

General



Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

October 2, 2012

The Honorable David Martin
Secretary
New Mexico Environment Department
Harold Runnels Building
P.O. Box 5469
Santa Fe, NM 87502

Dear Secretary Martin:

We are in receipt of your September 7, 2012, letter regarding the funding situation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 for cleanup at Los Alamos National Lab (LANL). Let us assure you we share your frustration.

As you are aware, both the House and Senate FY 13 Appropriations bills for the Department of Energy (DOE) provide significant increases over the FY12 funding. The Senate bill in particular includes \$239 million for cleanup, a \$51 million increase over FY12 levels, and represents the funding amount requested by DOE for FY13 cleanup activities under the Order on Consent and the recent Framework Agreement. The House bill includes \$219 million, a \$31 million increase over FY12 levels.

Unfortunately, many in the 112th Congress have aggressively pushed for dramatic, immediate reductions in federal government funding for all activities, including DOE. While we agree on the need to put the federal budget on a sustainable path, an unbalanced approach threatens important federal priorities like LANL cleanup activities. Broad disagreements in Congress about overall levels of funding for the federal government have led to a situation where Congress has approved a Continuing Resolution to fund the government for the first six months of FY13 at the levels for FY12.

When Congress returns in November, we will continue to work to enact full-year appropriations legislation for DOE that adequately funds cleanup at LANL for FY13. We have already contacted Administrator D'Agostino to urge him to identify within the six-month CR additional funding above the \$189 million provided in FY12 to ensure all priority efforts at LANL stay on schedule and critical deadlines continue to be met. In the alternative, if a FY13 CR ends up operating for the remainder of the fiscal year, we will continue to work to ensure adequate funding levels for cleanup. We recognize the difficult decisions you face under the current funding situation, and we will continue to work closely with you to provide the necessary funds for DOE to meet its obligations to New Mexico.

We face a possible further reduction from FY12 levels due to the mandatory sequestration included in the Budget Control Act of 2011. The required across the board cuts would mean an additional funding reduction for LANL cleanup. We hope there will be broad support in Congress for a

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comprehensive agreement that would prevent the sequestration. As we work in Congress on these issues, the impacts on important New Mexico priorities like LANL cleanup are foremost in our minds.

Thank you for your letter and for your efforts to ensure successful progress with LANL cleanup.

Sincerely,



Jeff Bingaman
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress