

March 26, 2008

The Honorable Hillary R. Clinton  
United States Senate  
Larkin Building, Suite 511  
726 Exchange Street  
Buffalo, NY 14210-1485

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senate  
111 W. Huron Street  
Room 620  
Buffalo, NY 14202

The Honorable John R. Kuhl  
United States House of Representatives  
22 Buell Street  
P.O. Box 153  
Bath, NY 14810

RE: **Funding for West Valley Demonstration Project**

Dear Senator Clinton, Senator Schumer and Representative Kuhl,

We, the members of the West Valley Citizen Task Force (CTF), respectfully request that you review and reconsider the funding levels that have been proposed for the West Valley Demonstration Project in the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management program budget.

The CTF is very encouraged by the progress that has been made at the site over the past several years when proper federal funding was made available, and also by the significant progress that the multi-agency Core Team has made in reaching agreement on how to move forward on completing the EIS process and ultimately the remediation of the site. However, we are very concerned that the severe funding reductions of more than 20% for 2008, and the additional reductions proposed for 2009 will slow work that could be accomplished if the site were more fully funded. These delays may increase costs to future generations. To that end, we ask your support for supplemental appropriations in the FY 2008 budget and additions to the FY 2009 budget resolution. The CTF strongly recommends that project funding should be at the \$75 to \$90 million per year level to sustain the current work force and technical expertise, in order to move forward with the initiatives proposed by the Core Team. The Core Team is comprised of staff from the DOE, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and New York State Departments of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and Health (NYSDOH). This group has made encouraging progress over the past year and has reached agreement on the next steps at the site, but adequate funding levels need to be maintained so that necessary work may proceed.

We are very concerned that important cost effective and environmentally sensitive decisions will be delayed and the Core Team's success in developing a plan for final site cleanup will be hampered by severe funding reductions. Aside from possible job and talent loss at the Project, cuts will delay the Core Team proposals for:

- installing a system to dry the remaining liquids in the high-level waste tanks and the tank vaults (cost estimate \$9-10 million); and
- mitigation of the continued expansion and off-site release of radiation from an area of groundwater contaminated with Strontium-90 (cost estimate \$10-11 million).

West Valley Citizen Task Force  
c/o The Logue Group  
PO Box 270270 – West Hartford, CT 06127  
860-521-9122



**If funded, both actions could be initiated immediately and completed in the near future. If not, the Core Team efforts will be thwarted while costs of completing the work in the future will undoubtedly increase.**

Traditionally these funds are part of the DOE Environmental Management budget appropriation. With a national commitment to cleanup wastes in a timely manner, the Environmental Management budget grew to a \$7.3 billion budget in FY 2005; since then the budget has decreased to a proposed \$5.5 billion in FY 2009. Such reductions are extremely short-sighted in light of the real need to solve the problem of radioactive waste. To assure continued cleanup of nuclear waste sites, Senator Maria Cantwell (WA) and a bipartisan group of senators recently sent a joint letter to the Senate Budget Committee requesting additional funding needs for the DOE Environmental Management program. The commitment to clean up wastes must be reaffirmed.

We urge your support for supplemental appropriations in the FY 2008 budget and for additions to the FY 2009 budget resolution. We ask that in the best interests of the State of New York and all citizens and states that are part of the Great Lakes Watershed, you:

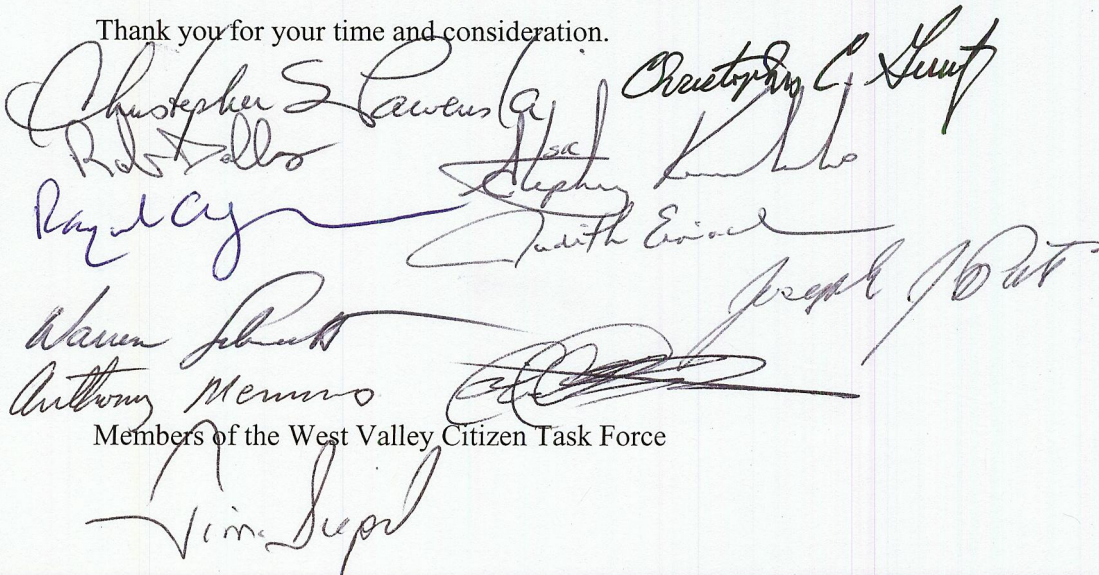
- Seek additional funding (\$10 million) for this year to begin work immediately on waste tank drying and mitigation of the Strontium-90 groundwater releases.
- Increase the proposed 2009 appropriation from \$57.6 million to at least the FY 2007 level of \$83 million to continue cleanup work that has been agreed upon by the involved agencies through the Core Team process.

We are very pleased that after more than a decade of disagreement among some of the involved agencies over the path forward for the West Valley site remediation, there is now a common vision and approach which we believe is very positive. The CTF strongly supports the portions of the Core Team's recommended preferred alternative which call for the total removal of the former reprocessing plant and the contaminated radioactive waste water treatment system which includes the lagoons.

However, we are concerned that the Core Team preferred alternative delays for up to 30 years a number of important decisions on the high level waste tanks and burial grounds. While we will continue to raise concerns over the long-term management of key facilities, we recognize and appreciate the agencies' efforts in developing a plan to move forward and want to support the agreements, decisions, and the necessary funding to complete this portion of the remediation work.

Any support that you can provide will be very much appreciated. Please contact us if there is anything that we can do to secure necessary funding to advance the cleanup at the West Valley Demonstration Project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A collection of handwritten signatures in blue ink, arranged in several rows. The signatures are of various styles, some appearing to be first names and others more formal. The names are not legible due to the cursive handwriting.

Members of the West Valley Citizen Task Force



West Valley Citizen Task Force

March 26, 2008

Page 3

cc:

The Honorable Brian M. Higgins, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Thomas M. Reynolds, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Louise M. Slaughter, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable David A. Paterson, Governor of the State of New York  
The Honorable Catharine M. Young, New York State Senate  
The Honorable Joseph Giglio, New York State Assembly  
Bryan C. Bower, Director, DOE, West Valley Demonstration Project  
Paul J. Bembia, Director, NYSERDA, West Valley Site Management Program  
Paul A. Giardina, EPA, Region II, Chief-Radiation and Indoor Air Quality Branch  
Chad Glenn, NRC, Sr. Program Manager  
Barbara Youngberg, NYSDEC, Chief-Radiation Section  
Gary H. Baker, NYSDOH