

Alliance for Nuclear Accountability

*A national network of organizations working to address issues of
nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup*

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS – SPRING, 2016

Congress should cut unnecessary spending on nuclear weapons and save money.

- **Cancel the Long-Range Stand Off (LRSO) warhead Life Extension Program (LEP) and the new cruise missile that will deliver it.** That action would eliminate the \$220 million in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Budget Request and the estimated \$30 billion total cost.
- **Cancel the “Interoperable Warhead-1,”** also called the W78/88-1 LEP, which is delayed, but should be cancelled to save future costs estimated at around \$12 billion.
- **Require NATO cost-sharing for the B61-12 LEP,** which is now estimated at more than \$10 billion for the bomb and its new tail kit (more than twice its weight in solid gold). The FY 2017 budget request for the B61-12 LEP is more than \$616 million. B61s are housed in the U.S. and five NATO countries, so NATO should pay some of the costs.

Congress should cut funding for expensive and excessive weapons production facilities.

- **Reduce the FY 2017 funding for the Uranium Processing Facility (\$575 million).** Suspend the project until there is a clearly demonstrated need for new secondaries, a new supplemental environmental impact statement is completed, and contractors are held accountable for past design mistakes that cost more than \$500 million.
- **Cut FY 2017 funding for expanded plutonium pit production (\$185 million) and suspend expansion of plutonium pit production.** Pits last at least 85 years and no new ones are needed for the existing nuclear weapons stockpile.

Congress and the Administration should support Curatorship as a superior, cost-effective way to manage the existing stockpile until the weapons are dismantled. Curatorship principles include: stringent surveillance of the weapons, replacement of components only if they are shown to be degrading and pose a safety or reliability risk, and when needed, remanufacture of parts as close as possible to original specifications.

Congress should require an increase in the rate of nuclear weapons dismantlement and increase funding for the program to at least \$100 million. A backlog of 2,500 warheads is awaiting dismantlement. Because they are expensive to guard, accelerating the dismantlement rate will save money and reduce nuclear weapons threats.

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ALLIANCE FOR NUCLEAR ACCOUNTABILITY

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Congress should increase accountability by addressing Department of Energy (DOE) mismanagement, halting funding of unneeded facilities, and providing adequate funding to address contamination that threatens the environment, workers and public health.

Congress should halt MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility funding. Congress should fund secure plutonium storage at the Savannah River Site and require DOE to expedite an environmental study of disposition alternatives, including immobilization (via glassification) of plutonium in high-level nuclear waste and alternative use of the partially constructed MOX plant. The MOX plant is not financially or technically viable and has no utility customers. Safe plutonium storage is required while an environmental study identifies better alternatives.

Congress should provide sufficient funding for safe transuranic waste storage at existing sites and not authorize or fund any expansion of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The cost and schedule to return WIPP to normal operations are unknown, but it will take at least several years to restore full ventilation to the mine. Sufficient funding is necessary for safe transuranic (plutonium-contaminated) storage at about a dozen sites.

Congress should not authorize or fund consolidated storage of spent nuclear fuel, nor DOE's "consent-based" process. Spent fuel can remain in on-site storage at nuclear plants. Consolidated storage would not solve the waste problem but would increase transportation costs and risks, and could allow for reprocessing, which is environmentally damaging, very costly, and a proliferation threat. The FY 2017 Budget Request of \$39.4 million for a "consent" siting process should be eliminated because it is premature: there are no technical standards and DOE is not the proper waste management agency.

Congress must require a reformed high-level waste program that actually increases environmental protection, now and in the future. Although DOE spends 40 percent of its cleanup budget on high-level waste (HLW), that waste still threatens the environment and worker health. New environmentally compliant tanks at Hanford are needed *now*. Congress should require an independent audit of HLW programs at DOE sites to determine how much funding has been wasted, what contractors should pay back, and how to avoid mismanagement in the future decades that are required to address the wastes.

Congress must provide funds for timely, effective cleanup and increase federal and state regulatory authority over DOE. Inadequate funding for non-HLW cleanup at Hanford and for exhumation of waste at Los Alamos threatens the environment and public health. Increased state and federal (non-DOE) regulatory authority over DOE's radioactive material is needed to bring about timely, effective cleanup.

Congress must provide funds from the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) budget for cleanup of abandoned, heavily contaminated buildings that are deteriorating. Congress should authorize, appropriate, and "fence" funds in the FY 2017 NNSA budget to establish a separate account to initiate cleanup of the highest priority "excess high-risk facilities."