Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 15, 2008

The Honorable James A. Rispoli
Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy
Forrestal Building
Room 5A-014
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Assistant Secretary Rispoli:

We are writing concerning the pending award of the Mission Support contract (MSC) at Hanford.

The last official announcement from the Department on the timing of the award of the MSC contract was that it would be awarded prior to award of the Tank Operations contract and the Central Plateau contract. However, both of these two contracts have now been awarded with no official word from the Department on why the order of award was changed or, more importantly, when the MSC contract award is expected to be made.

As you can imagine, with three new contacts being awarded at Hanford there are questions and concerns about what the changes will mean. These questions have been amplified by the Department's actions to depart from previously announced plans and award the MSC contract last.

A public statement from the Department about what prompted the decision to change the order of the contract awards, any potential impacts the decision could have on cleanup, and what to expect regarding the timing of the Mission Support contract award would be very helpful. As the MSC contract will be responsible for management of workforce benefits and coordinating services among all site contractors, details about steps the Department is taking to ensure smooth transitions will take place as each of these three contracts are implemented would also be helpful.

As you know we have no role in selecting contract winners, rather our concern has always been the impact federal policies and decisions on the local community, the Hanford workforce and cleanup progress. It is for these reasons that we are asking and encouraging the Department to provide more information on its actions, intentions and plans. Such information would be very helpful to Hanford workers and to the local community.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Doc Hastings
United States Representative

Patty Murray
United States Senator

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