



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

December 16, 2025

The Honorable Patricia L. Lee
Board Member
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Dr. Lee:

This letter is in response to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's (DNFSB) October 16, 2025, correspondence, which provided the results of your staff's review and evaluation of the transportable storage containers (TSC) closure welding process at Hanford's Waste Encapsulation and Storage Facility (WESF). On October 27, 2025, the Department of Energy (DOE) discussed the reporting requirements in more detail with the DNFSB Staff and assessed the time needed to coordinate a response. DOE requests a 90-day extension to provide a briefing to the Board by March 16, 2026.

A 90-day extension will afford DOE sufficient time to coordinate internally to address the Board's concerns regarding DOE's path forward for ensuring the long-term confinement integrity of TSCs at WESF and the promulgation of related lessons learned.

We will continue to provide DNFSB staff with periodic updates to confirm that they are kept informed of our progress and their input is considered.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Mr. Raymond Geimer, Manager, Hanford Field Office, at (509) 376-7395.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy J. Walsh".

Timothy J. Walsh
Assistant Secretary
for Environmental Management

cc: Joe Olencz, EHSS-1.1