

AFFIRMATION OF BOARD VOTING RECORD

SUBJECT: RFBA by Board Member Connery to Direct Office Directors to draft a plan for HQ staff to return to Headquarters

Doc Control#: 2020-300-0025

The Board acted on the above document on 06/30/2020. The document was Failed.

The votes were recorded as:

	APRVD	DISAPRVD	ABSTAIN	NOT PARTICIPATING	COMMENT	DATE
Bruce Hamilton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	06/30/2020
Jessie H. Roberson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	06/30/2020
Joyce L. Connery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	06/29/2020

This Record contains a summary of voting on this matter together with the individual vote sheets, views and comments of the Board Members.

Shelby Qualls

Executive Secretary to the Board

Attachments:

1. Voting Summary
2. Board Member Vote Sheets

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

NOTATIONAL VOTE RESPONSE SHEET

FROM: Bruce Hamilton

SUBJECT: RFBA by Board Member Connery to Direct Office Directors to draft a plan for HQ staff to return to Headquarters

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DATE: 06/30/2020

VOTE: Not Participating

COMMENTS:

This Board Action, if approved, would task Office Directors to draft a return to Headquarters plan which would be subject to subsequent Board approval. The Action is both unnecessary and detrimental to the operation of the agency during the COVID-19 pandemic for the following reasons:

1. A plan is already in place the Continuity of Operations Plan, or COOP, was activated on March 13, 2020 and has been revised a dozen times to adapt to the changing circumstances. It is the best approach to managing the operations of the agency during the pandemic;
2. Office Directors have already prepared recommendations on Administration Reopening Guidelines for the Agency. I have used that April 24, 2020 document to inform me on revising the COOP as the situation has evolved, and it is appropriately adequate for an organization of our small size;
3. This train has already left the station. As of this week, Revision 12 of the COOP has the agency operating in rough parity to state and local governments in the National Capital Region and the Secretary of Energys headquarters who have transitioned to Phase 2 of reopening; and,
4. Emergency operations such as this pandemic require unity of command and the ability to adapt promptly to the changing environment. This Board Action would start a chain of events that would lead to command by committee. It would erode and make ineffective the clear, unified and flexible executive direction called for by the situation.

I loathe the idea of not participating in motions before the Board in order to prevent Board Action, as my voting record over the past five years demonstrates. When it comes to issues of the adequate protection of public health and safety, I believe the Secretary of Energy deserves to hear recommendations, advice, and observations from the Boards majority opinion. I have never used lack of quorum to stop such actions, even when I strongly disagreed with them, and even when I knew I could block them simply by declining to participate. Likewise, when it comes to policies which define the Agencys organization, priorities, and general operations, I have deferred to the will majority of the Board rather than using lack of quorum to thwart policies with which I disagreed.

This case is unique. We are in the midst of a national emergency, with an active COOP, and with conditions constantly changing. For all of the reasons articulated above, but particularly point #4, I will not allow the imposition of this action. I reluctantly refrain from tendering my vote in order to prevent a quorum.

I therefore do not participate.

Bruce Hamilton

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

NOTATIONAL VOTE RESPONSE SHEET

FROM: Jessie H. Roberson

SUBJECT: RFBA by Board Member Connery to Direct Office Directors to draft a plan for HQ staff to return to Headquarters

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DATE: 06/30/2020

VOTE: Approved

Member voted by email.

COMMENTS:

None

Jessie H. Roberson

DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

NOTATIONAL VOTE RESPONSE SHEET

FROM: Joyce L. Connery

SUBJECT: RFBA by Board Member Connery to Direct Office Directors to draft a plan for HQ staff to return to Headquarters

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DATE: 06/29/2020

VOTE: Approved

COMMENTS:

OMB-OPM guidance related to COVID-19 requires agencies to develop plans to protect the health and safety of employees and support a phased return to normal work operations. To date, we have no written or voted upon plan. We have not communicated to the staff members the details of any plan so that they may assess the risk and determine the course of action most suitable to their circumstances. This RFBA empowers the Office Directors to develop such a plan and present it to the Board for its consideration.

Joyce L. Connery