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**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES
SAFETY BOARD**

Washington, DC 20004-2901



June 1, 2012

Dr. Charles V. Shank
Co-Chairman
Committee to Review the Quality of the Management and
of the Science and Engineering Research at the
Department of Energy's National Security Laboratories
Laboratory Assessments Board
Division on Engineering and Physical Sciences
National Research Council
500 Fifth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Dr. Shank:

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) appreciates the time you spent with us on April 19, 2012, to help us understand your committee's phase I report: *Managing for High-Quality Science and Engineering at the NNSA* [National Nuclear Security Administration] *National Security Laboratories*. Based on our discussions, there is one item on which we would like to request written clarification.

In our understanding, you indicated that the scope reviewed by your committee did not include the safety of high-hazard operations or facilities. In particular, you stated that you did not review the safety of activities at nuclear weapons production facilities, and other defense nuclear facilities under the jurisdiction of the Board—in fact, for that very reason, you did not consider it necessary to meet with the Board prior to concluding phase I of the study and issuing the report.

In observing recent events, however, the Board has noted that your committee's report is being cited as the basis for actions being proposed by Congress in bill HR4310 that affect the safety of operations at NNSA's high-hazard defense nuclear facilities. Therefore, it would be helpful if you could confirm for us that we did not misunderstand your presentation—that, in fact, the scope of the committee's report is not intended to address safety at defense nuclear facilities.

Thank you again for taking the time to speak to the Board. We look forward to hearing back from you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Peter S. Winokur, Ph.D.
Chairman