

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

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March 8, 2018

Mr. James Owendoff
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Environmental Management
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20585

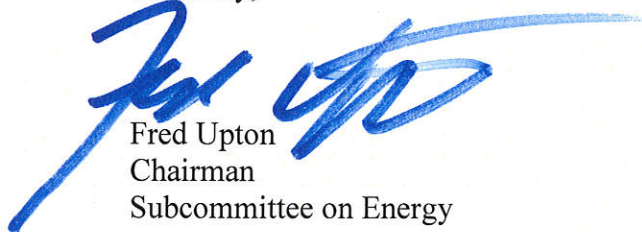
Dear Mr. Owendoff:

Thank you for appearing before the Subcommittee on Energy on February 6, 2018, to testify at the hearing entitled "DOE Modernization: Advancing the Economic and National Security Benefits of America's Nuclear Infrastructure."

Pursuant to the Rules of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the hearing record remains open for ten business days to permit Members to submit additional questions for the record, which are attached. To facilitate the printing of the hearing record, please respond to these questions with a transmittal letter by the close of business on Thursday, March 22, 2018. Your responses should be mailed to Kelly Collins, Legislative Clerk, Committee on Energy and Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 and e-mailed in Word format to kelly.collins@mail.house.gov.

Thank you again for your time and effort preparing and delivering testimony before the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Fred Upton
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy

cc: The Honorable Bobby L. Rush, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy

Attachment

Attachment—Additional Questions for the Record

The Honorable Fred Upton

1. DOE is responsible for about \$372 billion in federal environmental liabilities. Now, of DOE's \$5.4 billion annual cleanup request (in FY 2017) about \$4.4 billion was for operational activities—actually doing cleanup. The remaining \$1 billion was for construction projects to support the operational activities.

In March last year, we asked GAO to look at what DOE is doing to monitor the performance of the \$4 billion in operational spending to be sure we are making cost-effective progress on cleanup. That work is underway.

- a. Is it possible to measure the how DOE operational spending is reducing environmental liabilities?
 - b. Does DOE issue performance assessments to validate that its operational spending is reducing environmental liabilities?
2. Last September the Government Accountability Office issued a report that addressed long-term planning needs associated with the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The report noted DOE has not yet initiated certain steps to assess options to expand the size of WIPP or enter into discussions with the State of New Mexico to acquire needed environmental permits. Since the issuance of GAO's report, what steps has DOE started to address these long-term needs?
 3. Is the Department considering options to align conflicting definitions of how certain radioactive waste is classified?
 - a. If so, is there a need for statutory clarification?
 4. DOE submitted a required report to Congress with disposal options for material that is known as "Greater Than Class C" (GTCC) waste, pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 2005. While the expected disposition path at the time was in the Yucca Mountain repository, the previous administration's decision to terminate the Yucca program resulted in a major delay in meeting the 2005 Act. Please briefly describe DOE's recommendations contained in this report and what further authorities the Department needs to move forward.