



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor



February 2023

Re: Hanford Nuclear Site Cleanup Funding

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www.oregon.gov/energy

Honorable Member of Congress,

This letter is to convey the importance of funding and successfully completing cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Site in Washington state. Oregon has a longstanding interest in ensuring the effective cleanup of the Hanford Site, which is located near Richland, Washington on the banks of the Columbia River – just 35 miles from Oregon’s border. From Hanford, the Columbia flows through prime Oregon farmland, fisheries, and communities. The U.S. Department of Energy produced plutonium at Hanford for our nation’s nuclear weapons program, beginning with the Manhattan Project and continuing through the end of the Cold War. Since its closure in the 1980s, work at Hanford has shifted to cleanup, and is now the world's largest and longest cleanup project of its kind. While significant progress has been made since 1989 by US DOE, there is a tremendous amount of additional work required in the coming decades, or even centuries.

The State of Oregon’s interests in the Hanford cleanup are represented by expert staff at the Oregon Department of Energy and members of the Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board, a governor-appointed volunteer board. Oregon’s primary interest in Hanford is to ensure that cleanup decisions and investments are protective of the Columbia River, including cleanup of groundwater and sources of contamination that could affect the river in the future. In addition to the many Oregonians who live and work nearby, the Hanford site includes land ceded by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Yakama Nation, and was historically used by other Native American tribes and bands.

The DOE Hanford offices will receive around \$2.8 billion in FY 2023, but projections indicate that the actual costs to accomplish cleanup on schedule will be higher. In August 2022, Oregon Governor Brown together with Washington Governor Inslee and other regional and local partners, requested that the White House include additional funding in the President’s Request Budget for Hanford beginning in FY 2024.

We are writing to ask your support for increased DOE funding to a level aligned with DOE's expenditure estimates needed to comply with state and federal regulatory milestones. The estimated need for the Hanford site in FY 2024 is \$3.76 billion, escalating in subsequent fiscal years as treatment of high-level radioactive waste begins. DOE estimates the Hanford cleanup will cost between \$300.2 billion and \$640.6 billion between now and 2078. Lower annual funding levels in the near-term may mean that the cleanup cost and schedule will reach the higher ends or even ultimately exceed these estimates.

Oregon communities from Umatilla to Astoria rely on a clean Columbia River. The U.S. Government, through the US DOE Office of Environmental Management, has an obligation to the residents of the Pacific Northwest to see the cleanup through to completion. We greatly appreciate your attention to this issue. If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned directly.

Regards,

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