

COMMENTS TO DNFSB BOARD 10/2/12

Chairman Winokur, Members of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board....Good afternoon,

On behalf of the Y-12 Community Relations Council, I want to welcome you to the East Tennessee area during one of our most beautiful times of year. I also want to thank you for selecting Knoxville, Tennessee as the site for this hearing. By doing so, you allow all interested parties to publicly express their opinions and provide their own insight as to why the urgently needed Uranium Processing Facility should or possibly in some cases, shouldn't be built, allowing the people of our region to become informed about this important national asset in a more objective and factual manner.

The Y-12 Community Relations Council - CRC as it is referred to - was created by B&W in 2002 to enhance communication between Y-12, the Oak Ridge community and the surrounding East Tennessee region. The CRC is comprised of 31 members from a variety of backgrounds - local, state, and federal government representing surrounding cities and counties, business leaders, neighbors, retirees and other stakeholders, all who share a common vision to support the important national security mission carried out at Y-12. Y-12 is in Oak Ridge, but it is the second largest employer in East Tennessee, currently employing over 4700 employees and 3300 contractors, a dedicated workforce whose focus has been on our national security and the continuous oversight and improvements of America's nuclear needs whether it be for nuclear power, nuclear medicine, or national defense. In addition to these jobs it is estimated that another 24,000 indirect jobs are created by Y-12 activities. Y-12's economic impact to East Tennessee and the surrounding Appalachian region cannot be overstated. Here, in this part of the country, it is difficult to find anyone who has not been positively impacted, their lives made better, by the federal assets located here.

Over the past decade we have witnessed a progressive transformation of the Y-12 National Security Complex and commend the NNSA and its management team for those revitalization efforts. But there is more... critical work to be done. Safety and security of our communities and workforce has always been emphasized during any interaction between the Y-12 management team and the CRC.

Oak Ridge recently celebrated its 70th anniversary. Now almost everyone knows it was the city "behind the fence" constructed to support the Manhattan Project which brought an end to the Second World War. Most people know that the National Security Complex has played an important role in securing America's future by maintaining our nuclear capabilities through the Cold War and modern age. Today, patriotic Americans continue to work towards our national security in the those same facilities built in the early 1940's. At a time when the military flew prop-planes instead of supersonic jets with stealth capabilities, at a time when weapons were "dropped"

instead of “guided” with precision using lasers, GPS, and internal cameras... at a time when things we take for granted everyday weren’t even conceived of yet, crucial components of our nuclear capability were being developed and maintained in the same exact facilities being used today. Old weapons have been retired, replaced, and upgraded, most military infrastructure has been replaced and upgraded, and yet today, dedicated Americans are still involved in the important task of enriching and maintaining our nation’s uranium supply in the same facilities used in the early 40’s. The Uranium Processing Facility (UPF) that we discuss today addresses any operational and safety concerns that come with aging infrastructure.

It will reduce the footprint of the uranium enrichment process by 90%, creating not only a more efficient economic platform saving taxpayers millions of dollars in the long run, but be much easier to secure for the safety of the workers and the surrounding communities.

State of the art handling facilities will ensure only the safest environment possible for workers engaged in the UPF. In addition, only the highest technical construction methods contemplating natural and manmade disasters, will insure the surrounding communities that the sensitive materials stored and maintained here will done so in both a safe and secure method.

The sooner the UPF plan is executed, the safer our country will be. The sooner the UPF is constructed, the safer our workers and our communities will be. Y-12 is unique in its mission. No one in the world does what we do and having grown up around this important facility - I’m biased - but I don’t think anyone could do it better. We have an excellent management team in place and workers with the proper experience and work ethic to execute our nuclear mission. It is time to address America’s nuclear future and begin construction of the Uranium Processing Facility.

THANK YOU