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-----Original Message-----
From: Kathryn Young [mailto:bukalo126@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2004 12:24 PM
To: tom.grim@oak.doe.gov
Subject: no nukes please

Dear Mr. Grim,

As a former school teacherand concerned citizen, I find it difficult to express my fear and outrage about the nuclear plans.

Please consider this letter with my comments on the environmental and proliferation risks from proposed nuclear weapons development and new plutonium and tritium programs at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL).

1/02.01 I write to you because the DOE has prepared a draft Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS) that proposes to ramp up nuclear weapons activities at the Livermore Lab in Northern California. Livermore Lab is working on the design of a new, high-yield nuclear bunker-buster, called the "Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator," and I oppose its development. Additionally, I oppose the development of so-called "mini-nukes" and other new nuclear weapons concepts being researched at Livermore Lab.

Here are my comments on six dangerous new programs being proposed at Livermore Lab.

2/08.02 1. Storage of More Nuclear Materials: This plan will more than double the storage limit for plutonium at Livermore Lab from 1,540 pounds to 3,300 pounds. It would increase the radioactive tritium storage limit from 30 grams to 35 grams. I join California Peace Action and the Livermore-based Tri-Valley CAREs group in calling on DOE to de-inventory the plutonium and tritium stocks at Livermore Lab, not increase them.

3/27.01, 33.01 2. Plutonium Atomic Vapor Laser Isotope Separation (AVLIS): This plan will revive a project that was canceled more than 10 years ago because it was dangerous and unnecessary. The project is Plutonium AVLIS. This is a scheme to heat and vaporize plutonium and then shoot multiple laser beams through the hot vapor to separate out plutonium isotopes. To do this, Livermore Lab plans to increase the amount of plutonium that can be used at one time in any one room from 44 pounds to 132 pounds a 3-fold increase. I join California Peace Action and the Livermore-based Tri-Valley CAREs in calling for cancellation of this project.

4/26.01, 26.03 3. Dangerous New Experiments in the National Ignition Facility Mega-Laser: This plan will add plutonium, highly-enriched uranium and lithium hydride to experiments in the National

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4/26.01, 26.03 cont. Ignition Facility (NIF) mega-laser when it is completed at Livermore Lab. Using these materials in the NIF will increase its usefulness for nuclear weapons development. It will also make the NIF more hazardous to workers and the environment. I join California Peace Action and the Livermore-based Tri-Valley CAREs in calling for a close out of the NIF project and termination of plans to use plutonium and other new materials in it.

5/37.01 4. New Technologies for Producing Plutonium Bomb Cores: This plan makes Livermore Lab the place to test new manufacturing technologies for producing plutonium pits for nuclear weapons. A pit is the softball-sized piece of plutonium that sits inside a modern nuclear weapon and triggers its thermonuclear explosion. DOE says these new technologies will then be used in a new bomb core factory, called the Modern Pit Facility (MPF). The Livermore Lab plutonium pit program will enable the MPF and production of 150 - 450 plutonium bomb cores annually, with the ability to run double shifts and produce 900 per year. This production capability would approximate the combined nuclear arsenals of France and China each year. I join California Peace Action and the Livermore-based Tri-Valley CAREs in calling for termination of this technology development project.

6/39.01 5. Enhancing Readiness to Resume Full-Scale Nuclear Tests: This plan calls for Livermore Lab to develop diagnostics to "enhance" the nation's readiness to conduct full-scale underground nuclear tests at the Nevada Test Site. This is a dangerous step back to the days of unrestrained nuclear testing and I join with California Peace Action and Tri-Valley CAREs to oppose any move to "enhance" U.S. readiness to conduct full-scale tests.

7/35.01 6. Mixing Bugs and Bombs: This plan mixes bugs and bombs at Livermore Lab. It calls for collocating an advanced bio-warfare agent research facility with nuclear weapons activities in a classified area at Livermore Lab. The DOE proposes genetic modification and aerosolization (spraying) with live anthrax, plague and other deadly pathogens on site at LLNL. This could weaken the international biological weapons treaty -- and it poses a risk to workers, the public and the environment here in the California. Interestingly, this program is listed as part of LLNL's "no action alternative" as though it were an existing program -- even though it is not yet constructed, Tri-Valley CAREs has brought litigation against it, and a federal Judge has issued a "stay" prohibiting the importation of dangerous pathogens into the facility while the lawsuit moves forward. I join Tri-Valley CAREs in opposing the operation of a bio-warfare agent facility at Livermore Lab.

8/04.01 I believe the DOE plan to introduce new weapons programs into LLNL will promote a new arms race and escalate the nuclear danger. Further, the DOE proposal to double LLNL's plutonium storage limit to 3,300 pounds and triple the amount held "at risk" in any one room increases the environmental threat LLNL poses to the people of California. The SWEIS propels Livermore Lab in exactly the wrong direction.

9/07.01 Instead of proposing new weapons projects, DOE should enhance the peaceful, civilian scientific capabilities and mission at Livermore Lab by proposing new, unclassified programs in environmental cleanup, non-polluting and renewable energy, earth sciences, astrophysics, atmospheric physics and others. The alternative of a "green lab" in Livermore should be pursued instead of the dangerous nuclear weapons future proposed by the Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Young
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