

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

From: Scott Mitchell
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 10:04 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: DOE please stop micromanaging Labs

The plan for DOE to dictate to contractors how to define and manage pension plans is deeply flawed on two levels. At the higher level, this is the sort of micromanagement that the GOCO system was intended to prevent; please leave the Labs free to meet reasonable costs as they see fit. Another illogic at the higher level is the misguided notion that DOE ought to be following the lead of for-profit companies. Too many times the DOE misinterprets the "standard," "trendy," or "expedient" practices of business as "best practices"; the government and its contractors has an obligation and an opportunity to define truly best practices; this ties to the final factor mentioned in the next paragraph.

At the lower level in which this plan is flawed, I will mention three factors. The first factor is the increase in pension costs at the National Lab I am most familiar with is consistent with the aging population and the large number of retirees: there is no cost crisis per person. The "crisis" is just made up by DOE. \$1.1B / year? So what. That is a tiny fraction of the benefit the DOE has extracted from the high quality PhD workforce at the Labs over these dedicated employees years. Another factor is that the pension plan is an integral part of the total benefits aspects of the labs. Lab staff do not have paths towards the big salaries and bonuses available at private industry. Indeed, this segue's to the third factor, in that the Nation is well served by people who are attracted by pensions. Relatively high pensions leads to a stable workforce, with high long-term commitment to the lab and its National Security missions. This is just the sort of people we want stewarding the nuclear stockpile (for example) rather than those who are interested in getting rich quick (or extracting information quick) and moving on.

Regards,
Dr. Scott Mitchell

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

From: nucblond
Sent: Fri, 13 Apr 2007 5:36 PM
Subject: Fwd: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding
sent to: contractorpensions@hq.doc.gov

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 almost twenty five 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.

I would also like to add that our insurance coverage has progressively gotten worse if not non-existent. We are exposed to chemicals and radioactivity on a daily basis unlike other people out in the private sector. As legacy workers we deserve the proper insurance coverage to meet our medical needs when they occur now and in the future. UnitedHealthcare and HMO do not provide proper coverage to meet those needs.

Thank you,
Antoinette S. Winborg

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

From: Tolendino, Chris D
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 5:24 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: DOE Contractor Pension and Medical Benefits

It has come to my attention that DOE N 351.1, *Contractor Employee Pension and Medical Benefits Policy*, which was to be issued last year and was suspended as of June 19, 2006, is about to expire on April 27, 2006. It is my understanding that a revised version of DOE N 351.1 is out for comment without following DOE's own review process via REVCOM, but accepting feedback may be submitted to this e-mail address instead and comments are due prior to May 11, 2007. I have a number of concerns:

- Why is DOE receiving "backdoor comments" rather than using its formal review process?
- Why has DOE placed Order-type requirements into a Notice without following the provisions of DOE's own DOE M 251.1-1B, Departmental Directives Manual? Notices are intended to refer to Orders and have expiration dates. This Notice is for all intents and purposes an Order revision without following the DOE process.
- Why hasn't a revised draft of the DOE N 351.1 been published for review? The current version of this Notice is referenced in the *Federal Register*, Vol. 72, No. 58, March 27, 2007. What is included in the revised version of this requirement? Why aren't contractors allowed to see the proposed changes?
- DOE should not consider a "generic" "market-based" pension plan. Rather, DOE should look for good examples and model Contractor plans after similar facilities with successful plans. Example: For at least the past 20 years, Sandia National Laboratories has had a retirement fund run by Sandia Corporation. Initially, Sandians contributed to this fund and at a certain point the fund became self-sustaining. The employees have not had to contribute to the fund in a number of years, yet it has had ample funds to pay out to its retirees. Should it become necessary to increase the fund base, then employees could be asked to contribute.
- I understand that Oak Ridge National Labs also has a working system--why is DOE changing good pension systems? It appears that DOE's concern is with the "spiraling costs" of medical benefits. It is not appropriate to link the cost of pensions to the cost of medical care, particularly when pensions are fully funded. Please leave the working pension systems alone
- If DOE wants to continue to hire the "best and the brightest" scientists to perform research at its labs, a mediocre pension is not going to attract new employees. Remaining within $\pm 5\%$ of the market as required by DOE N 351.1 does not encourage the best of the best to come to the labs. These people will go where they can be paid what they're worth, with bonuses, stock options, good salaries and good benefits--in the for-profit world.

I do hope that DOE is not trying to slide new pension and medical programs into its requirements to take advantage of its contractors who have been proud to support their country by working for the Department of Energy!

In the interest of national defense, the national laboratories need to attract the cream of the cream and must be better than the rest of the "market!"

Christina Tolendino

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

From: Grady, Kevin J

Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 4:35 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: FW: Read and Act Promptly

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 fifteen plus 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,
Kevin Grady

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

From: Weber, Dale H
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 9:49 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: pension and benefits

To whom it may concern,

I am a Senior Health Physics Technician working at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. I've been working for the Dept. of energy for 16 years at Hanford, Fernald and Savannah River Site and have been involved in the production of nuclear materials for our national defense and dismantlement of old production buildings for our children and their children. When I started

working for the Department of Energy, 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 performed 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. I am a member of Local 984 and the Union leaders preceding me have negotiated a multi-employer plan that was designed to save DOE money. My union accepted the plan even though they had to take a cut in pension benefits. I am now told 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. The 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 than to that which is paid out to the very workforce that "straps on a respirator" and works every day in the trenches of the radiological and chemical waste dump they created here in the desert of Washington and other states.

Please help the 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
Dale H. Weber

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

From: Foreman, Nancy D
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 10:00 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Hanford Reservation in Washington State

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 one 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.

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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,

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

From: Romero, Peggy
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 9:45 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Pension/Medical Benefits

Employees are expecting DOE to maintain pension and medical for current employees.

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

From: MILO & TERESA BODAY
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 9:32 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Pension 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 thirty one 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.

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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,
Milo Boday

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

From: JOHN DYES
Sent: Friday, April 13, 2007 12:11 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: pension0001.pdf

I also oppose these new directives

John A Dyes Ironworker for Fluor Hanford

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

From: RRUDEDOGS
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 9:04 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Systematically erode worker benefits.

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

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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,
RANDY EUBANKS

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

From: Frank Charney
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 12:04 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject:

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.

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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,
Frank Charney

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

From: Cartwright, Carrol D
Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2007 2:29 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 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.

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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,
Carrol D. Cartwright

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

From: Williams, Glenn D
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 5:52 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: LEAVE MY PENSION ALONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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?

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Thank you,
Glenn Williams

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

From: Fiskum, Paul A
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 5:37 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: pensions

I PAUL FISKUM AM A STEAMFITTER/PLUMBER WORKING ON THE HANFORD SITE SINCE 1984, I AM PROUD TO BE WORKING FOR UNCLE SAM AS A JOURNYMAN. THE ROAD HERE WAS A LONG TEN YEARS, PLUS FOUR YEARS IN A APPRENTISIIP PROGRAM I AM LIVING THE AMERICAN DREAM. MY FATHER IS VERY PROUD OF MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS. HE ALSO WORKED THIRTY FIVE YEARS ON THE HANFORD SITE, AND SERVED HIS COUNTRY IN THE ARMY. TO HAVE BEEN PUT IN SOME VERY DANGEROUS JOBS CLEANING UP TANK WASTE IN TANK FARMS THE LAST EIGHT YEARS AND AM PROUD TO BE PART OF A VERY SMALL EDUCATED GROUP OF UNION PERSONNEL TO EVEN THINK OF ERODING MY PENSION IN ANY WAY IS A SLAP IN THE FACE TO ANYONE WORKING ON SITE OR SERVING OUR GREAT ARMED FORCES. YOU SHOULD INSTEAD FIGURE A WAY TO INHANCE OUR PENSIONS SO WE COULD ALL RETIRE AT A HEALTY AGE OF FIFTY FIVE WITH OUT PENTALTIES TO SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH THE ONES WE LOVE' AN TO FEEL THAT ALL MY LIFE WASNT A WASTE; TO HAVE TO WORK UNTILL THE AGE OF SIXTY SIX AND FOUR MONTHS IS A JOKE' WE ALL KNOW GOD GAVE US SEVENTY YEARS AT MOST' WHAT KIND OF MESSAGE ARE WE SENDING OUR CHILDREN?

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

From: Gilbert, Gregory L (Greg)

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 5:15 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 nine 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.

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Thank you,
Greg Gilbert

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

From: Mistretta, Michael
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 4:46 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: comments on pensions to DOE
Importance: High

DOE Gentlemen / Ladies:

I understand from the Washington Post Stephen Barr Column of March 28, 2007 that you are seeking comments on pensions and benefits.

As the DOE considers the pensions and benefits issue, DOE should be equitable across the network of DOE contractors and DOE should promote the best interests of the DOE mission and taxpayers. Two key issues relate to parity and workforce.

Parity:

Where does one draw the line on parity - physics labs for nuclear weapons? nuclear weapons labs? nuclear weapons complex contractors? DOE labs? What are the cost implications?

I suggest that there should be a uniform approach for all of the M&O contractors in NNSA, DOE or the Federal GOVT M&Os and /or FFRDCs that is compatible with the private sector. It is time for a Federal policy embraced by the White House.

Flexibility for the workforce and DOE and NNSA:

In the modern workforce there is a desire for portability to facilitate flexibility for the employees to realize their career goals and flexibility for the organization to have a workforce with suitable skills and in a timely manner. To promote transformation we need a dynamic workforce. In retrospect, the approach taken at LANL and LLNL may not best promote transformation. There are skill sets of the existing workforce that need to be replaced soonest to promote transformation and extending expensive retirement / benefit programs that complicates the turnover of the existing workforce may not be in the government interest of promoting transformation since we cannot afford to carry an existing workforce and hire a new one at the same time. The sweeping approach taken at LANL and LLNL may have been better replaced with alternative methods to be more selective on skills that truly needed to be maintained and promote more timely turnover of the existing workforce. In this manner, we could retain the truly critical skills; afford and attract the new skills; and turnover the old skills.

Holding on to the status quo by grandfathering an entire workforce has its negative consequences.

Mike Mistretta

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

From: Holly Carmichael
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 4:06 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: Input on contractor pensions

To: DOE Contractor Management

While DOE is reconsidering it's ongoing commitment to employees of DOE contractors, particularly in light of rising medical costs, I wish to make the following input. A major consideration that I made during my career at career at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (and in 1975 when I was first hired), was not only the caliber of research, the excellent work environment, and the "university atmosphere" that existed at the Laboratory, but also the security

it provided for me and for my family, both at the present time and for the future. Now as DOE is reconsidering its position" with respect to contractor benefits, i.e., pensions and insurance benefits for retired and current employees, I reflect on this observation. DOE has made what most individuals I know believe is the worst decision possible for the national laboratories conducting weapons-related and homeland security research and development, particularly the former. The decision to allow a group or private "for-profit-based" contractors to manage the work that the national laboratories have done for decades is and will be far more costly than in the past. If this decision was not made, the issue before us now would not be a concern. Take for example the management system in place now at the Nevada Test Site, Los Alamos National Laboratory and before too long (I fear), Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The layers of management have multiplied and the efficiency of not only managing the work but also conducting the work/research has severely decreased with DOE's "attempt" to accomplish security and accountability. Quality has not improved with these new contractual arrangements and not only the perceived costs but the real costs have greatly increased. I am not saying improvements were not necessary. I am saying that all the costs associated with the present plans to improve quality are failing. These costs, I will refer to as "wasted funds" resulting from political decisions rather than wise decisions, taxpayers money, could easily offset the concerns before us now pertaining to pension-related benefits.

As a citizen of this country whose great, great, great, great, great grandfather(s) settled Shenandoah Valley, Virginia and areas of New York, fought and died in the Civil War, served during WWII, and more. I am very concerned about the future of America and the decisions being made by those, like yourselves, that are destroying our ability to be competitive in this global economy; decisions that are not in the best interest, safety and security of its citizens, but instead drive up the costs and just make private for-profit contractors rich. I am disappointed on a daily basis to see our lawmakers and federal agency managers make decisions for the near term, without the far-reaching perspective so necessary for us to survive and for our children to prosper. Watching contractors like Bechtel, Halliburton & subsidiaries whose effort is to make their stockholders and executives wealthy as real progress suffers 's undermines us all.

In closing, I do not think pensions and benefits for those who have worked their lifetime for a non-profit R&D Laboratory should be diminished in any way by DOE. Congressmen and women get entitlements for a lifetime for only on term of office! If the rising cost of health care is an issue, why don't our Congressmen and women simply enforce the law and deny illegal aliens benefits and rights? This issue alone is bankrupting our schools, our cities, and our health care systems. Yet DOE is interested in decreasing the benefits of those who have worked a life time as legal citizens to promote the security and safety of US citizens.

Our current chief executive sits by while the CEO for Exxon made \$470 million in income last year - while we all pay an extra dollar a gallon for gas. Where is DOE weigh in here? Cheney, his VP gets millions in kickbacks and uses his position to stonewall Congress on Iraq issues, to ensure Halliburton & subsidiaries get the Iraq contracts, bankrupting the country. The book Vice documents so much about Cheney, yet our government does nothing. We sold chemical warfare gas to Saddam who massacred thousands of Kurdish men ,

women and children, and we act self-righteous. I am not proud of my country, for this and for all the ways it is not ensuring the safety and security of it's citizens.

Respectfully, H.H. Carmichael

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

From: Brent McHale
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 3:40 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Pension Plans

Suggested changes to the DOE employee pension benefits.

I am relatively new to the work force and LLNL. I graduated last year and have interviewed with more than 15 different organizations from government, educational and corporate sectors. There is a move in all sectors to go from company managed pensions to personally managed 401(k)/403(b) retirement accounts. To remain competitive with other jobs DOE should also move towards company matching 401(k)/403(b) retirement accounts. Some DOE organizations offer both traditional pensions and company matching 401(k)/403(b) retirement accounts. New workers, like myself, entering the work force are more interested in a higher matching percentage 6% or 7%, versus having a traditional pension.

I don't have any good suggestions on medical benefits other than to make sure that employees are aware of the great cost burden DOE is paying on their behalf, outline it in the pay role statement maybe a separate health care statement.

Thanks
Brent McHale, PhD

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

From: Dave
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 2:35 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: DOE Contractor Benefits

The DOE laboratory system has some of the best and smartest people around. They should be compensated above and beyond the average people employed elsewhere.

With that said, DOE should certainly look at retirement benefits and possibly make changes in the future. But existing DOE M&O employees should be grandfathered in their existing plans. These people have dedicated their lives to helping the USA stay free. It would be an injustice to suddenly cast them aside like old garbage.

However, keep in mind that if the benefits are reduced, the DOE M&O organizations will only be able to attract the less capable workers.

Dave Dell

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

From: Artz, Ken A
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 1:56 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: FW: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding
Importance: High

From: Angerman, L S (Scott)
Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2007 3:55 PM
To: Knight, Kim M; Callender, Patti A; Newell, Pamela L; Slape, Cathy L; Quinn, Joseph C; Conner, Michael D (Mike); Artz, Ken A; Akers, Bret M
Subject: FW: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding
Importance: High

From: Hendricks, Tim J
Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2007 2:34 PM
To: Mccary, Joanne; Hendricksen, Robert D; Jacobs, Scott B; Angerman, L S (Scott); Bentley, Bruce B; Knight, Russell R (Rusty)
Subject: FW: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding
Importance: High

Contact your Senators and newspapers and voice your concern on this important issue!!

Subject: FW: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding

GET THIS OUT TO EVERYONE.

This needs to be sent to: contractorpensions@hq.doe.gov

Change to your name at the bottom, change things around if you feel they need to be, like the number of years you've worked here.

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: Norris, Daniel A
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 1:18 PM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: pensions

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.

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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,
dan norris

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

From: Geffre, Michael B

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 12:44 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding

I have been told that the Department of Energy is seeking public comment regarding the funding of pension and health care benefits for workers on DOE sites.

I work at the Hanford Reservation in Washington State. I've been here for twenty years. The year I was hired on 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, we put ourselves in harms way performing a critical service to the United

States of America. I began working here when I was 24 years old, when I retire at age 64, I will have worked here for 40 years, I would hope that my dedication would not go unnoticed. I would expect from our government the same type of commitment and dedication in return for my years of 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,
Michael Geffre

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

From: Mills, Barbara E

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 12:27 PM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: comment re: Request for Public Comment on DOE Contractor Employee Pension and Medical Benefits Challenge

I work for Sandia National Laboratories as a Member of Technical Staff. I am not represented by any labor union. I have a few comments about DOE's position.

Please separate consideration of pension plans from consideration of medical benefit plans. They may be having the same financial implications for DOE but they do not have the same ethical or emotional issues.

We have become accustomed to eroding medical benefit plans as our population lives longer but less healthfully. And as our medical system is able to treat more and more conditions. It is difficult for any of us to get a handle on this, because new treatments become available all the time and it boils down to who has the right to expensive, potentially life-saving treatments? How do we put a cost on human suffering and human life?

In contract, a defined pension benefit plan is simply expensive and becoming more so as we live longer. We all know that. The rise in cost due to longer life expectancy has been completely predictable. The ability for a lump of money to be invested wisely has always been tricky. That's not changing. What appears to be changing is the commitment of an institution to provide such a benefit. That is infuriating to those of us who chose a career in a government lab because they provided benefits superior to those available in the private sector.

I would expect the DOE to provide oversight into the financial management of these defined benefit plans and take over those who are being managed imprudently. I would also expect the DOE to direct contractors who are managing these plans to perhaps delay or reduce annual benefits to stretch the money to cover the increased life expectancy of the members of the pool. As in any management

situation, there needs to be limits defined and expectations made clear. But don't just throw up your hands and say because the private sector is eliminating defined benefit plans so will we.

Barbara Mills

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

From: Bucci, Howard M (Bud)
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 11:50 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: Pension/Benefits Comments

These comments are being submitted in response to the Federal Register Notice on DOE Pension/Benefits. I recognize DOE pension/benefit obligations have increased in recent years probably far beyond anyone's expectations; nevertheless, the obligations which are in place today should be fulfilled for current and past employees. As difficult as it may be, DOE should honor its commitments. If DOE chooses a path of less resistance, perhaps the reduction in benefits should begin at the top with our leaders. Our congressional representatives could demonstrate their loyalty to the citizens they represent by taking a reduction in their packages and using the savings to help fund DOE pension obligations. This allows our leaders to be part of the solution in a very practical and visible way.

Future benefits for new hires is an area where DOE could employ a new pension/benefits program since this would allow the new employees to accept the package when hired. It is suggested that the new package be commensurate with private industry or perhaps a little better to attract and maintain the best professionals. Along this line, DOE should consider establishing only one package which applies to all DOE contractors as a means to limit administrative costs. DOE might also consider establishing or simply extending the existing pension/benefits package currently provided to DOE employees as the new package for all DOE contractor new hires. This may be another opportunity to streamline and reduce future costs.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Respectfully,
HM Bucci

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

From: Sams, Charles A (Chuck)
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 11:12 AM
To: contractpensions@hq.doe.gov
Subject: FW: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding
Importance: High

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 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,
Charles A. Sams

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

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 11:09 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Pensions

Don't be Bozo's these people need their pensions. No one knows how to manage their 401k except to buy a boat or a vacation. Spend the money on your people not just toys.

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

From: Kiehn, Christine S

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 11:06 AM

To: contractor pensions
Subject: RE: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding

From: Mcintyre, Alan R
Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2007 12:33 PM
To: Aguilar, Juan R; Aylsworth, Arthur L; Bailey, James H; Billingsley, Janice R; Brotherton, Donald W Jr; Cano, Pablo B; Carter, Patricia A; Cleavenger, David L; Crow, Robert J; Deleon, Janelle R; Dunnington, Ginni A; Ellingsworth, Randy D; Emerson, Patty; Faith, Cindy D; Faragher, Milton L (Lee); Floyd, David L; Gregory, Delmar L; Hamaker, Scott E; Harder, Dale R; Harris, Kenneth L; Herman, Michael D; Jones, Jay H; Julian, Robert D; Kasey, Bruce E; Kauer, Edward L; Kiehn, Christine S; Kiehn, Michael B; Krueger, Craig A; Lowery, James R (Russ); Lund, John I; Monlux, Richard A; Patterson, Kevin C; Quackenbush, James S; Ridgley, Dan E; Roberts, Dave L; Rogers, Bruce A; Rosane, Larry J; Rowlette, Gene; Russell, Linda M; Schermerhorn, Larry P; Senger, John G; Smith, Janet M (Jan); Sparks, Daniel J; Spicer, Charlette A; Townsend, Neomia; Valerio, B S Jr (Benny); Wallis, Kevin L; Watson, Elnora W; Welch, Thomas E; Woehle, Daniel J; Yarger, Frank R; Zahn, Donald W
Subject: FW: Public Comment for Pension and Medical Funding

You can all send them a piece of your mind if you'd like _____

This needs to be sent to: contractorpensions@hq.doe.gov
Change to your name at the bottom, change things around if you feel they need to be, like the number of years you've worked here.

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.

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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: Wutzke, Benny I Jr [
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 9:51 AM
To: contractor pensions
Subject: Pensions

To whom it may concern:

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 fifteen 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.

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It is evident that with every contract at DOE Nuclear Facilities the worker benefits are the first thing that a contractor wants to cut. DOE should not support this, we as workers would ask that DOE support the worker that works diligently to make our country a safer and cleaner one to live in.

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,
Ben Wutzke

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

From: Ritchey, M Barry

Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2007 10:13 AM

To: contractor pensions

Subject: Comments

I've worked for the government [LM/Sandia Labs-NM] for over 25 years. Throughout that time, benefits have slowly been diluted or taken away. You CANNOT take away, or cut back on, the one benefit that employees have planned their retirement and life around. DO NOT TOUCH OUT PENSION PLAN !!

Barry Ritchey

To: contractor pensions]

From: May, Robin L

Sent: Wed 4/11/2007 9:32 AM

Subject: RE: comments on DOE Contractor Employee Pension and Medical 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 eighteen 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.

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Thank you,
Robin L. May, Sr. Health Physics Technician