

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

February 7, 2013

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you begin to consider candidates to be the new Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) we urge you to seek an individual who will provide strong leadership at the agency. The NNSA has recently suffered from a series of ongoing management, security and budgetary problems and effective new leadership is needed now to restore the confidence of the public and of their representatives in Congress.

We believe the new Administrator should have a strong background in the day-to-day operations at the national labs, an understanding of the scientific and engineering challenges, and a strong emphasis on employee safety, which includes providing the resources and infrastructure to carry out the labs' mission. The new Administrator should also bring the management skills necessary to properly oversee and carry out the mission of the NNSA and any future reforms in the governance structure, mission and management of the agency.

In particular, we expect the new administrator will share our commitment to maintaining the National Security Laboratories' lead role in our nation's weapons and national security programs. In the face of growing fiscal constraints we believe it will be essential that the labs continue to diversify their efforts, especially in the area of advanced energy and environmental technologies. Finally, the new administrator must share our commitment to assuring resources are available to meet all obligations and deadlines for environmental cleanup.

We are especially concerned that recent funding pressure at Los Alamos National Laboratory has led to a drawdown in intellectual capital, which if continued, will have a detrimental impact on the lab's scientific and technical capabilities. The new Administrator must assure the site splits and funding for each of the national security labs, including Los Alamos, is sufficient to sustain high levels of scientific and technical capabilities. A particular concern at Los Alamos is the need to maintain the unique plutonium research and technical base in both the near and long term. We believe the new administrator should work with lab directors and other leaders within NNSA to ensure that site splits do not have a detrimental impact on hiring and retention throughout the NNSA, as they have at Los Alamos during the past year.

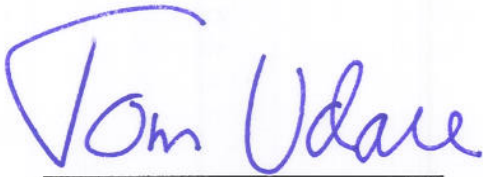
While site splits at Los Alamos remain a concern, maintaining funding for the B-61 life extension program is equally important. Without a steady stream of funding, the design work for the B-61 could be delayed and the life extension program put at risk. Sandia National

Laboratories will play a key part in this life extension program and we believe the new Administrator must commit to keeping this program on time and within a reasonable budget.

This year Congress will be looking at ways to reform and improve the governance structure of the NNSA, and it will be important that the new Administrator be capable of providing constructive criticism where needed, and support when implementing changes. We believe there is an opportunity now to make substantial improvement in NNSA's management and oversight responsibilities and we urge you to nominate someone with the leadership ability to help guide the transformation.

We look forward to working with you as you consider this important appointment and continuing to improve the performance of the NNSA.

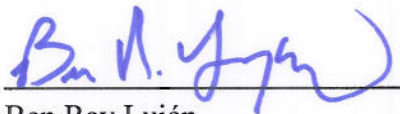
Sincerely,



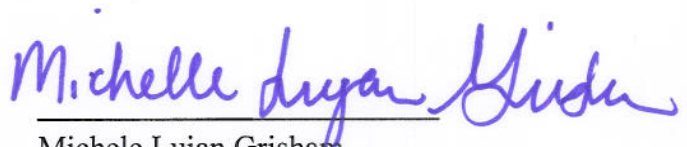
Tom Udall  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján  
Member of Congress



Michele Lujan Grisham  
Member of Congress