



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

May 22, 2012

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DNF SAFETY BOARD

The Honorable Peter S. Winokur
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Chairman Winokur:

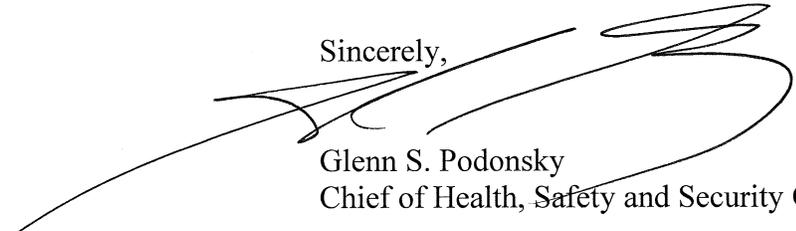
Thank you for inviting me to testify at this morning's Board hearing regarding safety culture at the Department of Energy's (DOE) Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) and our efforts to assess the safety culture at other facilities and programs throughout the Department.

I want to congratulate you and the Board for a very productive and insightful hearing. I felt that the discussion at this hearing was another large step forward for both the Department and the Board in effectively responding to the safety culture concerns raised at WTP. The energies invested in this matter over the past several months among the Board, DOE line management, the Department's senior leadership, and the Office of Health, Safety and Security (HSS) have set the Department on a strong course toward fixing the problems that have been identified and strengthening the safety culture for the benefit of thousands of DOE workers and the public.

I would like to correct the record with respect to comments made by the public commenter, who indicated that he did not receive a response from me regarding his safety concerns at the WTP. The individual initially contacted me in January, 2012. Upon receipt of his inquiry, I requested that the HSS senior leaders who are responsible for enforcement of worker safety and health regulations speak with the individual to hear his concerns. Both the Director of the Office of Worker Safety and Health Enforcement and the Deputy Director for Enforcement spoke with the individual. I subsequently encouraged the senior leadership of Bechtel National, Inc. to meet with the individual to hear his concerns. The company did meet with him and reported to us a very positive discussion. In fact, I referenced this interaction during my appearance at the Board hearing this morning. When the individual later contacted me again, following his termination due to apparently inappropriate public behavior, I did not return that contact.

Again, thank you for a very fruitful hearing. I look forward to continuing our constructive dialogue and to continuing our partnership in addressing the very important issue of DOE's safety culture.

Sincerely,



Glenn S. Podonsky
Chief of Health, Safety and Security Officer

