

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

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## Bill for long-term West Valley funding heads to Trump's desk

By Olean Times Herald staff

WASHINGTON — A bill to authorizing \$75 million a year for the **West Valley Demonstration Project** through 2026 to secure and remove nuclear waste passed the Senate and is headed to President Trump's desk to be signed into law.

"For the first time in more than 35 years, our friends and neighbors will have the peace of mind that the **West Valley Demonstration Project** cleanup is a top priority and has long term funding authorization from Washington," U.S. Rep Tom Reed said Tuesday. "We are excited about this bill's success as we ensure the health and safety of our environment in Western New York for years to come."

Reed, R-Corning, thanked U.S. Rep. Brian Higgins, a Buffalo Democrat, and members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate for their support of the bill.

Reed's bill to authorize **West Valley** funding passed the House in March.

"The Department of Energy (DOE) appreciates Congress' action to reauthorize, for the first time, the **West Valley Demonstration Project** in New York state," Undersecretary of Energy for Science Paul Dabbar said. "DOE is proud of the cleanup success that has been accomplished at the **West Valley** site, including the demolition last year of the former vitrification facility, which represented the largest and most complex demolition of a radioactively contaminated facility at the site to date."

Scott Anderson, president and general manager of CHBWW, the contractor that is dismantling the **West Valley** site, said authorization for funding at the \$75 million level supports the capacity to "continue making good progress at the site, eliminating potential environmental risks and reducing **West Valley**'s footprint and lifecycle costs."

He said the CHBWW employees are committed in performing cleanup activities safely and in compliance with federal standards, while protecting themselves, the public and the environment.

John Pfeffer, supervisor-elect of the town of Ashford, said he is grateful to Reed for his efforts in getting the legislation for funding introduced and passed.

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“With dedicated funding and an understanding of possible disposal pathways, DOE, New York state and the town of Ashford can now begin to better plan for the future of the **West Valley Demonstration Project**,” Pfeffer said, adding that without the funding the town would face an uncertain, annual fight to see progress in cleaning up the **West Valley** site.