

**OPENING STATEMENT**  
**The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen**  
**Chairman, Energy and Water Development Subcommittee**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request for the**  
**Department of Energy's Offices of Environmental Management and Health, Safety and**  
**Security**  
**March 21, 2012**

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Good afternoon, everyone. We have before us today David Huizenga, Senior Advisor for Environmental Management to the Secretary of Energy. We also have Glenn Podonsky, the Department's Chief Health, Safety, and Security Officer. We welcome you both to the subcommittee, and look forward to your testimony.

Before we begin, I'd like to note that a colleague of yours, Brad Peterson, died last week in New Mexico due to injuries from a car accident. He was most recently with the Office of Secure Transportation, and I think I speak for everyone here on the subcommittee in extending our condolences to his family and his colleagues at the Department.

The EM budget request for fiscal year 2013 is \$5.009 billion for defense cleanup activities, a \$14 million reduction from last year's enacted level. While it is clear many tough decisions have been made in putting together this request, you have even more tough decisions ahead. Many of your current cleanup agreements relied upon continued large increases in funding – increases that are unrealistic even with the strong support we have for these activities. It is the responsibility of the Department to explain where those timelines are in jeopardy and to work constructively with its stakeholders to establish affordable milestones which will meet our legal commitments and financial restraints.

Mr. Podonsky, your budget request is \$246 million, a reduction of two percent from last year's level, at the same time you are undertaking a review of the Department's safety and security regulatory model. I hope you'll be able to show us today that this budget request will fully support that important work.

Gentlemen, you are appearing together before the subcommittee for the first time in order to better explain some of the challenges, and opportunities, the EM program and other nuclear operations at the Department are facing. This subcommittee has taken note of a number of very serious issues facing the Department – poor project management leading to out of control cost growth, and an apparent weakness in nuclear safety culture, to name two of the most worrisome. The EM program is at the middle of these concerns, and HSS is mandated to evaluate and help solve them.

Over the last few years, the Department has taken some positive steps to address these issues, such as updating its project review procedures. More recently, EM has been reevaluating its bureaucracy to see if it should be realigned. We will be watching closely to make sure that safety and project management are adequately resolved and that the management reforms are actually effective.

Gentlemen, reports have identified major problems at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant at Hanford. It appears that DOE has as yet been unable to resolve significant design problems, and changes may be on the horizon which will undoubtedly impact the project's cost

and schedule, and could put the milestones of the Tri-Party Agreement in jeopardy. There are reports that as these troubles have festered, the safety culture at the site has deteriorated to such an extent that some find them to be a major risk to the project itself. The reforms you put in place must address these issues, both at Hanford and anywhere else they threaten to come up.

Mr. Podonsky, your group has done some good work in looking into the sources of the safety culture problems, and we're looking forward to hearing your findings. Ensuring these new facilities will operate safely is one of our greatest responsibilities, and this subcommittee cannot support any plan that would place the safety of your employees and the public in jeopardy.

Please ensure that the hearing record, responses to the questions for the record, and any supporting information requested by the Subcommittee are delivered in final form to us no later than four weeks from time you receive them. I also ask that if Members have additional questions they would like to submit to the Subcommittee for the record, that they please do so by 5:00 PM tomorrow.

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