



Remarks from the Energy Communities Alliance Annual Meeting

Speech

Feb 17, 2011

Good afternoon. Thank you Councilor Berting for that very kind introduction, and for the opportunity to be here today.

Having been a part of our nuclear security enterprise for more than 15 years, I can say without question that our sites and my organization cannot succeed without support from the communities we call home. The Energy Communities Alliance is an important partner in building strong relationships between the Department and our communities.

Thank you for the important work you have done on behalf of our friends and neighbors.

Let me also thank ECA's Vice-Chair, Mayor Tom Beehan from Oak Ridge.

Earlier this month I had the opportunity to visit NNSA's Y-12 National Security Site to visit with our workforce and thank them for the vital work they do to keep the American people safe and secure. While I was there, Mayor Beehan and the members of the city council were kind enough to meet with me.

I often say that Y-12 is the "poster child" for the transformation I would like to see across the NNSA enterprise. At the same time, and indeed as a part of that, I would suggest that the relationship between the Department and the Oak Ridge community is a model for how our sites should interact with the communities that host us.

Mr. Mayor, thank you for your hospitality, and for your support.

Make no mistake: our relationship between our sites and the communities they call home is a true partnership. Those of you from New Mexico saw that first hand earlier this month when a brownout in Texas shut down natural gas pressurization pumps across the Southwest, causing widespread outages from Albuquerque to Taos.

During one of the coldest winters in history, thousands of New Mexicans were without heat.

Our teams at Los Alamos and Sandia stepped up to the plate. We reduced natural gas use at Los Alamos by 50 percent and power use by 14 mega watts.

We used our on-site emergency response capabilities to support state and local response efforts.

We work closely with the Los Alamos Fire Department to keep our minimum requirements on hand and release as many units as we could to support the surrounding communities.

In short, we did what any good neighbor would do in a time of crisis. That is the partnership we share with our communities.

That partnership is going to be even more important as we work with Congress to pass critical investments in the infrastructure of our sites.

You have picked a particularly opportune time to meet. This week, the President released his budget request for Fiscal Year 2012. Despite the economic challenges facing our nation and the budget pressures being felt throughout the federal government, the President demonstrated his commitment to our mission by proposing an unprecedented investment in ensuring the nuclear security of our country and our allies.

That investment is a reflection of his vision for our nation, and of the critical role we play.

Our job is to enhance global security by leveraging the best science and technology in the world to maintain our nuclear deterrent, prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and materials, power the nuclear Navy, and provide the nation with the best emergency response and counterterrorism capabilities in the world.

It's a tremendous responsibility, and each one of you in this room has an important role to play. Together, we are making the world a safer place.

President Obama has requested nearly \$11.8 billion for NNSA in 2012, up from \$11.2 billion last year. This reflects the tremendously important work happening in many of your communities.

I think this year's budget request can best be summarized with three key themes: We are investing in the future, implementing the President's nuclear security agenda, and improving the way we do business and manage our resources.

To INVEST IN THE FUTURE, the budget request includes \$7.6 billion for our Weapons Activities appropriation, up 8.9 percent over the President's FY 2011 request.

This reflects the President's commitment to invest \$85 billion over the next decade to modernize the nuclear security infrastructure and revitalize the science, technology and engineering that supports the full range of nuclear security missions.

These resources will help us invest in a modern, 21st century national security. With these investments, we will be able to continue to move toward an enterprise that is safer, smaller, more secure, more efficient, and more sustainable.

We are building the modern research facilities needed to do cutting edge science and attract the next generation of nuclear security experts.

To paraphrase something Vic Reis once said, our strength at NNSA is our ability to do big things that no one else can do, anywhere else in the world.



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I should also point out that these investments are also providing the nation the tools to tackle broader challenges.

The supercomputers we built to help maintain our nuclear stockpile are also helping bring products to markets faster, predict the strength of hurricanes, and model the spread of global diseases like HIV/AIDS.

Our National Ignition Facility in Livermore holds the potential to bring us closer to clean, reliable energy based on fusion.

Our laboratories and research institutes are bringing new cancer scanning tools to the market, and our effort to produce Moli-99 without using highly enriched uranium can help save countless lives by expanding the market of available lifesaving medical isotopes.

These things are all good for our country, and good for your communities. Our sites are our nation's engines of innovation. That means solutions to a broad range of national challenges and new business opportunities in your the communities.

This Budget Request will allow us to build on those successes so we can continue to support the President's nuclear security agenda and our communities.

That brings me to the second key theme of this Budget Request. It clearly reflects the central role NNSA plays in IMPLEMENTING THE PRESIDENT'S NUCLEAR SECURITY AGENDA.

President has laid out an ambitious goal of securing vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years. This budget request includes \$2.5 billion in FY2012 and \$14.2 billion over the next five years to detect, secure, safeguard and dispose of dangerous nuclear and radiological material worldwide.

To implement the agenda outlined in the Nuclear Posture Review and the modernization program outlined during the Senate's debate on ratifying the New START Treaty, this budget request provides \$7.6 billion for our the Weapons Activities account.

That investment will enhance our efforts to leverage the best science and research in the world to maintain our nuclear deterrent and modernize the infrastructure that supports it. It will enable us to continue critical work done in partnership with the Defense Department and other interagency partners to keep our nation safe.

It increases support to our stockpile by 4.8 percent, which will support the B61 life extension program.

It seeks a 3.1 percent increase in Science, Technology and Engineering to protect and advance the scientific capabilities at the U.S. national security laboratories.

It includes a 21 percent increase in our infrastructure component, largely to maintain key facilities and to continue the design and completion of major construction projects for Plutonium and Uranium capabilities.

What's more, they will also allow us to operate more safely and securely at lower cost. After the up-front costs of building modern facilities like the UPF in East Tennessee and the CMRR-NF in New Mexico, these investments will reduce maintenance costs, reduce the footprint of our enterprise, and reduce security costs and requirements.

For Naval Reactors, the Budget Request includes \$1.1 billion, an increase of 7.8 percent over 2011. This will continue design work on the OHIO class submarine replacement, support the effort to modernize key elements of the infrastructure that supports Naval Reactors program, and refuel the land-based prototype reactor in Upstate New York.

These are all requirements that were outlined in last year's Nuclear Posture Review. Taken together, this request includes significant investments in all of our core mission areas, and will allow NNSA to play a central role in implementing the President's nuclear security agenda.

It is important for us all to recognize that these investments come at time of severe economic challenges for our country and a renewed commitment to reducing the deficit, and that brings me to the third major theme of this budget.

To maintain the consensus we have seen for supporting our programs, we have a responsibility to work together as one NNSA to IMPROVE THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS AND MANAGE OUR RESOURCES.

Changing the way we do business is an important part of our effort to transform a Cold War nuclear weapons complex into a 21st Century Nuclear Security Enterprise. We simply cannot expect Congress to support major investments in our programs and our facilities unless we can convince them that we are responsible stewards of the taxpayer's money.

And let's be honest: this is not an area in which we have performed especially well in the past.

We need to do better, which is why we are working with our M&O partners to streamline our governance model so we can devote more resources to critical mission work and maximize our ability to complete our mission safely and securely.

We are making sure we have the right contracting strategy in place. I know that this has produced some anxiety in some of our communities, so let me be clear about one thing: I am convinced that this approach is going to strengthen our enterprise and increase the productivity of our sites.

This is good for NNSA, good for our workforce, and good for our communities because it will solidify support for our mission and ensure we can continue to get the resources we need.

We are improving our project management. For example, we have a new policy that we will no longer set cost and schedule performance baselines on construction projects until design work is 90 percent complete. This will allow us to give more accurate cost and schedule estimates to Congress and the taxpayers.

We are ensuring we have the right project management leadership teams in place, and performing independent cost reviews.

We created a new policy and oversight office for managing major projects that reports directly to me. This will help ensure that project management gets the high level focus it deserves.



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back into mission work at our sites.

And, as the next step, we recently announced that we are reorganizing the way our headquarters staff is structured. Our goal is to move this agency forward, remaking and realigning our program and mission support offices to better carry out the NNSA's work.

All of this is part of our effort to create "One NNSA," a true partnership between all of our programs and all of our partners to fulfill our common mission.

We must break down stovepipes; work collaboratively across our programs and organizations; make sure our headquarters, site office and M&O partners are coordinated; and leverage all of our resources to meet our common objective – making the world a safer place.

Taken together, these steps will ensure we have a modern, 21st century national security enterprise that is smaller, smarter, safer, more secure, more efficient, and organized to succeed.

We are already beginning to see results. Last year our Kansas City Plant won the Malcolm Baldrige Award. Since October, NNSA projects have won two Project Management Institute Awards, including the our Global Threat Reduction Initiative which became the first federal project to win PMI's 2010 Distinguished Project Award.

Now more than ever, we are one NNSA, with one mission. That is my vision for the future of NNSA. To succeed, we need to be one integrated enterprise where all of our programs are working together, and we are leveraging resources from all of our sites to support all of our missions.

That is the true path forward for NNSA. That is what our country expects, and what your communities deserve.

Thank you for your role in keeping our country safe, and for helping us move our enterprise forward.

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- [Sitemap](#)

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- [Y-12 National Security Complex](#)
- [Albuquerque Complex](#)

