

April 22, 1999

The Honorable Bill Richardson
Secretary
US Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

Mr. Keith Klein, Manager
Richland Operations Office
US Department of Energy
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Hanford Openness Workshops

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*The Hanford Openness
Workshops are a
collaborative effort
among the U.S.
Department of Energy-
Richland Operations
Office, the Consortium
for Risk Evaluation
with Stakeholder
Participation, the
Oregon Office of
Energy, the Washington
Department of Ecology,
and regional Tribal
and citizen
representatives.*

Dear Secretary Richardson and Mr. Klein:

On behalf of the Hanford Openness Workshops (HOW), I am writing to bring to your attention the importance of the Hanford Declassification Project (HDP) and to urge that it receive full funding in the Fiscal Year 2001 budget and through to completion of the project in 2003.

In this time of increased concern about security and possible espionage at the national laboratories, there is a very real danger of the US Department of Energy (USDOE) slipping backward on its openness initiative by incorrectly equating openness with lax security. There is no such relationship. As the Secretary of Energy's Openness Advisory Panel has said, openness is about putting higher fences around a narrower range of information, thereby increasing security.

The Hanford Declassification Project is an important part of this process. Rick Sturheit of the USDOE Richland Operations Office has provided the HOW with regular updates on the Project and its progress. Roger Heusser, USDOE Office of Declassification has helped us understand how the Project fits in with declassification efforts at USDOE Headquarters. It is clear that the Project is a model for what could be—and what needs to be—accomplished at other sites. The Project must be completed successfully so that it can be replicated elsewhere. Any funding shortfall creates a backlog which threatens the success of the project.

The Hanford Declassification Project is also essential to the Hanford clean up effort. Because of dramatic reductions in security clearances at the site, the vast majority of technical and operations staff involved in Hanford clean up are "uncleared." It is necessary to declassify and provide legacy documents to the contractors who are performing the clean up work. In many cases, these documents provide crucial data for characterizing work areas and performing clean up in a safe manner. The Hanford Declassification Project frequently performs reviews to facilitate these activities.

IS OPENNESS WORKING? A PROGRESS REPORT
HANFORD OPENNESS WORKSHOPS, FALL 1999

APPENDIX 12. HOW HDP FUNDING LETTER

Honorable Bill Richardson

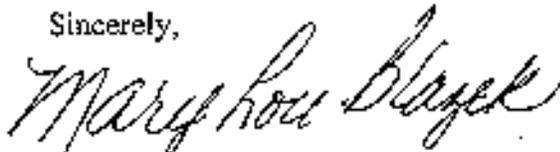
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Funding the Project is also necessary for USDOE to be in compliance with the Tri-Party Agreement and other legal obligations, as we understand them. Declassification requirements in current contracts (see Code of Federal Regulations Title 48, Chapter 9, 952.204-70) cannot be met if the Project is not adequately funded.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can answer any questions about this letter or the Hanford Openness Workshops. I can be reached at (503) 378-5544.

Sincerely,



Mary Lou Blazek
Spokesperson

Enc: HOW 1998 Report Executive Summary
HDP Background Information

cc: Lloyd Piper, DOE-RL
Rick Stutheit, DOE-RL
Roger Heusser, DOE-HQ
Richard Meserve, Openness Advisory Panel