



**UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD**

2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300  
Arlington, VA 22201-3367

December 7, 2016

Mr. John Kotek  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Kotek:

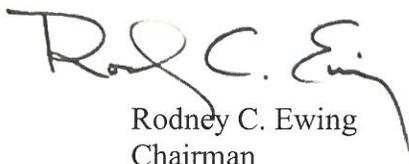
On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (Board), I want to thank you and your staff, as well as the staff from the National Laboratories, for supporting two recent technical fact-finding meetings related to the performance of high-burnup spent nuclear fuel (SNF) during extended storage and transportation.

On February 17, 2016, the Board held a public meeting in Knoxville, TN, to review the Department of Energy's (DOE) research and development program on high-burnup SNF performance. During that meeting, there was not sufficient time for full discussion of some of the technical issues raised by the Board, so the two fact-finding meetings were held to allow additional discussion of these issues. In each case, three Board members and two members of the Board's Senior Professional Staff participated in the meeting.

The first fact-finding meeting was held on July 11-14, 2016, in Las Vegas to discuss research being performed to obtain the data needed to characterize high-burnup SNF, including the degradation that may occur during extended storage and transportation. The second meeting was held on October 4-6, 2016, at the Idaho National Laboratory to discuss how data from this research can be used with computer models being developed by DOE and the National Laboratories to understand the potential degradation of high-burnup SNF during extended storage and transportation. The Board commends DOE for undertaking this work.

The meetings were very productive and provided additional clarity to the discussions on high-burnup SNF that took place at the Board's open public meeting in Knoxville. The Board is preparing a report on high-burnup SNF, drawing on information from the public meeting and the two fact-finding meetings, and I would be grateful if you would pass on the Board's thanks to the DOE staff and the staff from the National Laboratories for preparing their presentations and participating in these fact finding meetings.

Sincerely,



Rodney C. Ewing  
Chairman