



The Deputy Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

August 14, 2012

The Honorable Peter S. Winokur
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your July 18, 2012, letter requested certain information regarding the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) efforts to evaluate the structural response of the Los Alamos National Laboratory Plutonium Facility (PF-4) to potential earthquakes. PF-4 is a significant element of NNSA's overall capability to execute its plutonium mission.

Towards that end, I appreciate the efforts and the insights of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) as you conduct your independent external oversight of our PF-4 structural evaluations. Interactions between the NNSA and the DNFSB have already resulted in numerous adjustments and improvements to the overall effort.

NNSA is actively working to complete the analysis, but we will require additional time to respond to your request. NNSA will provide you a detailed response no later than September 28, 2012.

We look forward to continued technical exchanges as we complete this important work. If you have any additional questions, please contact me or Dr. Donald Cook, Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs at (202) 586-2179.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel B. Poneman".

Daniel B. Poneman

