

**Murray, Cantwell Denounce Cuts to Hanford Cleanup**

**President's budget puts timeline, safety, jobs in question**

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(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – U.S. Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell today decried massive cuts to nuclear waste cleanup at Hanford, as outlined in the President's fiscal year 2006 budget. The budget, which was unveiled today, includes \$297 million in cuts to Hanford cleanup efforts.

The President's budget cuts a total of \$548 million from Environmental Management programs nationwide-- 54 percent of which are cuts to Hanford. The Hanford cuts include \$148 million from the Office of River Protection and \$149 million from the Richland Operations Office.

"For four years the Bush Administration has talked about accelerated cleanup of waste at Hanford. Unfortunately, their rhetoric doesn't match the reality of the President's budget request," Senator Murray said. "Hanford area residents and workers deserve a strong federal commitment to nuclear waste cleanup. The President's budget not only breaks that promise, but puts the safety and economic security of this community at risk."

The Administration has not provided any information on the impact of this proposed reduction on the jobs, safety, or the pace of work. It is also unknown whether this level of funding allows the Administration to meet the federal government's obligations under the Tri-Party Agreement.

"It was literally less than a month ago that the incoming Secretary of Energy assured me DOE would meet its commitments to clean up Hanford, consistent with the TriParty Agreement. I'm deeply disappointed that this budget and that commitment appear to be mutually exclusive. I will not stand for further efforts by the Department of Energy to reclassify waste stored at Hanford that will jeopardize the health and well-being of the citizens of Washington state," Cantwell said. "This budget does not give me confidence that the Department of Energy is going to keep its commitment to clean up the site."

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