

# Savannah River Site CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

A U.S. Department of Energy Site-Specific Advisory Board

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April 24, 2001

The Honorable Spencer Abraham  
Secretary, U. S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Abraham:

The Savannah River Site (SRS) Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) respectfully asks that you reconsider the SRS budget and the potentially serious health and safety impacts it could have on the communities surrounding SRS.

We are interested in the environmental management activities of the Department of Energy at SRS: waste management, environmental remediation, nuclear materials stabilization, new technology development, and long-term stewardship. Each of these activities depends upon adequate funding. We are concerned about the Administration's proposed budget and its potential impact on SRS.

We share your belief that the budget should reflect significant national priorities and that there is great merit in fiscal efficiency and effectiveness. We respectfully submit that meeting environmental commitments and obligations is an important national priority. In support of these goals, there are activities at SRS that need adequate funding:

- High-level waste vitrification with a minimum of 200 canisters prepared per year.
- The design, construction and start up of a high-level waste salt processing facility.
- Removal of TRU wastes to WIPP on a definitive schedule.
- Off-site shipment of low-level waste, which cannot be disposed of at SRS.
- Maintaining a specific closure schedule for the high-level waste tanks at SRS.
- Stabilization of nuclear materials.
- A shipping facility and certified shipping casks for high-level waste.

We understand that the proposed budget will go through several iterations before it becomes final. We will continue to monitor the budget activity and advocate added funding for those programs that we believe are critical to safety of the surrounding communities, protection of human health, and the environment.

The SRS CAB wishes to congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of Energy and thank you for sending Mr. Mark Frei to discuss the proposed budget. This demonstrates the Department's recognition of the important work being carried out at the Savannah River Site.

Sincerely,



Ms. Karen Patterson  
Chair



Mr. Melvyn P. Galin, Ph.D.  
Strategic & Long Term Issues  
Committee Chairman