



March 26, 1999

Chuck Clarke, Regional Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

Tom Fitzsimmons, Director
Washington Department of Ecology
P.O. Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

James Hall, Acting Manager
U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations
P.O. Box 550 (A7-50)
Richland, WA 99352

Subject: U.S. Department of Energy Fiscal Year 2001 Budget

Dear Messrs. Clarke, Fitzsimmons and Hall:

The Hanford Advisory Board (HAB) has completed its review of the proposed Fiscal Year 2001 (FY2001) budget and submits the attached Consensus Advice for your consideration. We appreciate the assistance that has been provided to the Committees and the Board by a number of key U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Office (DOE-RL) program managers and staff, including Mr. Lloyd Piper, Deputy Manager. We were pleased that Dan Berkovitz, DOE Deputy Assistant Secretary for Planning, Policy, and Budget, attended our March Board meeting.

This HAB advice was developed by the Dollars and Sense Committee and reviewed by all other Committees prior to submittal to the full Board. It has been intensively analyzed, debated, and was adopted by unanimous consensus. The entire advice is deserving of careful review and timely response by the DOE-RL and the U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters (DOE-HQ). We are especially concerned about the following three issues:

- The proposed FY2001 budget reflects a compliance gap of \$232 million which follows a FY2000 gap of \$98 million. These gaps and proposals for level funding are not adequate to perform the minimum work required to meet safety standards and mandated cleanup schedules;
- The high-level wastes in the aging 177 underground tanks remain the most expensive, highest priority, and longest term program at Hanford. Obtaining necessary funding is vital to keep this program on schedule, including consideration of alternative financing mechanisms; and

- Proposals to eliminate cleanup work along the Columbia River are unacceptable and will increase future costs.

The HAB notes that costs will escalate in the future if necessary cleanup work is deferred. The nation has received a commitment from President Clinton that “my administration has made a priority of accelerating toxic waste cleanup, and we remain committed to the principle that all federal facilities must comply with their environmental obligations”. (Letter from President Clinton to Governor Gary Locke, August 7, 1998).

Acting Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management James Owendoff has also acknowledged in a letter to HAB Chair Marilyn B. Reeves, June 25, 1998 that “the Department of Energy will request full funding...for all legally required activities at Hanford...We are also committed to honoring our compliance agreements.”

Governor Gary Locke in an April 30, 1998 letter to President Clinton urged the President “... to make the cleanup of Hanford and the Department’s other nuclear weapon sites a top priority on your environmental agenda and to ensure that the Department has sufficient funding...”

Numerous items of our advice relate specifically to DOE-HQ decisions or policies. These are in italics.

The HAB expects a timely response from DOE-RL and DOE-HQ to its advice to permit our review prior to FY2001 budget submittal to the Office of Management and Budget. We look forward to changes in the FY2001 budget that better meet compliance and match the funding needs of the Hanford Site.

Sincerely,

Marilyn B. Reeves, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board

cc: James Owendoff, U.S. Department of Energy - Headquarters
Paul Kruger, Designated Federal Official, Hanford Advisory Board
Michael Gearheard, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
Dan Silver, Washington Department of Ecology

This advice represents HAB consensus for this specific topic. It should not be taken out of context to extrapolate Board agreement on other subject matters.

[Hanford Home Page](#) | [HAB](#) | [Advice Index](#)

*For questions or comments, please send [email](mailto:Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov) to Hanford_Advisory_Board@rl.gov
HAB Consensus Advice # 94
Subject: Tri-Party Agreement Milestones and Public Involvement
Adopted: March 26, 1999*