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GOVERNOR



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SALEM, OREGON 97310

June 3, 1986

Ben Rusche, Director
Office of Civilian Radioactive
Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Mr. Rusche:

I want to impress upon you again that Oregon has grave concerns about the potential for a high-level radioactive waste repository at Hanford. Based on US DOE's own ranking system, Hanford was not one of the best three sites. Yet, the President has decided to continue the Hanford site study. Therefore, I must again request that the U.S. Department of Energy (US DOE) provide the funds we need to more fully take part in the review of this proposal.

You supported my request to Governor Gardner of Washington to share some of his state's US DOE funds so that Oregon could be involved in Washington's review so far. I thank you for that support.

But, now that the President has chosen Hanford for intensive, long-term review, we simply must have a higher level of federal commitment. The work we must do during Hanford's five-year-long site characterization study requires dedicated federal funding.

Oregon has distinct and vital interests that simply cannot be ignored. There is a clear, direct, and short pathway by which Oregon and the Columbia River could be affected by releases from a repository at Hanford. Oregonians have been exposed to past radioactive releases from Hanford. Oregonians now need confidence that will not happen again. The degree of confidence depends on our level of involvement in scientific and technical reviews of the characterization study.

Oregonians need to know that transportation impacts on Oregon fully will be addressed in the study. Those impacts potentially could be greater here than in most other states, including Washington. There is every

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reason to believe that more shipments could pass through Oregon than through other states. Oregon routes could be longer than routes in Washington. And, much of the likely routes in Oregon are subject to severe winter road conditions.

We are involved in decisions about permanent disposal of U.S. defense wastes at Hanford. Those decisions will influence the size, configuration, and monitoring programs of a Hanford repository. And, those decisions require us to deal with the same transportation issues posed by a repository at Hanford. Again, the people of Oregon need assurance that the Hanford repository study fully addresses transport impacts on public health and safety. That requires our direct involvement.

In short, we no longer can rely on the generosity of Washington State for hand-me-down funding.

In effect, Oregon has pre-paid the cost of our technical review and public involvement. Oregon electric ratepayers have contributed \$45 million to support the search for a federal repository. Today, the focus of that search implies potentially grave impacts on Oregon. It is imperative that a repository's implications for Oregon thoroughly be reviewed and assessed. To ask Oregonians to pay again for that work is unacceptable.

I therefore request that US DOE dedicate \$500,000 per year over the next five years to Oregon's involvement in the Hanford study. The total, \$2.5 million -- amounts to about 5 percent of what our ratepayers already have paid to support US DOE's repository search.

Direct funding for Oregon would assure that we can continue our close working relationship with Washington and affected Indian Tribes. Direct funding also would enhance US DOE's credibility in its commitment to a review of a repository which would have a disproportionate impact on Oregon.

In summary, I believe Oregon's concerns are well founded. They are substantive and distinct from other states' concerns. They are comparable to those of Washington and the affected Indian Tribes. I need your help to address them fully.

I would like to meet with you to decide how we can work together to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Victor Atiyeh
Governor

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!bcc: Oregon Department of Energy