that are already forking out money to try to stay in good health.

Decreasing retirement (even the City has higher percentage rate for retirement benefits) or getting rid of retirement altogether should not be an option. Again, we don't have the salaries so need to hire and retain staff based upon benefits. Many will come to SNL based upon benefits. I was one.

Susie McRee

-----Original Message-----

From: Drr4der

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 2:28 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Comments on DOE Notice N 351.1

Coalition of Oak Ridge Retired Employees (CORRE)
Working for Fair, Equitable, and Competitive Benefits

April 16, 2007

Ms. Stephanie Weakley
Office of Procurement and Assistance Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20585
Sent by email to DOE at contractorpensions@hq.doe.gov

Dear Ms. Weakley:
Comments on DOE Notice N 351.1

In response to the Department of Energy's invitation given in the Federal Register, I am submitting the attached comments on the document. We had previously supplied amendments to the document shortly after the public meeting at Pellissippi State Community College. This set of comments replaces the amendments for N 351.1 that we supplied to DOE at that time. It does not replace the written questions we addressed to DOE at the meeting. We also supplied copies of those to the DOE delegation at the meeting. We would emphasize that the draft N 351.1 document, while not primarily addressing the defined benefit plans in effect, does address them by restricting severely how adjustments can be made. The fact that little written guidance is given by present DOE procedures provides a vacuum in which retirees of those plans are easily forgotten. We think that has happened in Oak Ridge with the existing contractor pension plans. The comments we are supplying to you addresses our concerns that there be put in place adequate administrative guidelines to assure that interests of retirees are protected. Adoption of our recommendation, as contained in our comments, will assure that there are guidelines for proper reviews with criteria that all of us can understand. We would also note that a large percentage of the retirees of DOE contractors rely extensively upon the contractor defined benefit plans, and, thus, it is important that their concerns be addressed in the N 351.1 document, such that when it becomes the order, it is known how the defined benefit plans will be administered. We appreciate this opportunity to comment and would be pleased to discuss them with DOE management.

Sincerely,
David E. Reichle, President

COMMENTS ON DOE Notice N 351.1
Provided by
COALITION of OAK RIDGE RETIRED EMPLOYEES (CORRE)
April 12, 2007

CORRE recognizes that DOE Notice N 351.1, as drafted, is primarily about the transition from Defined Benefit (DB) plans to Defined Contribution (DC) plans for future DOE contractor retirees. However, the document is inadequate in the manner in which it addresses the problem of administering fairly the existing defined benefit plans under which most of DOE contractor retirees now receive benefits and which is still a prevalent methodology used by many contractors for the DOE. The document should address comprehensively all primary issues related to the administration of the defined benefit plans, especially since there is no other document that addresses properly how defined benefit plans will be administered to give fair treatment to retirees whose pensions are provided by these plans. Therefore, CORRE is making the major recommendation that detailed methodology for administration of defined benefit plans also be incorporated in N 351.1. It is not sufficient to say simply that changes in DB plan benefits must be approved by the Secretary of the Department of Energy. DOE has 45 defined benefit plans in use across its operations in some 20 states. These plans were established by a variety of corporate entities at different times under conditions of a world war as well as more peaceful times, and with considerations that span some of the most turbulent times from a sociological and political perspective in our nation's history. Stewardship, management, and performance of these 45 different plans have varied dramatically. Some contractors have an exemplary record of managing costs, while periodically augmenting plans to help mitigate lost purchasing power due to the ravages of inflation. Others have apparently failed in this responsibility as indicated by a current deficit of pension assets to liabilities of some \$2 billion, according to DOE representatives.

It is the position of the Coalition of Oak Ridge Retired Employees that those plans with an exemplary record of responsible management NOT be lumped together with those less successful or under-funded. We believe and advocate that successful DB plans should be allowed to augment their plans in accordance with their ability to fund the augmentation, and also in special circumstances where additional funding is required by DOE. CORRE recommends that DOE modify N 351.1 by incorporating guidelines for governance of the method of augmenting benefits for retirees of DB plans. CORRE recommends that the following criteria be used to implement and manage such augmentation, and that these criteria and provisions be incorporated into N 351.1:

- A) DOE shall separate considerations for Defined Contribution (DC) plans and Defined Benefit (DB) plans.
- B) DOE shall separate considerations for DB plans that are fully funded

from those that are not fully funded.

C) DB plans that are under-funded shall be funded in accordance with the Pension Protection Act (PPA) requirements.

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D) Retiree benefits from fully funded DB plans (i.e., assets/liabilities=100%) may be augmented at the contractor's request and with the advanced approval of the Secretary of Energy (Secretary), provided the funds are available and the augmentation is based on sound management practices as regards that individual DB plan fund.

E) Under no conditions shall the contractor propose or DOE approve a transfer of funds from the DB plan surplus.

F) Under all circumstances, any change or augmentation of DB plan benefits for future retirees (present employees) shall be granted immediately and in full to existing retirees or their qualified survivors. Where such augmentation has not been allowed for any reason, the contractor shall now propose this augmentation, and the Secretary shall approve it for immediate implementation, provided the funds are available as herein specified.

G) At least biennially (every two years), the contractor shall review lost purchasing power of existing retirees and qualified survivors and propose appropriate augmentation of pensions as follows:

1) At a minimum, the goal shall be to maintain pensions at 75% of lost purchasing power calculated as follows and using the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Inflation Calculator on their website or it's successor methodology:

For each \$100 of pension: (example =1985 retiree)

- | | | |
|----|--|-----------|
| a. | Inflation calculator 1985-2006= | \$ 187.36 |
| b. | Pension plus previous adjustments. = | \$ 130.38 |
| c. | Lost purchasing power (a-b) = | \$ 56.98 |
| d. | 75% of lost purchasing power(c x .75) = | \$ 42.74 |
| e. | After adjustment per \$100 (b+d) = | \$173.12 |
| f. | After adjustment % of original pension in inflation-adjusted dollars (e/a) | 92% |

Note 1: In the case of Oak Ridge Multi-Employer Pension Program (MEPP), these adjustments could result in retirees being up to 16% behind inflation (lost purchasing power), and the average would be 8% behind inflation.

Note 2: In the case of the Oak Ridge MEPP covering over 11,000 current retirees, the cost of fully implementing this proposal plus the 2% spousal option (separate proposal) would require less than one half of the current surplus and cost DOE or the taxpayer nothing!

2) Any lost purchasing power adjustments shall be made for all then retired employees and qualified survivors regardless of salary level or year of retirement without exclusions or setbacks of any kind.

3

H) The Secretary of Energy or their designate shall approve contractor

proposals for augmentation of existing DB plans provided:

- 1) The plan is fully funded before and will be fully funded after the requested augmentation, and
 - 2) After augmentation, plan assets shall not fall below 100 % of plan liabilities using PPA guidelines and requirements. Should the biennial review of lost purchasing power on two consecutive reviews (4 years maximum) result in the need to make an adjustment for which pension funds are not available (assets/ liabilities would fall below 100%), the Secretary shall in that year reallocate operational funds as may be required to fully fund the lost purchasing power adjustment as indicated and as herein specified.
- I) Contractors shall be cognizant of historical practices at the locations managed and provisions for augmentation of DB plans for retirees and covered employees at such locations, and
- 1) Conduct biennial reviews of lost purchasing power as herein specified, and
 - 2) Propose to DOE Elements augmentation of such plans in accordance with these provisions, provided the plan meets the specified funding requirements for augmentation.
- J) DOE Elements shall review contractor proposals for DB plan augmentation as herein described, and
- 1) Ensure that all provisions of this policy/order are met, and
 - 2) Submit the proposal to the Secretary for approval and authorization to implement.
- K) The contractor shall implement approved augmentations as soon as practicable.

CORRE

April 12, 2007

-----Original Message-----

From: Davenport, Micheal Edward (M13)

Sent: Tuesday, April 10, 2007 4:13 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Doe Pensions

Dear Sirs,

I am an employee at one of the Oak Ridge DOE sites who just wants to voice my opinion on the proposed elimination Of the Defined Employer Pension Plan. As a worker with 37 years of service and also a retired military serviceman I feel I have MORE than earned the benefits I am looking forward to one day being able to enjoy after my working days Are over. The problem I have is not with company's making profits I know they can't stay competitive or grow without Showing gains, But as someone who has envisioned the American dream of one day enjoying the fruits of my labor it Makes me wonder whether that Dream is real or another worker nightmare. Company CEO'S can get million Dollar Raises they can Lie and cheat the American public and the list goes on an on, So why is it so difficult for the worker Who just wants to enjoy and LIVE THAT DREAM slighted

so. Greed will be the down fall of this great NATION if we As Americans don't WAKE UP!

Michael Davenport

-----Original Message-----

From: Vasey, Steve
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 1:38 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Pension and medical benefit plans

Comments

I understand the cost of medical benefits are increasing. They are for everyone. The work force is aging and people are living longer after retirement. Consideration must be given to the retired men and women that have dedicated their lives to protecting our country. Men and women from all walks of life that served in the military and worked at the National Laboratories.

In most cases the pensions are fixed. Some are attached to a cola but the increase falls short of the rise in medical costs. The increase in social security benefits also only covers the rise in Medicare.

I know this is not what anyone would like to hear but all these men and women should not have to choose to eat or pay their medical bills but that what's happening. All these men and women deserve more not less but, each time the government can't meet their obligations they turn to the people who have been the most loyal and ask them to give more.

As you look for solutions to this problem keep all of us in mind and think of ways to help us, which in my mind means providing more not less.

Thank for asking
Steve Vasey

-----Original Message-----

From: IBEW Local 77
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 1:08 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Site Pension & Medical Benefits

To Whom It May Concern,

As Business Representative of IBEW Local 77 and representative of IBEW Local 77 members at Hanford, IBEW Local does not support the two-tiered system of pension and health for any employees at the Hanford Site. Members of this community have

supported the building of various projects on this Site, which have benefited the Department of Energy (DOE) and Federal Government. Now our mission, as you know, is to cleanup the leftover contamination and hazardous material. Why would DOE eliminate or change the current Pension and Health Program that is needed for the workers who have endured and sacrificed for the betterment of the country? It compares to not taking care of our armed forces when they come home. IBEW Local 77 is opposed to any elimination or negative change to the Pension and Medical Benefits Program.

Tom McMahon
Assistant Business Manager
IBEW Local 77

-----Original Message-----

From: Smith, Mark W
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 12:27 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Benefits Comments

To whom it may concern:

I work under contract to the Department of Energy at Sandia National Laboratories. My health insurance and pension benefits are extremely important components of my total compensation package, and I don't want to see them reduced in any substantial way.

In comparing the compensation of DOE contracted employees to the compensation of employees who work in private industry I think it is important to keep several factors in mind. First of all, DOE contracted employees are not eligible for stock options or other long term profit sharing mechanisms. As a general rule, we don't have good prospects for enjoying any economic benefits from the intellectual property that we help create, especially when it is tied to classified "national security" projects. Our salaries, benefits, and pensions are all that we get. Second, it seems very unfair to redefine any components of a package that an employee was offered at the time employment began - and this is especially true for retirement benefits. While an employee who is dissatisfied with the new terms could seek a new job, this is not always easy for an employee who has been at the labs for a long time, especially when you consider that working on classified projects puts a great restriction on just what information a person can put on a resume or share during an interview. In addition, maintaining a clearance is an additional "round-the-clock" commitment that an employee makes to his/her job at one of the DOE sponsored labs.

I think I have communicated that I don't want to see the benefits that I was offered prior to accepting a job reduced now that I have been in that job for a number of years. I am sure health and retirement benefits will be very expensive to maintain. I don't have any magic solutions to offer. However, there are two cost saving measures that I would be willing to accept. The first is to cap health insurance benefits for exorbitantly costly procedures that prolong life by perhaps a few months, but don't change the final

prognosis. I know that many people feel that human life should be preserved at any cost - but we all die sometime anyway. I get the impression that in many cases the last few months of super intensive treatment are enormously expensive. I would be in favor (theoretically) of capping health insurance benefits for people who are near the end of the road anyway. What I would not want to see is a cut in coverage for children or younger adults who are in a position to enjoy enormous benefits from (sometimes very expensive) medical procedures. As a second cost savings measure I could see upping the age limits for retirement. The goal would be to keep the same level of benefits but hold the line on the total number of years that a person will likely draw benefits. Again, I am sure some people look forward to a long retirement, but as life spans increase it seems to me that people will have to keep working for a greater number of years - provided that they stay healthy and mentally sharp enough. Some type of semi-retirement or half-time employment past a certain age also seems like a viable option. This would make a little more room for new (younger) employees and also make some allowance for a general decrease in stamina as one ages.

I would also like to add that I find it ironic that DOE talks about wanting to reduce the "financial volatility" of health care costs. It seems to me that the proposed solution simply shifts the "volatility" from DOE to the individuals who are contracted to work on behalf of DOE. It also seems to me that a defined contribution plan is not really an insurance plan at all - it is more of a savings account. The whole concept of insurance is to spread risks among a large group of people and thereby protect individuals from extremely expensive, but also hopefully unlikely, events. Replacing defined benefits with defined contributions in effect eliminates the "insurance" aspect of coverage and replaces it with personal liability. Talk about being subject to "financial volatility"!

I also find it very ironic that DOE and SNL put all kinds of safety procedures in place and require all kinds of safety related employee training, and yet there is talk of reducing health insurance and pension benefits. Again, the whole approach seems to be to reduce organizational liability and shift financial burdens and risks to individuals. Individuals who are lucky enough to never suffer from a major illness, or who are "lucky" enough to die shortly after they retire won't be penalized. But if you live a long time or come down with a major medical problem you could suffer tremendous economic hardship and your entire family could be affected by the financial burdens.

Thanks,
Mark W. Smith, Ph. D.

-----Original Message-----

From: Knewitz, Tim
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 12:03 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: Input

Is there any information that you have collected that shows the relative percentage of pension/medical costs to total employee costs since the DOE was formed? It seems that

without a strong pension plan, turnover at the nuclear weapons laboratories would increase. I don't think that volatility in the workforce of an important national security organization is desirable.

Tim Knewitz

-----Original Message-----

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 11:51 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject:

Could a pension buy out offer be made to employees? I know of several companies that are offering approximately \$15,000 per year of service to buy out the employee's pension. This is becoming quite common in private industry. If this could be offered as a non-taxable roll over into some type of IRA or something similar that would be taxable upon withdrawal several folks would be agreeable to this offer.

-----Original Message-----

From: James, Kerry L

Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 11:11 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Re: Pension

The Department of Energy is seeking public comment regarding the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites. Why is DOE only now concerned with this?

I work at the Hanford Reservation in Washington State. I've been here for twenty three and a half years. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. DOE-Headquarters approved the plan and, although the workers suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, the plan was accepted by the unions and the workforce. It appears now that DOE is HAVING to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. Where in the private sector is this type of "market-based" work being done? Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous environments in the world. We the workforce have dedicated our lives to cleaning up the federal governments environmental legacy. Each day, we put ourselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America. Our dedication should not

go unnoticed. We should expect from our government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for our service.

If DOE is so worried about how to fund benefits plans, it needs to start within it's own ranks. DOE's pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is 1.6 x high 5 wages X years of service. For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 X high 3 wages X years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund themselves. In fact, by eliminating the workers pension plan, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case.

In closing, I strongly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honor their commitments to the workforce and abandon any plan, now and in the future, to systematically erode worker benefits.

The views expressed in these comments reflect my personal beliefs as a private citizen and are not intended to reflect or constitute an expression of Company policy.

Thank you,
Mr. Kerry L. James

-----Original Message-----

From: Geer, Dale E
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2007 10:06 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: ERRODING HEALTH COVERAGE

WITH OTHER DOE SITES GOING COHORT DUE TO NUCLEAR CHEMICAL HAZARDS, WHY DO YOU TREAT HANFORD WORKERS AS THOUGH WE ARE SO CLUELESS TO WHAT IS GOING ON? IT IS TIME TO EXPOSE THE VERMIN IN DOE AND LET THE PUBLIC DECIDE IF WE ARE WORTH MEDICAL BENEFITS OR NOT. THIS WILL GET VERY UGLY IF DOE DOES NOT TAKE CARE OF THE WORKFORCE THEY HAVE MADE SICK WHILE NOT INFORMING WORKERS OF THE HAZARDS WE ARE EXPOSED TO. DO A BETTER JOB AND HAVE A CONSCIENCE. WE WILL NOT FALL FOR THE LINE THAT HEALTH AND SAFETY IS DOING A GREAT JOB OF TAKING CARE OF US WHEN THEY ARE TOLD TO IGNORE DEADLY HAZARDS THAT WE ARE EXPOSED TO ON A DAILY BASIS.

SIGNED-----A CONCERNED TANK FARM WORKER THAT KNOWS!

-----Original Message-----

From: josiebeach
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 10:50 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Pension

I work at the Hanford Reservation in Washington State. I've been here for twenty years. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. DOE-Headquarters approved the plan and, although the workers suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, the plan was accepted by the unions and the workforce. It appears now that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous environments in the world. The workforce have dedicated their lives to cleaning up the federal governments environmental legacy. Each day, they put themselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America. Their dedication should not go unnoticed. They should expect from their government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for their service.

If DOE is so worried about how to fund benefits plans, they need to start within their own ranks. Their pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is 1.6 x high 5 wages X years of service. For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 X high 3 wages X years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund themselves. In fact, by eliminating the workers pension plan, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case.

In closing, I adamantly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honor their commitments to the workforce and abandon any plan, now and in the future, to systematically erode worker benefits.

Thank you,
Josie Beach

-----Original Message-----

From: PAUL MORRISON
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 8:29 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Contractor Pension Feedback

My pension is already being degraded by Sandia National Laboratories. Prior to that, I was at the Pinellas Plant under GE. I would not have dedicated 28.5 years and my entire career if I would have known you would slowly default on your promise. I want my

pension linked to pension for government employees. How many friends have I lost or not made when they learned I make "the bomb"? You suck if you don't honor your obligation. No better than a deadbeat dad. Paul Morrison

-----Original Message-----

From: Richard C. Gwaltney
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 3:48 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Comments on DOE Notice 353.1

April 12, 2007

Ms. Stephanie Weakley,
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Ms. Stephanie Weakly:

RE: Comments on DOE Notice 351.1

As a retired Oak Ridge Doc employecc after reading DOE Notice 351.1 it has become obvious that DOE considers DOE Contractor employees or retirees in Oak Ridge as second class employees. That is why we have such treatment on our Pension Plan. Notice 351.1 states that there would be no increases in our Pension payout for retirees and that DOE plans to end the defined-benefit Pension plans and to substitute defined-contribution plans using 401K type systems for present working Contractor employees and new Contractor employees. This was also stated to us at a DOE Public Meeting held at Pellissippi State Campus on June 22, 2006. The new plan by DOE will make OAK Ridge Contractor Employees and future retirees third class employees.

As a retired DOE Contractor worker from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory where we received as retirees Social Security, benefits of a 401K plan if we wanted to participate in the plan and a Pension Plan based on our years of service and certain number of high income years. Our Pension Plan has had periodic increases in the past but has not kept up with inflation. Now DOE has implemented a program of no adjustments for defined pension benefit plans. Even though the Oak Ridge Multi-Employer Pension Plan (MEPP) has had a funding surplus sufficient for paying adjustments with no new funding required. DOE has not contributed to the MEPP plan in Oak Ridge Since 1984. This same plan is being used for present DOE Contractor workers. This is patently unfair when compared to present DOE Employees.

DOE Civil Service employees have the following benefits under the Federal Employee's Retirement System: Social Security, Thrift Saving Plan, and a Pension Plan. The Government puts 1% of the employee's salary into the Thrift Saving Plan even if the employee does not contribute any more to the plan. If the employee contributes to the

plan it becomes like a 401K at private companies. The DOE Pension Plan is based on the number of years of service by the DOE employee and a certain number of high income years. However the DOE employee pension plan has a COLA which increases the yearly payout. In January 2006 the COLA was 3.1 percent.

Notice 351.1 is DOE's new stated policy. We cannot believe that it would be the intent of Congress or the citizens of this country to follow such a policy that is so blatantly biased toward seniors who defended this country through years of effort and contribution to DOE programs. I urge your prompt attention to the benefits of retirees in Oak Ridge and other DOE sites. I urge DOE to return to a reasonable proposal for the present DOE contractor employees and retirees. I hope you will get others to assist you in obtaining an equitable policy, as DOE's policy not only affects Oak Ridge adversely, but also many of the other places where DOE has facilities.

However If Doe considers the plan proposed in Notice 351.1 fair, I propose that Congress set the same benefits for the DOE employees that they have proposed for DOE Contract Employees and Retires.

Sincerely,
Richard C. Gwaltney

-----Original Message-----

From: Huebner, Thomas L

Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 11:25 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: FW: Hanford Pension and Medical funding

To whom it may concern,

I am a Health Physics Technician working at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. I've been working on the site for the past 20 plus years and have been involved in the production of nuclear material used for our national defense. When I hired in, we were told of the importance of our mission and that importance had justified the way we had to work with all the hazards (radiological/chemical) of our job. We did our jobs as instructed because we believed in our government and that they would look after the safety and well being of work force at present and for years to come. Our Union leaders at the time had negotiated a multi-employer plan that was designed to save DOE money. We accepted the plan although we had to take a cut in pension benefits. I am told now that DOE wants to cut our pension program again and leave it in the hands of our contractors. This is totally unacceptable. The contractors on our site come and go as contracts are written and bid on. This burden placed on the contractors turns into a major cost concern in times of Union/Employer contract negotiations that was not a big issue when DOE committed to ensuring our pension and some health care benefits. If DOE is so concerned about cutting benefits, they need to start by lowering their own to that which is paid out to the very workforce that "straps on a SCBA" and works every day in the trenches of the radiological and chemical waste dump they created here in the desert

of Washington.

Please help us workers that have dedicated their working careers to the DOE and to the cleanup mission that is so urgently needed here at Hanford by stopping any plan to diminish what benefits we have left.

Thank you-
Thom Huebner

-----Original Message-----

From: Weil, Cheryl A

Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 1:41 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: RE: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding

The Department of Energy is seeking public comment regarding the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites. Why is DOE only now concerned with this?

I work at the Hanford Reservation in Washington State. I've been here for twenty four years. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. DOE-Headquarters approved the plan and, although the workers suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, the plan was accepted by the unions and the workforce. It appears now that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous environments in the world. The workforce have dedicated their lives to cleaning up the federal governments environmental legacy. Each day, they put themselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America. Their dedication should not go unnoticed. They should expect from their government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for their service.

If DOE is so worried about how to fund benefits plans, they need to start within their own ranks. Their pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is 1.6 x high 5 wages X years of service. For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 X high 3 wages X years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund themselves. In fact, by

eliminating the workers pension plan, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case.

In closing, I adamantly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honor their commitments to the workforce and abandon any plan, now and in the future, to systematically erode worker benefits.

Thank you,
Cheryl Weil
Nuclear Chemical Operator

Thank -you
Cheryl Weil

-----Original Message-----

From: Bancroft, Linda A
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 2:26 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: Pensions

To whom it may concern:

I work at Hanford and have been here since 1994. Prior to this I came from the private industry - Boeing Commercial Airplane Group. I have learned in that time that since 1987, before I came here, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. It appears now that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

If DOE is so worried about how to fund benefits plans, they need to start within their own ranks. Their pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is 1.6 x high 5 wages X years of service. For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 X high 3 wages X years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund themselves. In fact, by eliminating the workers pension plan, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case. We have an aging workforce, and as to be expected, and certainly had to be in the minds of those negotiating this in 1987, that a time would come that pensions would be needed.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. If the DOE site workers receive higher benefits then I would assume that DOE would also be willing to accept a 'market based

plan' also. Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous environments in the world. Do you even know where we are? The workforce have dedicated their lives to cleaning up the federal governments environmental legacy. Each day, they put themselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America. Their dedication should not go unnoticed. They should expect from their government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for their service.

In closing, I adamantly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honor their commitments to the workforce and abandon any plan, now and in the future, to systematically erode worker benefits. Set an example to the rest of the country and do the right thing.

Linda Bancroft

-----Original Message-----

From: Jason Green

Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 10:55 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Comment on the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites.

I understand that the Department of Energy is seeking public comment regarding the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites. I am not sure why DOE is only now concerned with this; but my humble comments are stated below.

I work at Tank Farms located at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington State. I've been working here at the largest Nuclear Waste Site in the United States for seventeen years. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. DOE-Headquarters approved the plan and, although the workers suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, the plan was accepted by the unions and the workforce. It appears now, that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous environments in the world. The workforce at Hanford has dedicated their lives to cleaning up the federal government's environmental legacy. Each day, they put themselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America.

Their dedication should not go unnoticed. They should expect from their government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for their service.

If DOE is so concerned about how to fund benefits plans, they need to start within their own ranks. Their pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is (1.6 times the 5 high wage years) times (years of service). For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 times high 3 wage years times years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund the DOE employees working non hazardous desk jobs. In fact, by eliminating the workers pension plan at the Hanford site, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case.

In closing, I adamantly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honors their commitments to the workforce and abandons any plan now and in the future to systematically erode worker benefits.

Thank you,
Jason Green

-----Original Message-----

From: Irwin, Michael J

Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 10:04 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Request for Public Comment on Department of Energy Contractor Employee Pension and Medical Benefits Challenge

The basis for the cost issue is not founded on an appropriate data set. The same data set could be used to close the US markets and abandon all investments in the US economy. The last five years have been poor for the US market (See International Monetary Fund Report, Sept. 2006, 3.3% growth for last year vs. 5.4% for the global economy and 2.2% growth projected for this year and 4.9% for the global economy) and to base a projection on this last five years of data is poorly founded. The US economy has been challenged by excessive spending coupled with tax cuts. These two factors have had a major effect on the US and consequently the World economy.

Economic analysis of this type are typically based on thirty years of data to get past perturbations in the market.

The DOE has the majority of its workforce in M&O contracts. These contracts make-up the very backbone of the DOE workforce and to reduce their benefits would serve no positive benefit on the organization. This type of unilateral change to contractors after they have made a career choice is a de-motivating factor and the DOE should know that!

Michael J. Irwin

-----Original Message-----

From: Edmonson, Cathy L
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 9:11 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: public comment

The Department of Energy is seeking public comment regarding the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites. Why is DOE only now concerned with this?

I work at the Hanford Reservation in Washington State. I've been here for twenty eight years. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension system was negotiated with the union and the contractors. Prior to this, there were multiple pension plans due to the multiple contractors performing work for DOE. The multi-employer plan was designed to save money for DOE. A detailed cost analysis was conveyed to DOE-Headquarters that showed what the plan would cost to fund through 2012. DOE-Headquarters approved the plan and, although the workers suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, the plan was accepted by the unions and the workforce. It appears now that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether.

DOE wants to introduce a "market-based" plan because the DOE site workers receive higher benefits to those in the private sector. Does DOE even know what type of work is performed at Hanford? The Hanford site is not building "widgets" or cleaning up oil spills. We are engaged in and exposed to one of the most contaminated and hazardous environments in the world. The workforce have dedicated their lives to cleaning up the federal governments environmental legacy. Each day, they put themselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United States of America. Their dedication should not go unnoticed. They should expect from their government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for their service.

If DOE is so worried about how to fund benefits plans, they need to start within their own ranks. Their pension and medical plans are significantly higher than the very workforce they want to eliminate. For the workforce at Hanford, the pension multiplier is 1.6 x high 5 wages X years of service. For DOE, the multiplier is 2.2 X high 3 wages X years of service. They don't seem to be worried about how to fund themselves. In fact, by eliminating the workers pension plan, the DOE could enrich their own. That appears to be the case.

In closing, I adamantly oppose this new directive. It's time the federal government honor their commitments to the workforce and abandon any plan, now and in the future, to systematically erode worker benefits.

Thank you,
David E. Molnaa, President
Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council

-----Original Message-----

From: Steve and Tresa Yarbro

Sent: Sunday, April 15, 2007 6:06 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Please Leave LANL TCP 1 funds with University of California

Dear Sirs:

I am a 24 year employee of Los Alamos National Laboratory and I am growing very concerned with the future of the defined benefit pension (DBP) program offered by Los Alamos National Security (LANS)/LANL. Reading the article, "Regents Approve \$1.2 B Pension Deals" in the Sunday, March 18, 2007 Los Alamos Monitor is alarming. Even though the UC Regents have decided to keep the portion of the DBP for current retirees and ongoing 'inactive' employees, they and NNSA will still remove the portion of the plan for ongoing 'active' employees and transfer that to LANS. I and many others are concerned that this will not be viable over the life of many of the individuals who will draw from this plan for their retirement. Since no new employees will be coming into the plan, it can only get smaller with time until it vanishes and can no longer support the few unlucky retirees who depend on that for their living. Furthermore, LANS is a new company, with an uncertain future, while the University of California is a large relatively stable institution. The transfer was set to occur on April 2, 2007. Is there no other recourse? Does this not deserve further study? If this plan fails, it will only be a burden to the taxpayer. Please consider the following actions for the Los Alamos National Laboratory TCP 1 Defined Benefit Plan employees:

1. Stop the transfer of the TCP 1 portion to LANS and continue to administer it in the University of California (UC) system.
2. If necessary, depending on further study, have the TCP 1 employees contribute to the pension fund in the UC system just like all of the other UC employees, to ensure it's continued health.
3. Continue the practice of a 401(K) contribution without matching funds for TCP 1 employees.
4. For new employees and TCP 2 employees continue the current 401(K) with matching funds linked to years of service.

Thank you for anything you can do in this matter.

Sincerely,
Steve Yarbro

-----Original Message-----

From: Anthony Mitzel

Sent: Saturday, April 14, 2007 10:20 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Pension and Medical Benefit Public Comment

I have worked on the Hanford Reservation for twenty plus yrs as an Ironworker. In 1987, a multi-contractor pension plan was introduced and negotiated with the union and the

contractors. Prior to 1987, there were multiple pension plans at Hanford due to the multiple contractors performing various job activities for DOE. The multiple pension plans were at a significant cost to the federal government. The new pension plan was designed to save the federal government and the taxpayers a significant amount of money. The parameters of the new pension plan required approval from DOE-Headquarters, who were given the opportunity to review the plan and the associated funding. Although the workforce suffered a loss of pension benefits at the time, all interested parties approved the new pension plan.

Now that DOE is having to fulfill their obligations to the workforce through pension benefit payments, they want to re-negotiate (eliminate) the plan altogether. Why is DOE so concerned about this now? They were fully cognizant of the funding that would be required to administer the plan. DOE is only concerned about how to fund the workforce pension plan. Why is the same concern not directed to within their own offices? The DOE pension plans are enriched with retirement benefits significantly higher than the workforce, and at a significantly higher associated cost. If DOE wants to reduce retirement costs, they can start by eliminating unnecessary and non productive workers that reside within the Forestall Building. Eliminating DOE headcount would save the federal government and the taxpayers money, money that could be forwarded to the personnel that actually perform a critical service to the United States of America.

The Department's new policy for pension and medical benefits is going to be a serious detriment to the interests of the Local, State, and Federal agencies that are committed to the clean-up mission at Hanford. The Department's continuing efforts to restructure the benefit programs will have an adverse impact on the retirement security of the workforce that are dedicated in the completion of such mission.

The workforce at Hanford is exposed to and responsible for one of the most hazardous and contaminated sites in the world. Given the unique complexity of the clean up mission and the continuous exposure to radiological and chemical hazards, the workforce must be assured that their service to the federal government will not go unnoticed. The pension and medical benefit programs at Hanford were designed to provide incentives that would recruit and retain a highly skilled workforce. Recruitment and retention of an experienced, trained, knowledgeable and dedicated workforce is essential for fulfilling the moral and legal obligation of the federal government to clean up America's nuclear legacy at Hanford. The preservation of established benefit programs is critical for a stable workforce that has resulted in safe, efficient and well documented clean up efforts.

The pension and medical programs at Hanford represent a commitment from the federal government that employees performing extremely dangerous and hazardous work will be appropriately compensated for their efforts. The introduction of a two tiered benefit program, which provides different benefits for identical work will disincentivize the workforce from making long term commitment to perform such work. This will most assuredly result in delays of clean up efforts, TPA milestones, and unnecessary increase in costs to the American taxpayers.

In closing, the Hanford Atomic Metal Council is extremely proud to represent a workforce that has made severe sacrifices for their dedication in contributing to this nation's war efforts during World War II and the Cold War. These workers have now shifted that same dedication to cleaning up the environmental legacy as a result of their contributions to our national defense. Now, more than ever, the federal government must continue to support their efforts and not undermine the sacrifices that were made by eliminating worker benefits.

I adamantly oppose these new directives and respectfully request and urge the Department of Energy to abandon any plans, now and in the future, to eliminate and or alter the Hanford Pension and Medical benefits programs.

P.S. And I quote "The worlds best dealing with the worlds worst."

Anthony Mitzel

-----Original Message-----

From: PistolPreacher

Sent: Saturday, April 14, 2007 8:36 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: M&O Contractors Pensions; Comments on N351.1

Most DOE M&O and site management contractors provide defined benefit plans that are supplemented by defined contribution plans and generously subsidized medical benefit plans. According to Department of Energy market comparisons, on average, the pension benefits received by DOE contractor employees are higher than the benefits earned by Federal or private sector employees. In addition, on average, DOE contractor employees contribute less for their medical benefit costs than Federal employees or private sector workers.

Ms. Stephanie Weakley,
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Ms. Weakley,
The above statement from the Federal Register is not correct with respect to the M&O contractor which I'm employed. The DOE Federal Employees receive about 60% of their

salary as pension (as I understand) but my maximum is about 42%. While I understand the increase in pension and health care costs, our medical cost continues to increase to the retiree and we have no increase for inflation built into our retirement plan. What we retire at never increases. I have worked in hazardous environments with chemicals and other materials for my career as a DOE M&O employee and I'm concerned about the long-term effects on my health. DOE always provided the safety equipment that I needed but many times the environment was believed to be safe and actually was not. Surely we should not be penalized (as we are) by receiving increased costs for our medical care but never receiving any increases for our retirement.

I have always appreciated my job and tried to work hard; as the old saying, "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay". I believe we should receive some type of inflation increases in our retirement plan to be fair to us who have given our labor and lives to the defense program of our nation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on N351.1 Pension Plans and health care.

Harvey Sherlin

-----Original Message-----

From: melwileY

Sent: Saturday, April 14, 2007 4:38 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Request for Public Comment on Department of Energy Contractor Employee Pension and Medical Benefits Challenge

> Subject: Request for Public Comment on Department of Energy Contractor
> Employee Pension and Medical Benefits Challenge

>

> Why is it that DOE looks to the "contractor" to find savings? I think
> they need to look "in-house" for some of the savings that they are
> seeking. I know that DOE employees are "paid" to go to the health
> club. If they attend a certain number of times per month the
> membership is paid for. This is not a perk that the contractors have.
> Additionally, DOE personnel are quite well paid and could probably
> afford this "luxury" without the compensation.

>

> It is just very disturbing that every time we are looking to save
> money, DOE immediately thinks the contractors need to contribute in
> higher costs of services, yet they would not want the same for
> themselves. As an employee who has worked here for 30 years, I have
> seen my benefits get cut and my contributions to the services rise
> steadily. I am asking that the Department of Energy look towards its
> own pension and benefits and put them in line with what they are
> asking the contractors to live with.

>

> Melodie Witherspoon

-----Original Message-----

From: Andy Lang

Sent: Saturday, April 14, 2007 4:22 PM

To: Mary Broesch

Subject: The Actuaries Club Meeting scheduled for May 8

Mary:

"The next meeting of the Actuaries Club of Philadelphia will be held on May 8th at the Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel in King of Prussia. Steve Lehmann, President of the American Academy of Actuaries, will be the after dinner speaker."

I need to know very soon if I am to be the speaker in a Linda Springer type of full-blown meeting at that session or not--as I have a lot of things on my plate and I need time to prepare my remarks. I do not wish to be a leader of a workshop.

The title of that talk would be: Fixing Health Care and Social Security: It's do or die for the nation and the actuarial profession.

Here is a synopsis:

My crystal ball says we are going to have a national health care system, and sooner than most think. Ditto for fixes to Social Security. The only question is whether they will be actuarially and financially sound in the long term, work for the vast majority of people, and have strong protective laws for them. Fixing both health care and Social Security are both actuarial problems and always have been.

Social Security is very easy to fix; medical care somewhat harder, but both need the same kind of legal and actuarial infrastructure, and interestingly enough both of which were invented decades ago, the latter in the mid-18th century in the life insurance industry.

It migrated to the pension industry in 1921 and then morphed into an Actuarial Cost Method known as The Entry Age Normal Cost Method by 1980--right before the pension collapse began

Like building a house that must stand up to earthquakes, hurricanes and floods, you need a good architect and a good builder--the former to ensure the house is both liveable and survivable, the latter to make sure the foundation and framework is strong enough. And of course, you must make sure the building site is well-chosen.

Like a house, the design details are very important, but can come later. Putting the cart before the horse is a sure way to get lost in the details and maybe get run over on the downslopes.

You can always change the design details later if they prove unsatisfactory, but not if the house is built poorly from the first and begins collapsing.

Fix them the right way and all manner of good things will happen, both socially and in our economy. Don't fix them, or fix them the wrong way and all manner of hell will break loose and that will be that for our grand experiment in democracy.

The problems are global and not just local and actuaries can play a central role in fixing both, here and around the globe, and get very interesting and well-paying jobs--or they can stick their heads in the sand and continue their decline, or worse yet, work for the bad guys.

America is all about choices and also redemption but, like all problems, such as global warming for example, there is also a tipping point beyond which nothing can be done.

Let me know.
Andy

-----Original Message-----

From: katniki
Sent: Saturday, April 14, 2007 2:38 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject:

Lead by example. You should be willing to give your contractors whatever you are willing to take for yourselves. Set the standard and your contractors will follow.

Kathryn Chavez