

Chamber of Commerce, Blount Partnership

Maryville, TN

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January 17, 2001

Mr. Gary S. Hartman
U.S. Department of Energy-Oak Ridge Operations
P.O. Box 2001
Oak Ridge, TN 37831

Dear Mr. Hartman:

The Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge plays a major role in supporting our nation's security in facilities that are woefully out of date. We have followed the process of the Department's site-wide environmental impact statement, and offer the following comments to be included in the record.

The Blount Partnership supports the modernization of the complex with the construction of new storage, special materials and enriched uranium facilities. These new facilities are included in Alternative IV of your SWEIS document, and are the preferred alternative of the Department of Energy.

The Y-12 Complex's mission is to:

- Effectively remanufacture, surveil, and assess all uranium, lithium, and secondary components in the nuclear stockpile while protecting people and the environment.
- Safely store, process and dispose of uranium, lithium and secondary components associated with the nuclear stockpile.
- Perform complementary work that reduces DOE's burden in maintaining Y-12's capability while contributing to regional economic development.

It is clear that to successfully complete these missions, we must invest in modern, safe, secure environmentally sound manufacturing facilities that are sized correctly and that are equipped with the latest technology for precision manufacturing. Pieces of every weapon in the U.S. nuclear stockpile are manufactured at Y-12. In these times of change, it is important that we maintain the stockpile in a safe reliable manner, and retire those components that are being removed from the stockpile just as safely.

Y-12 is a cornerstone of the East Tennessee economy. It employs about 4,000 people, and operates on a \$400+ million annual budget. Technologies coming out of the Complex have created new companies in East Tennessee and across the nation. Partnerships between the Y-12 Complex and the state of Tennessee have supported existing industries and helped teach young people the importance of manufacturing skills.

It is time to invest in security. We strongly support the modernization of the Y-12 Complex.

Sincerely,

Fred Forster, President/CEO
Blount Partnership



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includes: Blount County Chamber of Commerce, Smoky Mountain Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chamber Foundation, Industrial Development Board

1/22 **Comment No. 1**
Comment noted.

Issue Code: 22

2/16 **Comment No. 2**
Comment noted.

Issue Code: 16