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United States Senate

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The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

On Sunday, March 23, 2013, in advance of the Nuclear Security Summit, the *New York Times* reported an agreement had been reached between the United States and Japan to allow Japan to turn over more than 700 pounds of weapons-grade plutonium as well as 450 pounds of highly enriched uranium to the United States for disposition.

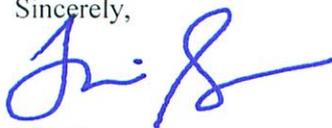
While we understand the need to secure vulnerable materials, we remain extremely concerned about the reckless decision in your Fiscal Year 2015 budget that abandons the Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX) program at the Savannah River Site (SRS) that is intended to turn weapons grade plutonium into usable fuel for commercial power reactors. Your Administration has failed to propose any alternative to the MOX program, which if shuttered will abandon 34 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium in South Carolina and Texas for an indefinite period of time while the Federal government pays hundreds of millions of dollars in fines to the state.

At the same time the *New York Times* is calling the agreement with Japan “the biggest single success in President Obama’s five-year-long push to secure the world’s most dangerous materials,” you are moving backwards in ensuring the world’s most dangerous materials do not remain in the hands of Russia, one of the world’s most dangerous regimes. The completion of MOX facility is paramount to the United States upholding the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA) with Russia to dispose of a total of 68 metric tons of weapons grade plutonium—214 times the size of the agreement with Japan.

Considering the current heightened tensions with Russia, it is extremely concerning that your Administration is simultaneously giving President Putin an excuse to break a critical nuclear arms control agreement that, if ended, would allow Russia to keep enough weapons grade plutonium for over 17,000 nuclear weapons. In light of Russia’s recent disregard for international law and the sovereignty of Ukraine, we believe enticing the Russians to break their end of the PMDA is both dangerous and irresponsible.

We strongly urge you to reconsider your decision to abandon the MOX program and work with us to find a fiscally responsible path towards its completion.

Sincerely,



Tim Scott
U.S. Senator



Lindsey O. Graham
U.S. Senator

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