

UNITED STATES SENATE
HONORABLE MAX CLELAND, GEORGIA
PAGE 1 OF 1

MAX CLELAND
GEORGIA
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510
202-451-1921

COMMITTEE
ARMED SERVICES
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SMALL BUSINESS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1005

August 6, 1998

The Honorable Bill Richardson
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Bill:

As you know, the Department of Energy Plutonium Disposition Program is one of our Nation's highest priority efforts to ensure national and international security. We should continue to provide world leadership in nuclear non-proliferation and I commend your Department for its work on this program.

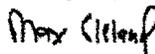
The Savannah River Site (SRS) stands ready to accept all of the Plutonium Disposition missions and in my opinion, should be the site of choice to accomplish these missions. The existing infrastructure, experience, expertise, and demonstrated plutonium processing accomplishments are not found at any other site under consideration for the Plutonium Pit Disassembly and Conversion phase. The capabilities and advantages of SRS which resulted in its being selected as the preferred site for the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication and Immobilization phases of the disposition program should make SRS the preferred site for Pit Disassembly and Conversion as well.

By consolidating all of the program phases at SRS, the taxpayers will save hundreds of millions of dollars. Avoiding the cost of duplicating the existing SRS nuclear infrastructure at another site to make that site capable of doing this work should be a major consideration in site selection.

This surrounding community fully supports SRS and the Plutonium Disposition Missions. To the best of my knowledge, you will not find that level of support at any other site in the DOE complex. Such local support is key to ensuring the complete and timely success of the of the Plutonium Disposition Program.

I believe that these and many other benefits strongly support SRS as the preferred site for Pit Disassembly and Conversion. I look forward to working with you and the people in your Department as the decision making process continues.

Most respectfully,



Max Cleland
United States Senator

SCD46

SCD46-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Senator's support for the pit conversion facility at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the pit conversion facility because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and the pit conversion facility complements existing missions and takes advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPDEIS ROD.

UNITED STATES SENATE
HONORABLE PAUL D. COVERDELL, GEORGIA
PAGE 1 OF 1

PAUL D. COVERDELL
GEORGIA
CONFERENCE SECRETARY



CHAIRMAN
WESTERN HEMISPHERE SUBCOMMITTEE
FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN
MARKETING, INSPECTION, AND PRODUCT
PROMOTION SUBCOMMITTEE
AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE
SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Representatives of the Department of Energy, guests and interested stakeholders: thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in support of future missions at the Savannah River Site.

As you are well aware, the Savannah River Site has played a key role in the security of our Nation and world over the past fifty years. During this time, our Nation has called upon the people and the community of the Central Savannah River Area to work efficiently and diligently for the betterment of our Nation. Not only have these citizens taken this upon themselves, but they have done so in a way that has made us all proud. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the people of the Savannah River Site who have successfully fulfilled and accomplished missions of the past, and will share in missions of the future.

I hope that by now, it is clear to DOE that the community support for the Savannah River Site is second to none within the DOE Complex. We are proud of this support and trust that you will weigh it heavily in your upcoming decision making process on Plutonium Pit Disassembly and Conversion.

Looking toward the future, we must continue to locate viable options for the Site. I found it only fitting that you selected SRS as the preferred site for the Mixed Oxide Fuel Facility and the Immobilization Process, but was not surprised. SRS has produced plutonium for the Department of Energy from its conception, and it is clear that SRS has the infrastructure and demonstrated experience and expertise to ensure the success of these missions.

With these same attributes and qualifications, SRS stands ready to accept the Plutonium Pit Disassembly and Conversion mission. Consolidation of all three missions of the Plutonium Disposition Program at SRS will save taxpayers of our Nation hundreds of millions of dollars in capital and operating costs.

Also, let us not forget the fact that SRS has the people that can fulfill this mission. A well trained and knowledgeable work force has been established at this site. This work force will meet or exceed any safety or efficiency standard.

In continuing our obligation to maintain national security for the people of the United States, it is imperative that we move forward with the Pit Disassembly and Conversion mission. I look forward to working with the Savannah River Site, the Department of Energy, and of course, the citizens of the area, to help establish this mission for the Site with the least amount of environmental impact.

I thank you for the opportunity to submit comments during this important program and site selection process.

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SCD52

SCD52-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Senator's support for the pit conversion facility at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the pit conversion facility because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and the pit conversion facility complements existing missions and takes advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPDEIS ROD.

PAUL D. COVERDELL
GEORGIA

CHAIRMAN
WESTERN HEMISPHERE SUBCOMMITTEE
FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1004

Representatives of the Department of Energy, guests and interested stakeholders, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to the Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement of the Department of Energy at the Savannah River Site.

As you are well aware, the Savannah River Site has played a key role in the security of our Nation and world over the past fifty years. During this time, our Nation has called upon the people and the Community of the Central Savannah River Area to work efficiently and diligently for the betterment of our nation. Not only have these citizens taken this upon themselves, but they have done so in a way that has made us all proud. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the people of the Savannah River Site who have successfully fulfilled and accomplished missions of the past and will share in missions of the future.

Looking toward the future, we must continue to locate viable options for the Site. One mission is Plutonium Disposition. I find it only fitting that we consider the Savannah River Site for this mission, as it was SRS who produced plutonium for the Department of Energy from its conception. It is my understanding that the Department of Energy is currently examining two possible methods of plutonium disposition at SRS, Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX) fabrication and immobilization. I have been informed that both of these methods may require some purification of plutonium before they can be stored in their final form, and that SRS is the only Department of Energy site that can purify any significant quantity of these materials. If this is so, and as we in Congress continue to work to balance our Nation's budget, it appears that by selecting SRS the Department could save our country from unnecessary expenditures.

Furthermore, the current infrastructure at SRS would allow for these missions to be put in place with relative ease. The Site currently works on immobilization of spent nuclear fuel at its Defense Waste Processing Facility, and has facilities that could be made available for MOX fuel fabrication. By already having the infrastructure in place to accomplish this mission, SRS is one step ahead of its competitors.

Also, let us not forget the fact that SRS has the people that can fulfill this mission. A well trained and knowledgeable work force has been established at this site. This work force will meet or exceed any safety or efficiency standard.

In continuing our obligation to maintain national security for the people of the United States, it is imperative that we move forward in the disposition of certain amounts of plutonium. I look forward to working with the Savannah River Site, the Department of Energy, and of course, the citizens of the area, to help establish this mission for the Site with the least amount of environmental impact.

I thank you for the opportunity to submit comments during this meeting.

SCD106

SCD106-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Senator's support for siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the proposed facilities because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and these facilities complement existing missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPDEIS ROD.

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UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD, GEORGIA
PAGE 1 OF 3

COMMERCE COMMITTEE
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SUBCOMMITTEE
Thought and Investigations
ATHLETIC EVENTS
Rural Health Care Caucus
Sportsman's Caucus

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August 13, 1998

The Honorable Bill Richardson
Secretary
United States Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you know, the citizens of the Central Savannah River Area take great pride in their association with the Savannah River Site (SRS). Unlike other field sites across the country, the support for future missions at SRS is unquestionable.

One such mission is plutonium disposition. Over the next several months, as you weigh all the options for siting this mission, I ask that you consider the following issues:

1. **Infrastructure:** the infrastructure at SRS would allow the dual-track approach of plutonium disposition to proceed with relative ease. Currently, the site works on immobilization of spent nuclear fuel at its Defense Waste Processing Facility. It also has facilities that would be made available for Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication;
2. **Workforce:** SRS already has the qualified workforce that is needed to fulfill this mission. A well-trained and knowledgeable workforce will meet or exceed any safety or efficiency standard needed to fulfill the requirements of this mission; and,
3. **Community Support:** Through resolutions and letters of support from community leaders and citizens in both Georgia and South Carolina, it is clear that the Central Savannah River Area is eager to continue to lead the country toward meeting its obligation of maintaining the national security for the people of the United States.

While I applaud DOE's selection of SRS as the preferred site for the MOX and immobilization elements of this program, it is my understanding that consolidation of all three elements of the Plutonium Disposition Program at SRS would result in significant cost savings. It is also the most expeditious path to achieving the program objectives. The potential for hundreds of millions of dollars of savings to the taxpayers is something we must monitor and insist upon as the decision process evolves.
The Honorable Bill Richardson

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SCD17

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SCD17-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Congressman's support for siting the pit conversion facility at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the pit conversion facility because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and the pit conversion facility complements existing missions and takes advantage of existing infrastructure. Although existing facilities and processes at SRS could support the pit disassembly and conversion process, a new facility would be built. However, supporting infrastructure and complementary missions would be used to the extent possible. Further, as noted by the Congressman, SRS has a well trained and knowledgeable workforce and wide community support.

Because this comment relates directly to the cost analysis report, it has been forwarded to the cost analysis team for consideration. The *Plutonium Disposition Life-Cycle Costs and Cost-Related Comment Resolution Document* (DOE/MD-0013, November 1999), which covers recent life-cycle cost analyses associated with the preferred alternative, is available on the MD Web site at <http://www.doe-md.com> and in the public reading rooms at the following locations: Hanford, INEEL, Pantex, SRS and Washington, D.C. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD, GEORGIA
PAGE 2 OF 3**

August 13, 1998
Page 2

One concern I do have with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the program is that it does not adequately address the existing facilities and processes at SRS – especially in the conversion of the plutonium pits to the oxide needed for MOX fuel or immobilization. Therefore, I encourage you to review this issue before the final decisions are made on pit disassembly and conversion.

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Mr. Secretary, SRS has been a vital part of our community and a vital link to our nation's national security for over 40 years. Therefore, it is my hope that you will rely on this valuable resource as you site the plutonium disposition, as well as future DOE missions, throughout the remainder of your tenure at DOE.

Finally, I would personally like to invite you to visit the Site over the next few months as you adapt to your new role as the Secretary of Energy. I look forward to continuing our relationship on energy issues that began when we both served together on the House Commerce Committee.

Sincerely,



Charlie Norwood
Member of Congress

SCD17

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD, GEORGIA
PAGE 3 OF 3

Plutonium Disposition Talking Points
The Honorable Charlie Norwood
August 13, 1998

- In the Department of Energy Surplus Plutonium Disposition Draft Environmental Impact Statement issued in July 1998, DOE states a preference for locating immobilization and MOX fuel fabrication facilities at SRS. DOE also states a preference for a pit disassembly and conversion facility to be located at either SRS or Pantex in Amarillo, TX.
- SRS is the clear choice for all three disposition activities (immobilization, MOX, and pit disassembly and conversion) for technical and financial reasons. SRS has the supporting infrastructure, trained personnel, and a long history of safe operations.
- SRS is unique from all the other DOE field sites in that it has the unanimous support of the local community, state government, and local congressmen and senators.
- SRS has over 40 years of experience of receiving, handling, storing, dissolving, purifying, converting, stabilizing, packaging, monitoring, and shipping plutonium in various forms. The Defense Waste Processing Facility at SRS is a proven immobilization facility. The Pantex site in Texas only has experience in the disassembly and storage of sealed plutonium weapons components.
- DOE's own cost estimates cite that it is \$60 million cheaper to build a pit disassembly and conversion facility at SRS than at Pantex. If politics didn't play a role here, this decision would be a no-brainer.
- DOE has failed to accurately reflect the cost savings of locating all three disposition activities at SRS, causing Senator Thurmond to request a GAO study a couple of weeks ago. This review ought to confirm the advantages of locating pit disassembly and conversion at SRS and hopefully provide a comprehensive cost savings to perform all of the work at SRS.

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SCD17

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE CHARLIE NORWOOD, GEORGIA
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COMMERCE COMMITTEE
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SUBCOMMITTEE
Oversight and Investigations
Army Caucus
Rural/Health Care Caucus
Sportsmen's Caucus

Charlie Norwood
10th District, Georgia
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June 25, 1997

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The Honorable Federico Pena
Secretary
United States Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary:

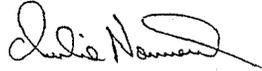
As you know, the citizens of the Central Savannah River Area take great pride in their association with the Savannah River Site (SRS). Unlike other field sites across the country, the support for future missions at SRS is unquestionable.

One such mission is plutonium disposition. Within the next year, as you weigh all the options for siting this mission, I ask that you consider the following issues:

1. **Infrastructure:** the infrastructure at SRS would allow the dual-track approach of plutonium disposition to proceed with relative ease. Currently, the site works on immobilization of nuclear waste at its Defense Waste Processing Facility. It also has facilities that could be made available for Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication;
2. **Workforce:** SRS already has the qualified workforce that is needed to fulfill this mission. A well-trained and knowledgeable workforce will meet or exceed any safety or efficiency standard needed to fulfill the requirements of this mission; and,
3. **Community Support:** Through resolutions and letters of support from community leaders and citizens in both Georgia and South Carolina, it is clear that the Central Savannah River Area is eager to continue to lead the country toward meeting its obligation of maintaining the national security for the people of the United States.

Mr. Secretary, SRS has been a vital part of our community and a vital link to our nation's national security for over 40 years. Therefore, it is my hope that you will rely on this valuable resource as you site the plutonium disposition, as well as future DOE missions, throughout the remainder of your tenure at DOE.

Sincerely,



Charlie Norwood
Member of Congress

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SCD76

SCD76-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Congressman's support for siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the proposed facilities because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and these facilities complement existing missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE PETER DEFazio, OREGON
PAGE 1 OF 1

PETER DEFazio
7th District, Oregon
RESOURCES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE
WATER AND POWER RESOURCES
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE
AVIATION
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

August 18, 1998

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Mr. Howard R. Canter
Acting Director
Office of Fissile Materials Disposition
P.O. Box 23786
Washington, D.C. 20026

re: Comments on the Surplus Plutonium Disposition Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Canter:

I want to thank the U.S. Department of Energy for holding this hearing in Oregon and for recognizing that Oregonians are significantly affected by actions at Hanford. I support the Secretary's decision in the SPD DEIS not to use any facilities at Hanford for mixed oxide fuel fabrication or fuel production. This decision should be maintained and affirmed in the Final EIS.

1

While I have grave misgivings about any use of mixed oxide fuel in nuclear reactors to dispose of surplus plutonium, I applaud the Secretary's recognition that Hanford's efforts must be focused on cleanup of its existing nuclear weapons wastes. The DEIS rightly recognizes that new missions that would create more waste at Hanford or contaminate buildings or facilities that have not previously been contaminated must not be allowed to occur.

I understand that the scope of the SPD DEIS does not address where mixed oxide fuel would be burned once it is fabricated and that the Department of Energy will address that issue in a separate proceeding. Nevertheless, let me make it clear that the same logic that has compelled the Secretary to conclude that mixed oxide fuel should not be made at Hanford should also govern his decision regarding the site for burning mixed oxide fuel. Burning mixed oxide fuel at Hanford would create more waste and complicate the ongoing cleanup effort.

2

Hanford must have one mission and only one mission: to clean up the enormous amount of nuclear waste that already exists at the site. Hanford presents a threat to the people of Oregon and Washington. I have previously introduced legislation to make Hanford and other federal facilities comply with the requirements of the Clean Water Act. I will continue to work to make sure that the threat Hanford presents to the people of the Northwest is contained and safely cleaned up.

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Sincerely,

PETER DEFazio

THIS STATIONERY MADE WITH RECYCLED FIBERS

ORD04

ORD04-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Congressman's opposition to siting the MOX facility at Hanford and the MOX approach. DOE believes that Hanford's efforts should remain focused on its current high-priority cleanup mission. The importance of cleanup at Hanford was taken into consideration in identifying preferred sites for surplus plutonium disposition activities. However, no decision has been made, and DOE will continue to consider Hanford for surplus plutonium disposition or other programs that are compatible with the Hanford mission.

ORD04-2

MOX RFP

As stated in this SPD EIS, the irradiation of MOX fuel would occur at domestic, commercial reactors. DOE conducted a procurement process to acquire MOX fuel fabrication and irradiation services. As a result of this procurement process, DOE identified the reactors proposed to irradiate MOX fuel, the Catawba, McGuire, and North Anna nuclear stations, as part of the proposed action in this EIS. Section 4.28 was revised to discuss the potential environmental impacts of operating the selected reactors. Hanford is not a preferred site for either MOX fuel fabrication or irradiation.

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE ELIZABETH FURSE, OREGON
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ELIZABETH FURSE
1ST DISTRICT, OREGON
COMMITTEE
COMMERCE
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON
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Congress of the United States
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STATEMENT: HEARING with US DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, Portland, OR
REGARDING SURPLUS PLUTONIUM DISPOSITION
August 18, 1998

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. Tonight you
will hear testimony from scientists, grassroots organizations and
concerned citizens. It is essential that public participation
remain an integral part of decisions of the magnitude we are here
today to discuss.

Hanford remains the most contaminated nuclear dump in the nation.
Perched on the banks of the Columbia River it is the site with the
greatest potential for disaster.

While I firmly support the reduction of the United States'
stockpile of nuclear warheads, Hanford is not the site where the
excess plutonium should be contained, let alone reprocessed into a
mixed oxide fuel. Making plutonium into MOX ushers in a new era of
nuclear proliferation. It does not make economic sense,
environmental sense or humanitarian sense.

The only mission at Hanford should be containment and clean up and
never, never the creation of more toxic waste.

ELIZABETH FURSE
Member of Congress

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ORD10

ORD10-1

General SPD EIS and NEPA Process

DOE agrees with the Congresswoman that public participation is an integral part of the decisionmaking process, and strives to provide as many means as possible for obtaining public input and participation.

ORD10-2

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Congresswoman's opposition to siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at Hanford and the MOX approach. DOE believes that Hanford's efforts should remain focused on its current high-priority cleanup mission. The importance of cleanup at Hanford was taken into consideration in identifying preferred sites for surplus plutonium disposition activities. However, no decision has been made, and DOE will continue to consider Hanford for surplus plutonium disposition or other programs that are compatible with the Hanford mission.

U.S. policy dating back to the Ford Administration has prohibited the commercial, chemical reprocessing and separation of plutonium from spent nuclear fuel. The use of U.S. surplus plutonium in existing commercial reactors does not involve reprocessing (reprocessing is a chemical separation of uranium, transuranic elements [including plutonium], and fission products from spent reactor fuel and the reuse of the plutonium and uranium to produce new fresh fuel). The proposed use of MOX fuel is consistent with the U.S. nonproliferation policy and would ensure that plutonium which was produced for nuclear weapons and subsequently declared excess to national security needs is never again used for nuclear weapons.

UNITED STATES SENATE, HONORABLE STROM THURMOND AND HONORABLE ERNEST F. HOLLINGS
 UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, HONORABLE JAMES E. CLYBURN, LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, BOB INGLIS, MARK SANFORD,
 FLOYD D. SPENCE, AND JOHN M. SPRATT, JR., SOUTH CAROLINA
 PAGE 1 OF 3



DoE Must Take Next Step at SRS

Washington, June 23, 1998—In a letter hand delivered today to Secretary of Energy Federico Pena, Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC) said that the Department of Energy needs to decide where the pit disassembly mission should go, and that the only logical place for this operation is at the Savannah River Site.

Thurmond outlined his position in a delegation letter he authored and had delivered to Pena this afternoon. Specifically, Thurmond said that the Department was on the right track in deciding to locate two of three vital plutonium missions at the Savannah River Site—the Mixed-Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility, and the plutonium immobilization mission. Pit disassembly is considered the third key leg of the plutonium production mission and Thurmond says that operation belongs in South Carolina.

"I am pleased the Department has recognized the unique expertise and world class capabilities of the Savannah River Site to take on the Department's new MOX mission," said Thurmond. "We must now work to bring the pit disassembly mission to SRS as there is no facility better suited for this mission, and locating this operation in South Carolina will save the American taxpayer \$1.6 billion."

The Department of Energy has said that it is considering two locations for pit disassembly, one in Texas and the Savannah River Site. Thurmond said that the Department of Energy will have a very difficult task in making a compelling argument that Texas is a better place to locate this vital plutonium mission.

"The Department of Energy's policy of not introducing plutonium operations into a site where plutonium doesn't already exist is a sound one. Plutonium is not a material to be handled by amateurs. The skilled employees of the Savannah River Site have been competently and safely working with plutonium for years. It simply doesn't make economic or technical sense to conduct pit disassembly anywhere except Savannah River," said Thurmond. "The facility in Texas has never processed plutonium, they do not have a work force of individuals trained in how to process plutonium oxides or solutions. Further, it does not make sense to split up the plutonium production missions and recreate the complex and costly infrastructure necessary to handle plutonium safely. It is my hope that the department will soon decide to site the pit disassembly mission at the Savannah River Site, along with MOX fuel fabrication and immobilization activities."

A copy of Thurmond's delegation letter follows this release.

SCD77

SCD77-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Senators' and Congressmen's support for siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the proposed facilities because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and these facilities complement existing missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

UNITED STATES SENATE, HONORABLE STROM THURMOND AND HONORABLE ERNEST F. HOLLINGS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, HONORABLE JAMES E. CLYBURN, LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, BOB INGLIS, MARK SANFORD,
FLOYD D. SPENCE, AND JOHN M. SPRATT, JR., SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 2 OF 3

STROM THURMOND
SOUTH CAROLINA

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
UNITED STATES SENATE

COMMITTEES
ARMED SERVICES, QUARTERS
JUDICIARY
VETERANS AFFAIRS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4001

June 23, 1996

The Honorable Frederico F. Peña
Secretary
Department of Energy
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Secretary Peña:

We commend your decision to locate the Mixed-Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility at the Savannah River Site (SRS). We agree that SRS is the best site to take on this new mission; however, a crucial decision is still forthcoming regarding the final component of the Plutonium Disposition Program: pit disassembly and conversion. It is our firm belief that SRS is the right location for this mission and should be designated the consolidated plutonium disposition site.

SRS has been safely and efficiently handling plutonium materials since the 1950's. In 1997 DOE referred to SRS as "a plutonium-competent site with the most modern state-of-the-art storage and processing facilities and a site with the only remaining large-scale chemical separation and processing capability in the DOE complex." Further, in the 1996 Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Stockpile Stewardship and Management regarding Pit Manufacturing at Pantex, DOE stated, "Plutonium would not be introduced into a site that does not currently have a plutonium infrastructure because of the high cost of new plutonium facilities and the complexity of introducing plutonium operations into sites without current plutonium capabilities."

We believe the policy of only introducing plutonium into a site with extensive plutonium handling experience is valid and correct. Further, we believe this policy should apply to pit disassembly and conversion as it has for pit manufacturing. Selecting SRS as the site for this program will reaffirm the Administration's position on this matter. Aside from being environmentally sound, the decision to consolidate the entire Plutonium Disposition Program makes economic sense as well. Siting the three components of this program at SRS will result in over \$1.6 billion of cost savings to the American Taxpayer, taking into consideration both capital and life cycle costs. The Department recently announced the intention to move to single complex-wide integrating contracts as part of an effort to increase efficiency. This concept should apply to the Materials Disposition Program. Selecting a single site and single contractor for all Plutonium Disposition Missions will result in greater efficiency.

SCD77

UNITED STATES SENATE, HONORABLE STROM THURMOND AND HONORABLE ERNEST F. HOLLINGS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, HONORABLE JAMES E. CLYBURN, LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, BOB INGLIS, MARK SANFORD,
FLOYD D. SPENCE, AND JOHN M. SPRATT, JR., SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 3 OF 3

will result in greater efficiency.

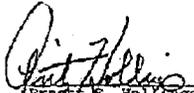
We are aware that the department is considering processing multiple waste products from other sites at SRS prior to their ultimate destination at a national repository, which we hope will be sited and open to receive waste materials on schedule. If DOE seeks cooperation from the people of South Carolina in this effort, then it is vital that attention be given to our concerns over future missions at SRS.

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Selecting SRS to take on the Plutonium Disposition Mission is the right decision for DOE and our Nation. SRS has the trained personnel, technological infrastructure, and community support to accept this mission. No other site can make such a claim. We firmly believe that the entire Plutonium Disposition Program should be sited at SRS. Selecting any other site would be costly, technically risky, and short-sighted.

With kindest regards and best wishes,

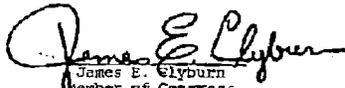
Sincerely,

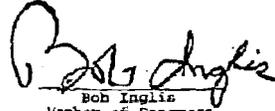

Ernest F. Hollings
United States Senator

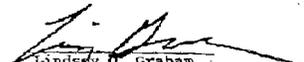

Strom Thurmond
United States Senator


Floyd D. Spence
Member of Congress


John M. Spratt, Jr.
Member of Congress


James E. Clyburn
Member of Congress


Bob Inglis
Member of Congress


Lindsey O. Graham
Member of Congress


Mark Sanford
Member of Congress

SCD77

UNITED STATES SENATE
HONORABLE STROM THURMOND, SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 1 OF 2

STROM THURMOND
SOUTH CAROLINA

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE
UNITED STATES SENATE

COMMITTEES
ARMED SERVICES CHAIRMAN
SUCCESSION
VETERANS AFFAIRS

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4001

August 13, 1998

Mr. Greg Rudy
Manager
Savannah River Site
Post Office Box A
Aiken, South Carolina 29802

Dear Mr. Rudy:

I regret that I am unable to attend today's hearing, but I would like to submit this statement for the record which outlines my support for the location of the pit disassembly mission at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

There are many strong and convincing reasons why the Savannah River Site is unquestionably the right choice to receive the entire plutonium disposition mission, not the least of which is that it is simply the most logical place to task with this critical function. As you know, two of the three plutonium disposition missions are already assigned to the Savannah River Site, and sending pit disassembly there guarantees efficiency in both program management and in budgetary considerations. I understand that by some estimates, giving SRS the pit disassembly mission will save the government approximately \$1.6 billion.

Furthermore, there is no location in the United States that has the infrastructure and highly skilled workforce in place to handle this mission. Locating pit disassembly at the Savannah River Site means that the Department of Energy (DoE) will be able to capitalize on assets already found in South Carolina. In an era when the Department of Energy is seeking ways to streamline its organization and to operate more efficiently, it does not make sense to split-up the plutonium disposition mission or to create what will be redundant infrastructure by building a pit disassembly facility at another DoE site.

Of course, public safety is an issue which must be taken into consideration and is one that exceeds all other considerations including budgetary savings. Plutonium is far too volatile a material to be handled by individuals or facilities that have no experience in dealing with it. As you know, the Savannah River Site has a longstanding and well earned reputation for safety. The men and women who work at SRS have been safely and efficiently handling plutonium since the 1950's and there is no reason for the Department of Energy to turn anywhere other than to a proven commodity.

In various documents published by the Department of Energy, that agency has acknowledged the suitability of the Savannah River Site for plutonium disposition missions. I refer to a 1997 Environmental Impact Statement, the Department of Energy referred to SRS as "a plutonium-competent site with the most modern, state-of-the-art storage and processing facilities, and... a site with the only remaining large-scale chemical separation and processing capability in the DoE complex." In a 1996 Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Stockpile Stewardship and Management regarding Pit Manufacturing at Pantex, DoE stated, "Plutonium would not be introduced into a site that does not currently have a plutonium infrastructure because of the high cost of new plutonium facilities and the complexity of introducing plutonium operations into sites without current plutonium

SCD44

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Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Senator's support for siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the proposed facilities because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and these facilities complement existing missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPDEIS ROD.

UNITED STATES SENATE
HONORABLE STROM THURMOND, SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 2 OF 2

capabilities.

Simply put, there is no better place in the United States to locate pit disassembly than the Savannah River Site, a modern facility with a proven safety record, and capable of carrying out the demanding requirements of plutonium disposition. This is an assessment with which officials at the Department of Energy agree.

Mr. Rudy, though your superiors at the Department of Energy are already well aware of my commitment to seeing pit disassembly being located at the Savannah River Site, I could not allow the opportunity to go "on the record" one more time to pass. I appreciate your including my comments in the proceedings of today's meeting.

With kindest regards and best wishes.

Sincerely,



Strom Thurmond

ST/jd

STATEMENT FOR PLUTONIUM DISPOSITION DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT -- NORTH AUGUSTA MEETING

Things going well in the committee
Good evening, my name is Maury Lane. I work ~~at~~

Senator Hollings' ~~office~~ and have been asked by the
Senator to convey his strong support for this new mission
for the Savannah River Site.

This is actually a extremely nice moment for me. As
many know, before I started with Sen. Hollings I worked
for Westinghouse, specifically on ensuring that we had
enough federal appropriations to operate the site and to
work with the local community to find new missions for
the site.

When I first I began at Westinghouse it was crystal
clear that the Savannah River Site had world-class
employees with world-class skills with a world-class
safety record. Let me tell you, *Mr. House then* ~~DOE~~ knows there ~~are~~
harder working, smarter, safer employees at any DOE site.

If Senator Hollings were here, he would say one thing
The Savannah River Site is the ONLY site for the
Immobilizations, MOX Fuel and Pit Dissassembly and
Conversion, because there is no leadership that can do it
better, cheaper, safer and quicker than the SRS site.

Why is SRS the right choice? Because the community

SCD16

SCD16-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Senator's support for siting the proposed surplus
plutonium disposition facilities at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6,
SRS is preferred for the proposed facilities because the site has extensive
experience with plutonium processing, and these facilities complement existing
missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the
surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental
analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation
considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding
facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the
SPDEIS ROD.

at SRS has assembled the safest and most capable work-
force in the department; the Site has the facilities and
infrastructure needed; it is the cheapest option
available, and, as you are seeing here today, it enjoys
the local community's complete support.

DOE should know what everyone in Aiken already knows:
SRS has the safest and best trained workers in the DOE
complex. The site has been successfully handling
plutonium since it was created in the 1950s. DOE itself
called SRS, "a plutonium-competent site, with the most
modern, state-of-the-art storage and processing
facilities."

As a member of the Senate Energy and Water
Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Hollings is keenly
aware of the great expense associated with handling
sensitive nuclear materials such as plutonium.

That is why we have been able to ensure that no
significant layoffs will occur in 1998 or 1999. In the
year 2000, we should be adding new jobs with the new MOX
mission through the next five years. That is a great
change from the difficult times of down-sizing.

Sen. Hollings has told DOE officials time and time
again that it makes no sense to introduce plutonium into

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a site which does not have plutonium infrastructure or plutonium handling capabilities. To duplicate SRS's experience, know-how, and plutonium handling facilities would take years of work and cost millions of dollars. This is a luxury DOE does not enjoy.

Senator Hollings not only believes it would be a mistake, but DOE officials know too. In fact, DOE has said in the past, ^{Quote} "Plutonium (should) not be introduced into a site that does not currently have a plutonium infrastructure because of the high cost of new plutonium facilities and the complexity of introducing plutonium operations into sites without current plutonium capabilities." ^{Unquote} Senator Hollings agrees with this conclusion. It should follow that the Pit Disassembly and Conversion Facility should not be built in a site which does not have plutonium infrastructure. The risks would be too great.

Further, it is estimated that consolidating all three of the plutonium disposition components at SRS would save taxpayers roughly \$1.6 billion over the life of the program. This is a savings we cannot ignore.

As I am sure DOE officials can see from this meeting, the Aiken/Augusta community supports this site and

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supports the addition of all of the plutonium disposition missions. When DOE brings these missions to South Carolina, it will know the depth of this support and the dedication of this community to DOE missions. In addition, the South Carolina Congressional delegation has the political will and power to secure these missions and keep them fully funded. [I challenge DOE to find political leadership any where else which is working as hard as this delegation is at SRS.]

The merits lie with SRS, but how do we ensure that DOE sees these advantages? I know Senator Hollings has pledged to do everything he can to "show DOE the light." I was in the room on several occasions when Senator Hollings called then Energy Secretary Pena to lobby for SRS and the MOX Fuel mission.

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The Senator made it clear that the Savannah River Site was the only site for the MOX fuel facility. I know the Secretary got tired of hearing from the Senator.

In fact, it was probably a great relief for Secretary Pena when he called the Senator to tell him ~~his arguments had been convincing~~ and that the MOX plant was coming to S.C. I know Senator Hollings was grateful the Secretary

UNITED STATES SENATE
MAURY LANE FOR THE HONORABLE ERNEST F. HOLLINGS, SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 5 OF 6

saw it his way.

Now, Senator Hollings has more work to do. With the new Secretary of Energy, Bill Richardson, the Senator has more wearing down to do. In fact, Sen. Hollings has already heated up the lines between his office and the Secretary's. I know the Senator has already contacted the Secretary and has begun working to ensure Secretary Richardson chooses SRS as the site of the Pit Disassembly and Conversion Facility. There is no doubt Senator Hollings will put all 32 years of his Washington experience and his position as the senior Democrat on the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee to work as he pushes DOE to do what is right and choose SRS as the Consolidated Plutonium Disposition Site.

Everyone at DOE should know this. The Savannah River Site has the capability to handle these missions in the safest, most cost-effective, and most efficient manner. Locating all three components here should be a simple decision, but simple decisions are not always made easily. I am sure Senator Hollings will make it his business to show the Secretary and the Department of Energy know just how easy this decision can be -- especially if SRS is chosen as the site.

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Speaking for Senator Hollings, I can tell you he looks forward to working with DOE over the next several months to make sure the Department sees the importance and the wisdom of consolidating all three missions here at SRS. I thank the Aiken/Augusta community for their outstanding support and hospitality and I thank you for your attendance and support.

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LINDSEY GRAHAM
3D DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA
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PLUTONIUM DISPOSITION AT SRS

I continue to support the Department of Energy's current dual-track Plutonium Disposition plan. I must reduce the risk of proliferation of these materials to rogue states or terrorist organizations and I must do this in a responsible, cost-effective manner. The people of the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) want to be part of the solution and I believe that Savannah River Site can and should play a vital role in disposing of this excess material.

The Department of Energy has made the right decision in selecting SRS and its skilled experienced work force as the MOX fuel fabrication site. I hope they continue to show that good judgement by selecting the most qualified, least expensive alternative for pit disassembly and conversion, the Savannah River Site. As I've said before, I have the luxury of having common sense and cost on my side, but, unfortunately, that doesn't always carry the day in Washington. It is incumbent upon us to prove this to DOE.

Savannah River Site is the best alternative for pit disassembly and conversion for the following reasons:

- ▶ Consolidating the three constituent parts of MOX (disassembly, conversion, and fabrication) at a site with existing plutonium infrastructure could save the Department and ultimately the taxpayers \$1.6 billion.
- ▶ The unparalleled community support for this program throughout South Carolina and Georgia, especially in the Aiken SC-Augusta GA area as evidenced by letters of support from Governor Beasley, numerous resolutions passed by local governments, several letters of support from the entire congressional delegation, and the appearance of so many Members of Congress here today.
- ▶ SRS has unparalleled expertise in dealing with plutonium and currently has the necessary plutonium infrastructure in place, an infrastructure that Pantex does not have.
- ▶ In the September 1996 Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Stockpile Stewardship and Management, the department wisely and correctly decided not to introduce plutonium oxide into a site that does not currently have a plutonium infrastructure.

"Plutonium would not be introduced into a site that does not currently have a plutonium infrastructure because of the high cost of new plutonium facilities and the complexity of introducing plutonium operations into sites without current plutonium capabilities."

Introduce plutonium into a site, like Pantex, that is already clean would create yet another Environmental Management cleanup problem.

- ▶ South Carolina has long been a supporter of the Department of Energy programs dating back to the Atomic Energy Commission and hopes to continue that relationship.

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SCD49

SCD49-1

Alternative

DOE acknowledges the Congressman's support for the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the pit conversion facility because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and the pit conversion facility complements existing missions and takes advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 1 OF 1

LINDSEY GRAHAM
3rd DISTRICT, SOUTH CAROLINA
ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL
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NATIONAL SECURITY COMMITTEE
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4003

June 18, 1997

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711 North Cherry Ave
Aiken, SC 29801
(803) 884-4571

Mario P. Fiori
Manager
U. S. Department of Energy
Savannah River Operations Office
PO Box A
Aiken, South Carolina 29802

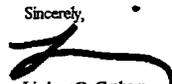
Dear Dr. Fiori:

I regret that I will not be able to personally attend the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) sponsored workshops regarding plutonium; however, I hope your workshops prove to be productive and educational for those who participate.

I feel Savannah River Site (SRS) is the logical site for the surplus plutonium disposition mission. SRS possesses a dedicated workforce that is experienced in handling plutonium combined with modernized facilities, support infrastructure, and tremendous community support.

I am very supportive of DOE's proposed dual track for plutonium disposition. Pursuing both disposal options will give the U. S. the flexibility to select the appropriate disposal technology for the different grades of plutonium. The purity of the weapons-grade plutonium makes it well suited for use in mixed-oxide (MOX) fuel. Immobilizing other grades of plutonium could be the best option for disposing of this particular material.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful day of workshops and relay my sincerest regrets that I am not able to join you.

Sincerely,

Lindsey O. Graham
Member of Congress

LOG:rat

SCD105

SCD105-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Congressman's support for siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the proposed facilities because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and these facilities complement existing missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 HONORABLE FLOYD D. SPENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
 PAGE 1 OF 1

FLOYD SPENCE
 20 District, South Carolina

COMMITTEES:
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Congress of the United States
 House of Representatives

June 19, 1997

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 Newberry
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 Spartanburg
 Sumter
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Mr. Howard R. Canter
 Acting Director
 Office of Fissile Materials Disposition
 United States Department of Energy
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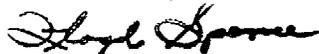
Dear Mr. Canter:

I would like to commend the Office of Fissile Materials Disposition for having public meetings concerning the proposed "Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement" (SPD EIS). These forums provide a valuable opportunity for concerned citizens to have input into the decision making process in this important matter. It is a pleasure for me to join those who are commenting on the capabilities of the Savannah River Site for conducting the United States Department of Energy surplus plutonium disposition mission.

The Savannah River Site is ideally suited for the surplus plutonium disposition mission. It possesses the only operating large-scale plutonium processing facilities in the United States, and it has a work force that is experienced in the handling of plutonium. It also conducts the only certified training program in our Country for this specialized work. Recently, facilities at the Savannah River Site, that would be utilized in performing the surplus plutonium disposition mission, have been modernized and, under oversight from the Department, as well as the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, the staff has completed a readiness review for restarting those facilities. It is also my understanding that the Savannah River Site has the best plutonium handling safety record of the Department's facilities.

It is clear that the Savannah River Site has the complete range of infrastructure that is needed to carry out the proposed plutonium mission, as well as a highly skilled work force. Additionally, there is strong support for this mission from the communities surrounding the Site. I urge the Department to give most careful consideration to the excellent capabilities of the Savannah River Site for conducting the surplus plutonium disposition mission.

Sincerely,


 FLOYD D. SPENCE
 Member of Congress

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SCD107

SCD107-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Congressman's support for siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the proposed facilities because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and these facilities complement existing missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE FLOYD D. SPENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 1 OF 3

AUG 13. 1998 10:17AM

*Jim Pantex
DOE officials
Cong. Nowwood*

STATEMENT BY CONGRESSMAN FLOYD D. SPENCE
FOR THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY PUBLIC MEETING
ON THE SURPLUS PLUTONIUM DISPOSITION DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT

THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 1998
NORTH AUGUSTA COMMUNITY CENTER - NORTH AUGUSTA, SOUTH CAROLINA

Please to be to help you make the proper decision in this matter

It is a pleasure for me to join those who are commenting today on the proposed sites for conducting the United States Department of Energy surplus plutonium disposition mission. I would like to commend the Office of Fissile Materials Disposition for having five (5) public meetings concerning the draft "Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement" (SPD EIS). These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for concerned citizens to have input into the decision making process in this important matter.

As the Congressman for the Second District of South Carolina, I am proud to represent an area of our State, which includes part of the Savannah River Site (SRS/Site), as well as counties that are heavily impacted by the Site. Also, as the Chairman of the House Committee on National Security, I am keenly aware of the crucial role that the Plutonium Disposition Program plays in our national security posture, which is of a high priority to the Congress.

The Department of Energy is currently assessing the capabilities of two locations, the SRS and the Pantex Plant, to carry out the first component of the Plutonium Disposition Program, that of pit disassembly and conversion. The Department is to be commended on the earlier decision to locate the Mixed-Oxide Fuel (MOX) Fabrication Facility at the SRS and I

would like to note at this point that, in the announcement of that decision, Former Secretary Pena particularly ~~emphasized~~ *put emphasis on the* the assets of the existing infrastructure and the expertise of the work force in *the handling of plutonium at the SRS.*

SCD18-1

Alternatives

DOE acknowledges the Congressman's support for siting the pit conversion facility at SRS. As indicated in the revised Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the pit conversion facility because the site has extensive experience with plutonium processing, and the pit conversion facility complements existing missions and takes advantage of existing infrastructure.

Because this comment relates directly to the cost analysis report, it has been forwarded to the cost analysis team for consideration. The *Plutonium Disposition Life-Cycle Costs and Cost-Related Comment Resolution Document* (DOE/MD-0013, November 1999), which covers recent life-cycle cost analyses associated with the preferred alternative, is available on the MD Web site at <http://www.doe-md.com> and in the public reading rooms at the following locations: Hanford, INEEL, Pantex, SRS and Washington, D.C. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program at SRS will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

-2-

the handling of plutonium at the SRS. These assets are equally as important to pit disassembly and conversion.

The SRS is ideally suited for the surplus plutonium disposition mission. It possesses the only operating large-scale plutonium processing capabilities in the United States, and the facilities that would be utilized in performing the surplus plutonium disposition mission have been modernized recently. Also, under oversight from the Department and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, the highly skilled staff at the SRS has completed a readiness review for the continued operations of those facilities.

Another significant factor to consider is that of safety. The SRS is acknowledged as the safest Department of Energy site, with the best plutonium handling safety record *of any of* the Department's facilities. The American public recognizes that there are serious risks related to the handling of plutonium. Therefore, it is vital that a specially trained and experienced work force be entrusted with this responsibility. The SRS has such a work force.

Economy is also very important. In the Department's recent cost report, it is submitted that locating the pit disassembly and conversion mission at the SRS would save taxpayers at least \$60 million. Furthermore, I have been advised that the potential savings could reach \$715 million, using the +/- 40 percent factor. As a Member of Congress, who is striving to achieve fiscal responsibility and to maintain a strong national defense, I encourage the

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UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HONORABLE FLOYD D. SPENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
PAGE 3 OF 3

-3-

Department to recognize the impressive savings benefits that are associated with locating this mission at the SRS.

In a joint letter to then Secretary Pena, on June 23, 1998, the entire South Carolina Congressional Delegation enthusiastically endorsed the location of the pit disassembly and conversion mission at the SRS. Additionally, there is strong support for this mission from the communities surrounding the Site, as well as throughout the ~~Palmetto~~ State of S.C.

In conclusion, it is clear that the SRS has the complete range of infrastructure and a highly skilled work force to meet the needs of the pit disassembly and conversion mission. Also, the SRS has an outstanding record of safely and efficiently handling plutonium, since the 1950's. In making a final decision in this matter, I urge the Department to carefully consider the impressive capabilities of the SRS. The ~~SRS~~ Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement, as well as the associated comments that have been obtained through this series of public meetings, should serve the Department well in this regard. As in the assessment that led to the Department's decision to locate the MOX facility at the SRS, I am convinced that, when completely evaluated on its merits, the SRS is the logical choice to be the site for the pit disassembly and conversion mission. Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to address this issue today.

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**UNITED STATES SENATE, HONORABLE KAY BAILEY HUTCHINSON AND
HONORABLE PHIL GRAMM, TEXAS
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KAY BAILEY HUTCHINSON
TEXAS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4304

August 11, 1998

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Fissile Materials Disposition
c/o SPD EIS
P.O. Box 23786
Washington, D.C. 20026-3786

Attention: Mr. Bert Stevenson, NEPA Compliance Officer

Re: Comment on DOE's Draft Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Stevenson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Department of Energy's (DOE) Draft Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement (SPD EIS).

First and foremost, any current and future functions at Pantex must be conducted in a safe and environmentally sound manner. Our first priority is to ensure that expansion at Pantex does not impair the health or safety of area residents or have an adverse effect on the environment. This must be a prerequisite to any current or future activities at Pantex.

We are aware that DOE has selected the Savannah River Site (SRS) as the preferred alternative for the MOX fuel fabrication facility and is considering SRS, along with Pantex, as the location for the disassembly/conversion mission. We do not understand DOE's decision to site the MOX facility at SRS, since Pantex remains the best and most cost-effective site for that mission.

However, with regard to the proposed plutonium disposition actions and alternatives discussed by the DOE in the SPD EIS, we are concerned that locating the conversion mission at a site other than Pantex would unnecessarily increase any safety hazards of dealing with plutonium. Such a decision would also ignore the facts that make Pantex the most economically rational site.

Pantex is uniquely suited to assume this new function. Pantex currently safeguards more than 8,000 surplus pits and has a long history of effectively and safely handling and securing pits and the related infrastructure. Furthermore, given the current weapons disassembly and storage functions at Pantex, disassembly and conversion of the pits already located there is consistent with the historic mission of the plant.

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General SPD EIS and NEPA Process

DOE acknowledges the Senators' support for siting the pit conversion and MOX facilities at Pantex. The environmental impacts of siting the proposed surplus plutonium disposition facilities at Pantex are summarized in Section 2.18.1 and analyzed in various sections in Chapter 4 of Volume I. The analyses show that such action would not have a major effect on the health, safety, and environmental resources in the Amarillo area.

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Alternatives

As indicated in Section 1.6, SRS is preferred for the MOX and pit conversion facilities because these activities complement existing missions and take advantage of existing infrastructure and staff expertise. In addition, SRS has extensive experience with plutonium processing. Decisions on the surplus plutonium disposition program will be based on environmental analyses, technical and cost reports, national policy and nonproliferation considerations, and public input. DOE will announce its decisions regarding facility siting and approach to surplus plutonium disposition in the SPD EIS ROD.

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Alternatives

In determining its preference, DOE also considered the transportation requirements for each alternative, including the shipment of surplus plutonium both in the form of pits (Alternative 3) and plutonium dioxide (Alternative 5) from Pantex to SRS. The transportation risks and costs would be slightly higher for Alternative 3 because the required number of SST/SGT shipments are higher for pits than plutonium dioxide. The radiological risk for both alternatives is about the same. All the candidate sites were considered to have adequate safeguards and security systems in place, as well as the capability to perform the necessary radiation monitoring and dosimetry.

Although cost will be a factor in the decisionmaking process, this SPD EIS contains environmental impact data and does not address the costs associated with the various alternatives. A separate cost report, *Cost Analysis in Support of Site Selection for Surplus Weapons-Usable Plutonium Disposition* (DOE/MD-0009, July 1998), which analyzes the site-specific cost

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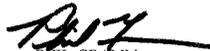
There are a number of other budgetary and policy reasons why DOE should site disposition functions at Pantex. First, due to its lower labor costs and utility rates, as well as its abundant **water and land availability, Pantex clearly is more cost-effective than SRS over the life of the program.** Second, transportation of plutonium in non-classified form (after disassembly and conversion at Pantex) to the SRS is far preferable to the perils that would be incurred by unnecessarily shipping plutonium in a weapons-ready form. Third, Pantex has the necessary **safety, security, and surveillance capabilities to accommodate an expanded role.** Finally, the Pantex plant enjoys unparalleled public and congressional support for new missions and could provide them at the lowest cost to the taxpayer.

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In summary, we strongly believe that Pantex should be selected for the pit disassembly and conversion facility as soon as possible so that our country and DOE's plutonium disposition mission in general can benefit from Pantex's cost, safety, and productivity record. There is not another facility in the world that can perform this mission at the same caliber of Pantex.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this decision-making process.

Sincerely,


PHIL GRAMM
United States Senator


KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON
United States Senator

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estimates for each alternative, was made available around the same time as the SPD Draft EIS. This report and the *Plutonium Disposition Life-Cycle Costs and Cost-Related Comment Resolution Document* (DOE/MD-0013, November 1999), which covers recent life-cycle cost analyses associated with the preferred alternative, are available on the MD Web site at <http://www.doe-md.com> and in the public reading rooms at the following sites: Hanford, INEEL, Pantex, SRS, and Washington, D.C.