



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

October 25, 2004

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Please be advised that, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2286d(e), the Department of Energy will require up to an additional 45 days to finalize and transmit our implementation plan for addressing the issues raised in the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's (Board's) Recommendation 2004-1, *Oversight of Complex, High-Hazard Nuclear Operations*. As you discussed by phone with Deputy Secretary Kyle E. McSlarrow, we need more time to finalize and fully articulate several key decisions and their implications. The Department remains committed to fully resolving the issues that are raised in your recommendation.

We appreciate the advice and feedback provided by you, other Board members, and the Board's staff during the development of this plan, and look forward to continued positive interactions as we finalize and implement the plan. Please contact me, or have your staff contact Mr. Ted Sherry at (865) 576-0752, if you have any questions regarding our path forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Spencer Abraham".

Spencer Abraham

