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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

August 27, 2015

The Honorable Shaun Donovan
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

The Honorable Ernest Moniz
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
100 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Director Donovan and Secretary Moniz;

Last year, I worked with you to ensure that the decontamination and decommissioning (D&D) efforts at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant (Portsmouth) in Piketon, Ohio, would continue without interruption or layoffs to the facility's workforce. This was made possible because, along with my colleagues in the Ohio delegation, I requested, and you provided, a budget anomaly that allowed the Department of Energy (DOE) to continue D&D funding above the level appropriated in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 appropriations.

Now, funding for Portsmouth is again at risk. The President's budget for FY 2016 failed to include funds sufficient to continue the current pace of D&D operations at Portsmouth. Additionally, the funding levels included in the FY 2016 Energy and Water appropriations bills passed by the Senate and House Appropriations Committees also fail to fund the current pace of D&D operations. The Senate bill matches the President's budget request (\$167 million) while the House bill provides \$213 million. Both of these numbers will result in layoffs at Portsmouth.

Because of the failure to provide adequate funding for Portsmouth, WARN notices have been issued to hundreds of Portsmouth employees, increasing the urgent need to come together and address this funding shortfall.

As the fiscal year ends, it does not appear that Congress will pass the fiscal year Energy and Water 2016 appropriations bill by the end of September. The result will likely be that Congress passes a short-term continuing resolution (CR). Passage of a short-term CR means that the DOE will apportion funds at the lower Senate-funded level.

Because of the funding challenges, including the uncertainty posed by a CR, I ask that you again provide an anomaly which continues the current level of funding for efforts at Portsmouth for all of FY 2016.

Portsmouth's D&D efforts are an integral part of the DOE's commitment to the people of southern Ohio. I believe that continued operations at the present level is an essential part of that commitment. I look forward to working with you to preserve the jobs at this facility.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator

cc: Senator Thad Cochran
Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senator Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senator Lamar Alexander
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development