

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 6, 2014

Secretary Ernest Moniz
United States Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Moniz:

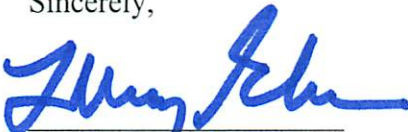
The President's budget request funds the plutonium disposition program at a level that would place the Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication project in cold standby. The \$221 million request is significantly lower than what is needed to maintain on-going operations and construction for MOX, will force major layoffs, and threaten the viability of the only congressionally authorized disposition path for weapons grade plutonium. It is our understanding that the Department of Energy (DOE) is planning to use FY2014 funds to begin this process. This would be inappropriate and we discourage this in the strongest possible terms.

Under both the *FY2014 National Defense Authorization Act* and the *FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act*, funding is provided for construction activities at the MOX facility. No funds are provided to put the program in cold standby. While we share your concerns regarding the increased costs associated with the plutonium disposition program, we are concerned that the budget request will end up adding to the costs while we still try to consider options regarding the program. As such, to not foreclose options and drive costs, it is our opinion that construction activities continue until the Department of Energy (DOE) receives further guidance through the legislative process.

Further, the budget submission claims the "Administration remains committed to the U.S.-Russia Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement." We remind you that under the terms of this agreement, MOX is the only acceptable disposition path for the 34 metric tons of American weapons grade plutonium. If the Administration does remain committed to this agreement, it does not make sense to stop construction of this facility at this time.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that there is a path forward for this important program and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator



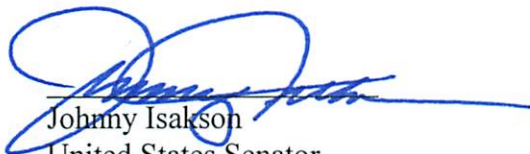
Mary Landrieu
United States Senator



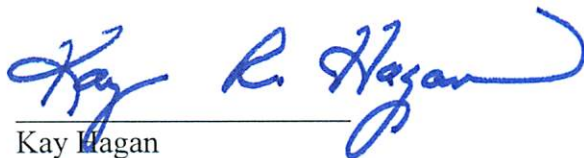
Richard Burr
United States Senator



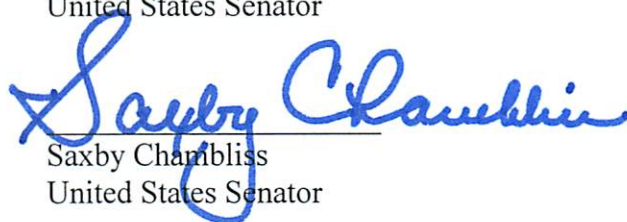
Tim Scott
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



Kay Hagan
United States Senator



Saxby Chambliss
United States Senator