

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500-0003

Dear Mr. President:

We write today to respectfully request your assistance in preventing an attempt by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to dramatically curtail funding for the federal government's nuclear environmental remediation efforts in our state.

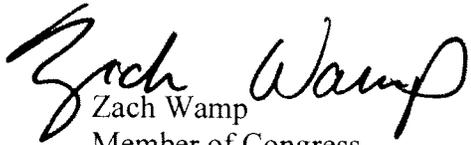
Through various sources, including the media, we have learned that your administration is planning to propose dramatic cuts to the Department of Energy's (DOE) Environmental Management Program in your FY2011 budget request to Congress. Further, we have learned that these cuts may be so severe that they will cut the cleanup budgets in half for the two sites we represent, Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Idaho National Laboratory. Such cuts would have a devastating impact on the ability of the DOE to meet its legal and contractual obligations to our states. Further, such reductions to cleanup funding would represent a fundamental betrayal of the trust the people of Tennessee and Idaho have placed in the DOE.

We are proud to report that the DOE is making strides in meeting its cleanup obligations in Tennessee and Idaho where amazing work is being accomplished on limited budgets. These accomplishments would not be possible but for the stable budgets we and many of our colleagues have been working toward for many years. The reductions planned in your budget would undo decades of hard work to ensure adequate funding for the EM program and put an immediate halt to the tremendous progress being made on the ground all across the country – but most prominently in Tennessee and Idaho.

As you know, the work to date is just a portion of the long-term work that will be required to meet the DOE's environmental cleanup obligations. Much more work is yet to be done. The longer you delay that work, the more money taxpayers will ultimately spend meeting the unquestionable obligation of the federal government to cleanup these sites.

With so much at stake, and such little time to alter the current course of the OMB's intent in the FY2010 budget submission, we respectfully request your personal and immediate attention to this matter. We stand ready to work with you, Secretary Chu, and Director Orszag to ensure the federal government meets its commitments to our states.

Sincerely,

  
Zach Wamp  
Member of Congress

  
Mike Simpson  
Member of Congress

cc:  
The Honorable Peter Orszag  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
Eisenhower Executive Office Building  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Steven Chu  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue  
Washington, DC 20585