



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD
1100 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 910
Arlington, VA 22209

June 30, 1995

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510-3101

Dear Chairman Domenici:

The House of Representatives Appropriations Committee has recommended a fiscal year 1996 appropriation for the Board of \$2,531,000, a reduction of 15% (\$439,000) in the Board's request of \$2,970,000. I can appreciate the Congress's need for across-the-board reductions to address the budget deficit, and we are prepared to accommodate ours. However, the unique way in which unobligated balances have been used to fund the Board may have resulted in a larger-than-intended reduction in our total funding. Each year our total funding need is satisfied by a combination of new budget authority (appropriations) and prior year unobligated balances (carryover). Consequently, as our carryover has decreased over the last few years our appropriations have increased.

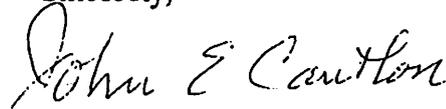
For fiscal year 1996 our carryover (\$523,000) is \$186,000 less than for fiscal year 1995 (\$709,000). Therefore, if the fiscal year 1995 appropriation is used as a baseline for determining the fiscal year 1996 appropriations *without* making some adjustment for the carryover difference between fiscal years 1995 and 1996, this produces a cut in our total funding that is, perhaps, larger than the one intended. In view of this, it may be more appropriate to include the carryover difference (i.e., \$186,000) in the baseline before imposing an across-the-board reduction. This approach would make an allowance for the diminished contribution of carryover in satisfying the Board's total funding needs for fiscal year 1996.

The addition of this \$186,000 carryover difference to the Board's 1996 appropriation is essential for a full Board. Although Board vacancies have existed for a variety of reasons, the committee included in its report a provision guaranteeing a full 11-member Board by permitting a member whose term has expired to continue to serve as a member until his/her successor has been appointed. We are very encouraged by this effort to solve this ongoing problem.

Looking ahead, the likelihood of a full Board and reduced appropriations will quickly eliminate any carryover available for subsequent fiscal years. Thus, in future years, without increase appropriations to replace the contribution of carryover funds the Board will not be able to meet its ongoing statutory requirements to advise the Congress and the Secretary.

In summary, the House Appropriations Committee action will result in a \$319,000, or 9 percent, reduction from the \$3,373,000 total funds available to the Board in fiscal year 1995. The addition of the \$186,000 carryover difference when applying an across-the-board formula would result in a fiscal year 1996 total funding level that will enable the Board to address this critical national issue. I would greatly appreciate your consideration of these comments in your deliberations to determine an appropriate fiscal year 1996 funding level for the Board. If there are any questions, please call William D. Barnard, the Board's Executive Director.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John E. Cantlon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "C".

John E. Cantlon
Chairman

Copy to:
The Honorable J. Bennett Johnston
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development