

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 27, 2015

The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Ernest Moniz
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
100 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Director Donovan and Secretary Moniz;

For the third year in a row, the Department of Energy (DOE) has put jobs at risk and jeopardized the decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) efforts at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon, Ohio by refusing to request adequate funding to maintain the Administration's commitments to clean-up the site in preparation for reindustrialization. DOE's announcement on August 25, 2015 that it has plans to lay-off 500 Ohio workers, 30 percent of the workforce at the site, is as much unacceptable as it was avoidable. We write today to request that you utilize the transfer authority provided to you by Congress to fund Piketon D&D at a level that preserves current employment.

The Ohio delegation has repeatedly urged this Administration to present a fully funded, comprehensive plan for D&D activities at the site. This environmental clean-up and restoration work employs 1,950 individuals and is critically important to the economic viability of southern Ohio. To date, this Administration has failed to provide the attention needed to ensure financial stability, fulfill the federal obligation to the community, and support the site's committed and dedicated workforce.

Our constituents in the Piketon community tell us they are discouraged by DOE budget requests that routinely underfund the clean-up work in Piketon. The President's most recent budget request for Fiscal Year 2016 proposed to cut D&D funding by 17.6 percent, or \$48.6 million below the Fiscal Year 2015 levels provided for by Congress. Clearly, such a reduction in funding is not compatible with the Administration's past commitments to the community to accelerate the clean-up efforts and have the site ready for reindustrialization by 2024.

The result of this sustained underfunding is instability, inefficiency, and reduced effectiveness. Some have estimated that the unstable economic environment results in annual lost productivity of \$120 million, caused in part by the contractor's inability to stick to a multi-year plan. Last year, for example, over 700 workers received notices that their jobs might be terminated before Christmas. Fortunately, these layoffs were averted when Congress intervened.

We had hoped that by partnering with you and the Administration on a sustained levelized program, the uncertainty experienced by the Piketon community these last few years would not be repeated. However, the continued budget cuts and the recent Secretarial Determination

reducing uranium transfers for clean-up services at Piketon makes the partnership increasingly difficult.

The Ohio Congressional Delegation will continue to step in to protect the site. Our delegation secured language in the Fiscal Year 2015 Continuing Resolution that provided DOE the funding it needed to prevent the 700 lay-offs at the site last Christmas. On May 1, 2015, the House of Representatives approved the Fiscal Year 2016 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill which provided full funding for the clean-up work at Portsmouth. Specifically, the bill provided \$213 million for D&D operations, which surpassed the Obama Administration's request by \$48 million. We are ready to work with the Administration again this year on funding, but unfortunately DOE appears committed to undoing the progress being made by Congress.

The people of southern Ohio sacrificed plenty for the national security interests of the U.S. during the Cold War. The least the federal government can do is provide strong and sustained support for their efforts to prepare the site for the next generation. We look forward to working with you both to avoid the agency's decision to layoff of 500 workers in Piketon.

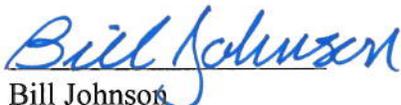
Sincerely,



Rob Portman
U.S. Senator



Brad Wenstrup
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



Steve Stivers
Member of Congress