

July 28, 2014

Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

Place MOX Construction on Cold Standby; Terminate Plans for German Spent Fuel to SRS

Dear Secretary Moniz,

Thank you for the opportunity to briefly interact with you at the “meet and greet” near Savannah River Site (SRS) on July 28, 2014. I encourage you on your next visit to SRS to take time to meet with public interest groups not tied to DOE or contractors as you could learn much during such a meeting. I would like to comment to you on two problematic programs being considered for SRS.

Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Boondoggle: Place on Cold Standby, Hold Managers Accountable

Obviously, there is growing concern in South Carolina about plutonium that has been imported into SRS with no clear exit path. We are deeply concerned that the mismanaged MOX program continues apace though it is very unclear if the MOX program can be funded in a sustainable fashion, if the plant as designed by AREVA can ever operate and if any MOX customers can be found. We thus request of you:

- Continue with the plan to place the construction of the MOX plant on cold standby.
- Take immediate steps to hold managers in DOE, NNSA and Shaw AREVA MOX Services accountable for the massive cost overruns and schedule delays associated with MOX project.
- Continue development of alternatives to MOX, including the vitrification of plutonium in high-level waste at SRS (which remains a viable option given number of DWPF canisters yet to be filled).

Halt Plans to Import Highly Radioactive Spent Fuel from Germany, for Processing and Dumping

There is mounting concern locally about DOE efforts to import additional high-level nuclear waste to the site as that will distract from the urgent and on-going clean-up and result in waste being stranded at the site. The half-baked plan to bring graphite spent fuel from two closed commercial gas-cooled reactors in Germany - the reactors were experimental, not research, reactors, and both were tied to the grid - would result in German high-level waste being processed via a new proliferation-prone reprocessing technique and “disposed of” at SRS though the site is not a geologic repository. We ask that you:

- Immediately terminate plans to import German spent fuel to SRS for processing and dumping.
- Direct DOE to prepare, with public involvement, a “non-proliferation impact assessment” on the new graphite spent fuel reprocessing technique being developed by Savannah River National Lab.

I would be glad to further discuss these and other SRS matters with you or your staff.

Sincerely,

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