

[DNFSB LETTERHEAD]

June 10, 1997

The Honorable Federico F. Peña
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Peña:

This letter acknowledges receipt of your acceptance, dated [April 25, 1997](#), of Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) Recommendation 97-1, *Safe Storage of Uranium-233*. The Board is encouraged by your timely acceptance of the recommendation, in concert with the initiatives already begun by the Department of Energy (DOE) to address the technical issues identified therein.

The Board understands your need to proceed deliberately with regard to the organizational changes necessary to address this issue. However, the Board would like to reiterate its strong opinion on the importance of the organizational structure for managing the corrective actions needed to ensure that uranium-233 is safely stored. While you are reviewing the results of DOE's ongoing studies related to organizational alternatives, you might consider one option the Board believes has a strong probability of success. This would be to establish a responsible line manager at Headquarters, reporting directly to an Assistant Secretary, with authority to allocate money to the appropriate sites for characterization, treatment, packaging, and facility upgrade work.

The Board has established a project team to work closely with your staff in the development of an implementation plan to fully address the technical issues outlined in the recommendation. The Board looks forward to continued progress in this important area.

Sincerely,

John T. Conway
Chairman

c: Mr. Mark B. Whitaker, Jr.