Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 31, 2010

The Honorable Peter Visclosky
Chairman,
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Ranking Member,
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ed Pastor
Vice Chairman,
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky, Vice Chairman Pastor and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen:

As you prepare the FY 2011 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, we request that you reconsider several components of President Obama's proposed $7 billion for nuclear weapons facility funding – a 10 percent increase from last year. We believe such an increase is unnecessary and undermines the goal of nuclear disarmament.

While the stated purpose of this funding is to maintain current stockpiles and nonproliferation efforts, parts of it could have the opposite effect. It is also important to highlight that current funding levels have proven more than sufficient to maintain these facilities. Therefore, an increase is not only unfounded, it takes away funding from other vital priorities.

Specifically, we are concerned about certain provisions within the President's budget for nuclear facility funding. We are opposed to the President's requested funding of $225 million for the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Nuclear Facility (CMRR), up from $97 million in 2010. This facility supports the production of plutonium pits that are used to make new nuclear warheads. In addition, $115 million is allocated for the Uranium Processing Facility (UPF), up from $94 million in 2010. This is a uranium manufacturing facility that could increase warhead production capacity.

Conversely, the President has proposed to decrease funding from $96 million to $58 million for dismantling our current nuclear stockpile. We believe nuclear disarmament should be a top priority for the $7 billion in total nuclear facility funding, and urge you to instead increase this funding.

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The existence of nuclear weapons is a threat to all peoples of all nations. If our goal is disarmament, we should be spending more money on dismantling our stockpile and less money on facilities that can be used to enlarge it. We urge you to oppose the President's increase in nuclear facility spending, and redirect these funds toward dismantling our current stockpile.

Sincerely,

Pete Stark
Member of Congress

John Conyers
Member of Congress

Lynn Woosley
Member of Congress

Lois Capps
Member of Congress

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

Yvette Clarke
Member of Congress

Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress

Edward Markey
Member of Congress