



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

Greetings and welcome to the 21st Annual National Voluntary Protection Programs Participants' Association (VPPPA) Conference. Over the next few days, you will have an opportunity to learn about the latest safety and health practices and examine strategies for strengthening your safety and health efforts.

As many of you know, the Voluntary Protection Program is the key initiative in this country for recognizing and replicating world-class models of excellence in occupational safety and health. We take great pride in the fact that the Department of Energy is a significant part of this important effort that strives to save lives, minimize harm, and protect the safety and health of our Nation's work force.

As Secretary of Energy, my first expectation of everyone within the Department is that we understand that we are responsible for ensuring the safety of our employees and the safety of the communities surrounding our facilities. The Department's Voluntary Protection Program is a vital tool supporting that expectation. It has helped the Department to improve our safety and health efforts and it has permitted us to mentor many companies and industries within the private sector as well as other Federal agencies. In doing that, we are fulfilling the President's direction that agencies work, "*as a team across traditional boundaries to better serve the American people, focusing on citizens rather than individual agency needs.*"

In closing, I wish to congratulate the members of the VPPPA on their commitment and dedication to safety and health in the workplace. Your efforts have made an indelible impact on each of us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel W. Bodman".

Samuel W. Bodman

