



Alliance for Nuclear Accountability

www.ananuclear.org

A national network of organizations working to address issues of nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup

4 February 2020

Dear Senator Alexander,

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability represents organizations located around nuclear weapons sites across the United States, and we write you today to express our strong opposition to the Trump Administration's FY 2021 budget request for the National Nuclear Security Administration which, according to media reports, will reach \$20 billion.

In particular, we want to call out NNSA Administrator Lisa Gordon-Hagerty's assertion, reportedly contained in a memo late last year, stating that any number shy of \$20 billion in FY21, with high out-year funding to follow, amounts to "unilateral disarmament."

Such hyperbole has no place in budget decision-making.

As reported in Defense News, and subsequently in other outlets as well, Gordon-Hagerty's "unilateral disarmament" assertion came in response to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) FY21 numbers that ranged from \$17.5 billion to \$18.6 billion. The lower OMB number would actually increase the NNSA budget by half a billion dollars over the FY20 appropriations.

The NNSA budget, which has seen annual funding increases even as other agencies have been cut, now threatens to surge. We urgently ask you to question "why" before throwing unwarranted billions of fresh taxpayer dollars into this seemingly bottomless pit. The taxpaying public relies on Congress to apply a reality check to NNSA's wish list.

According to news reports, as well as our on-the-ground information, two programs will consume most of the increase; the development of a completely new warhead, the W87-1, and the plan to develop duplicate plutonium pit production facilities at Los Alamos and Savannah River. The latter plan will expand US pit production capacity to 80 or more pits/year by 2030. NNSA has yet to offer adequate justification for this number.

It is important to note that both programs are related to one warhead. The W87-1 is being created with a novel pit design unlike anything in the stockpile or storage. Therefore, the justification for expanded pit production capacity is a new warhead; this capacity is not required for NNSA to fulfill its mission of maintenance of a safe, secure, reliable stockpile.

We urge you to ask questions, demand answers, and practice fiscal restraint.

The member groups of the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability have monitored facilities across the US nuclear weapons complex, their programs and their budgets, since 1987. We know the long history of NNSA budget overruns and project delays. We know DOE's Defense Programs have been on the Government Accountability Office's "High Risk List" for 27 consecutive years. Too often Congress has rewarded NNSA's fiscal irresponsibility not with demands for competence and deliverables, but with budget increases. So we feel compelled to speak when the NNSA makes a plea for extra billions in order to address an imaginary challenge.

We welcome your response to our concerns about the NNSA FY21 budget request. Please reply to the ANA board president, Marylia Kelley, at marylia@trivalleycares.org

Additionally, as you may know, the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability will be conducting its 32nd annual "DC Days" event this year with meetings scheduled with Congress and the Administration from Monday, April 20 through Wednesday, April 22. We look forward to meeting in-person with you or your staff during that time. Please feel free to contact ANA's coordinator, Joseph Rodgers, at joseph@anuclear.org and visit our website at www.anuclear.org for "DC Days" information.

For the board of directors,

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Joseph Rodgers,
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Enclosures

1. Gordon-Haggerty assertion of "unilateral disarmament" etc.

<https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2020/01/23/in-nuclear-spending-fight-its-trump-allies-vs-white-house-budget-office/>

2. Follow up article on the \$20 billion

<https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2020/01/28/trump-will-seek-20-budget-boost-for-nukes-says-inhofe/>