

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 7, 2008

The Honorable Peter J. Visclosky
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David L. Hobson
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky and Ranking Member Hobson:

As you develop the Fiscal Year 2009 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you restore funding for the Department of Energy's Environmental Management program to \$6.6 billion.

The Department of Energy (DOE) has a legal responsibility to cleanup the federal government's nuclear weapons manufacturing and testing sites across the nation. In President Bush's first term, DOE and the Office of Management and Budget launched an accelerated cleanup initiative that promised increased Environmental Management budgets with a focus first on closing several small sites such as Rocky Flats, Portsmouth and Fernald. With accelerated cleanup came a commitment from DOE that once these sites were cleaned up, the higher level of funding would be distributed among the larger, more complex sites like Hanford, Idaho, Oak Ridge and Savannah River.

Under the accelerated cleanup initiative, funding for Environmental Management cleanup peaked at \$7.3 billion in Fiscal Year 2005. DOE declared Rocky Flats clean in 2005 and the Fernald site cleanup complete in 2007. DOE estimates that it saved tens of billions of dollars and several decades by accelerating cleanup at these two sites alone. Accelerated cleanup has been shown to save money over the long run and eliminate threats to human and environmental health and safety.

Despite successful closure of several small sites, the shift of funding from closed sites to the larger sites never materialized. In fact, the budget for the Environmental Management program has dropped over \$1 billion in just three years – falling from \$6.6 billion in Fiscal Year 2006 to \$5.5 billion in the Fiscal Year 2009 request submitted by President Bush in February.

Reduced funding limits progress both at DOE's large sites and at its smaller sites, such as Paducah, Portsmouth, and West Valley and numerous National Nuclear Security

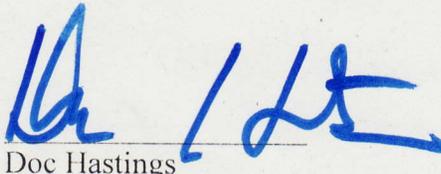
Administration (NNSA) sites such as Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, and the Nevada Test Site.

DOE will miss 23 legal milestones as a direct result of funding shortfalls in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget request. Perhaps more troubling, DOE has stated that due to these cuts, a substantial amount of work necessary to meet future milestones and obligations will not be performed. As a consequence, DOE will continue to fall behind in meeting legal cleanup obligations well into the future.

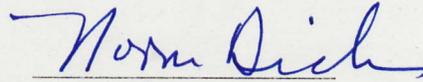
Under the reduced budget proposed for Fiscal Year 2009, cleanup would ultimately take longer and cost taxpayers more due to increasing maintenance costs on aging facilities and equipment, escalating operational costs, and more stringent security requirements. By delaying cleanup, reduced budgets mean greater environmental and safety risks and cause the layoff of hundreds of skilled workers.

We believe that DOE must have a sustainable cleanup budget that receives steady and reliable funding from one year to the next. We are concerned about the inadequate Environmental Management budget requested by the Administration and about the continuing downward trend in the nuclear cleanup funding. It is for this reason that we ask your assistance in reversing these proposed cuts and restoring the nuclear cleanup budget to a responsible level of \$6.6 billion.

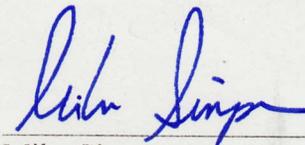
Sincerely,



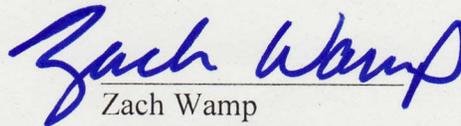
Doc Hastings
Member of Congress



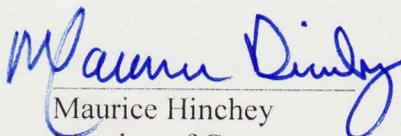
Norm Dicks
Member of Congress



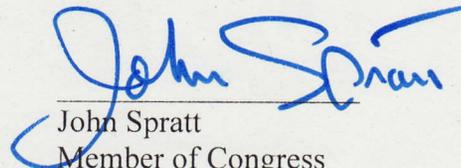
Mike Simpson
Member of Congress



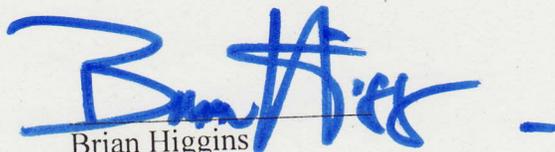
Zach Wamp
Member of Congress

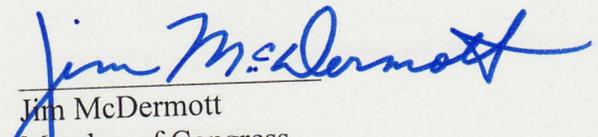


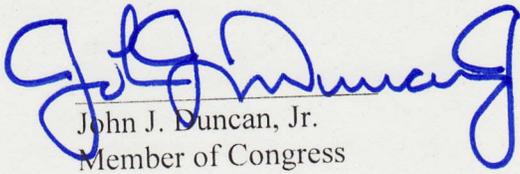
Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress

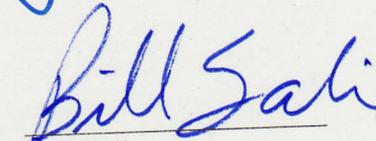


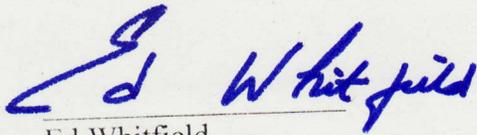
John Spratt
Member of Congress

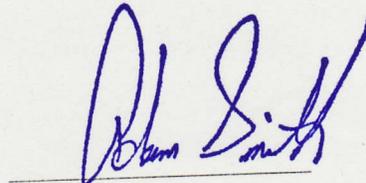

Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

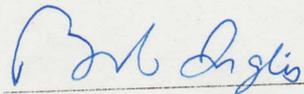

Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

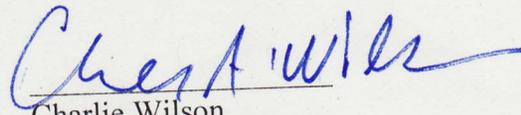

John J. Duncan, Jr.
Member of Congress

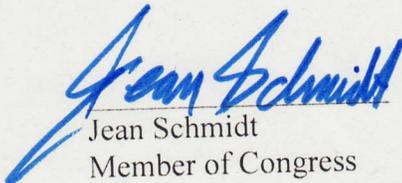

Bill Sali
Member of Congress

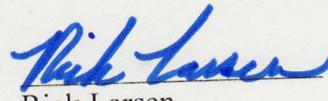

Ed Whitfield
Member of Congress

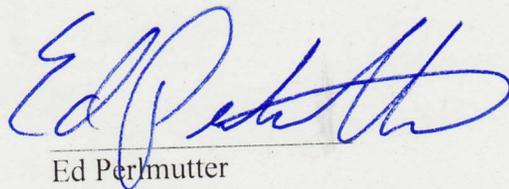

Adam Smith
Member of Congress


Bob Inglis
Member of Congress

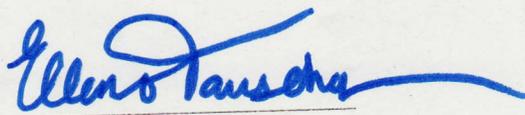

Charlie Wilson
Member of Congress

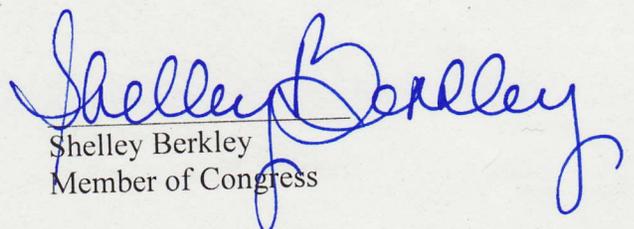

Jean Schmidt
Member of Congress

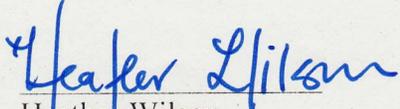

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

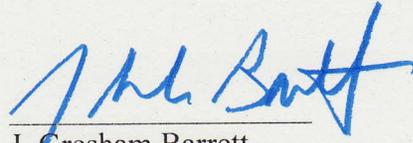

Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

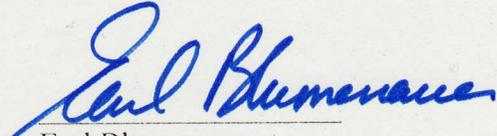

Paul Broun
Member of Congress

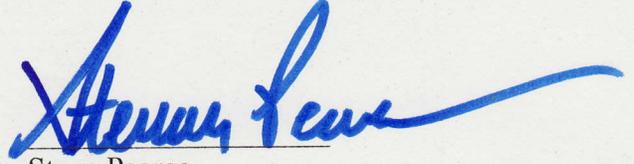

Ellen Tauscher
Member of Congress

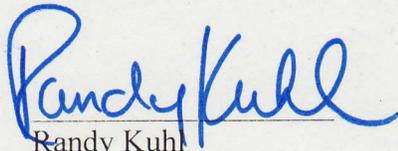

Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress

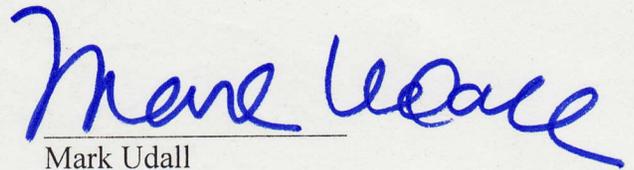

Heather Wilson
Member of Congress

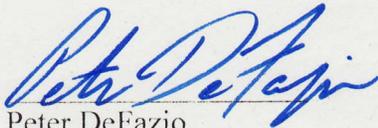

J. Gresham Barrett
Member of Congress

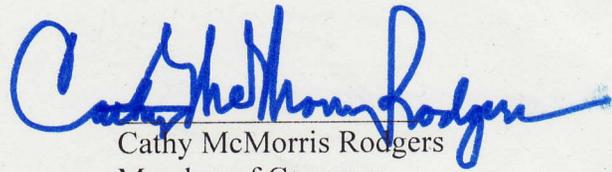

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

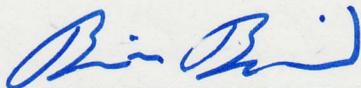

Steve Pearce
Member of Congress


Randy Kuhl
Member of Congress

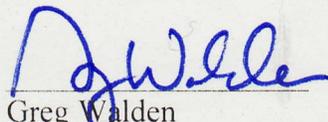

Mark Udall
Member of Congress

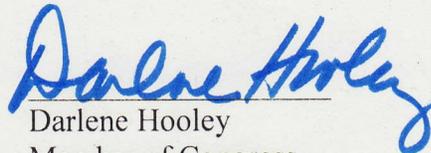

Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress


Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

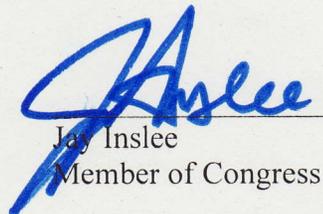

Brian Baird
Member of Congress

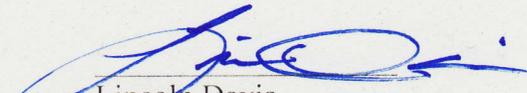

David Reichert
Member of Congress


Greg Walden
Member of Congress

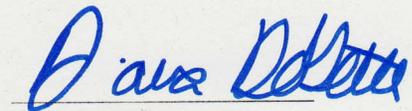

Darlene Hooley
Member of Congress


David Wu
Member of Congress

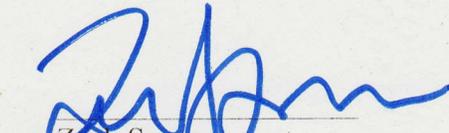

Jay Inslee
Member of Congress



Lincoln Davis
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Zack Space
Member of Congress