

*Tri-Valley CAREs' monthly Letter to the Editor party has gone virtual. Here are **three letters** that were published recently in three cities. One is on the Trump Administration's budget priorities in a time of pandemic; two are versions of an LTE on resuming U.S. nuclear explosive testing. Read on...*

## **[Backward priorities in federal budget](#)**

June 5, 2020 • Source: [Tracy Press](#) • Letter by Raiza Marciscano-Bettis

President Trump has requested an increase to the budget for the nuclear weapons stockpile. Further, his request reduces funds for science, environmental cleanup and other programs that meet human needs.

It is clear, with the coronavirus crisis that has shaken our country, that we need more civilian science and infrastructure, not new weapons of nuclear destruction. Rather than building weapons at the expense of everything else, the United States should meet its security goals with fewer warheads and more funding for programs that actually make us safer, such as education, science, health systems and environmental protection.

With this in mind, it looks like the administration's budget request for fiscal 2021 has its priorities backwards.

One example can be found in the funding for the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The overall funding request is for more than \$2 billion, up 7% from last year. Yet, the budget for science at the lab will shrink in fiscal 2021 to 1.7% of the total funding (\$36 million).

Livermore Lab has four of the top 10 most serious "High Risk" facilities in the nation at its main site. It also has another "High Risk" facility at Site 300 near Tracy. Tri-Valley CAREs members have raised the alarm in Washington, D.C., and locally about these abandoned buildings and the complexity of this matter.

It is sad to see that our community is forgotten, workers and the public are put at risk, and our tax money is going towards harmful nuclear weapons rather than cleaning up the contaminants that have been left in place carelessly throughout the years.

I stand for more funding at the lab for civilian science and environmental cleanup. The coronavirus pandemic should be a wake-up call for all of us. I invite lab workers and the community to stand with me.

Raiza Bettis, Tracy, CA

## **[Letter: US may spend billions on a nuclear bargaining chip](#)**

June, 10, 2020 • Source: [The Mercury News](#) (San Jose/South Bay) • Letter by Mary Perner • Featured LTE with graphic



Tri-Valley CAREs sent Congress a letter on reports US may conduct its first nuclear weapon tests since 1992.

Public interest organizations, including Tri-Valley CAREs, sent Congress a letter recently responding to reports senior White House officials discussed conducting the first U.S. nuclear weapon test explosion since 1992.

The proposal, a chest-thumping gesture aimed at Russia and China, is likely to spur the two countries and other nuclear states to conduct their own nuclear tests. The groups urged Congress to “demand prohibition on use of any funds to resume or prepare to resume such a test.” Sen. Ed Markey, D-Mass., has drafted a bill using similar language.

Nuclear testing sickened and killed military personnel involved in detonations, as well as civilians in the fallout pathways. Now officials consider spending billions on a high-risk nuclear bargaining chip, while the costs of the pandemic and unemployment continue to rise.

Mary Perner, Livermore, CA

## **[Maintain the Moratorium](#)**

June, 11, 2020 • Source: [The Independent](#) • Letter by Mary Perner (longer version than in the San Jose Mercury News)

On May 28, 24 non-governmental organizations, including Livermore’s Tri-Valley CAREs, signed onto a letter that was delivered to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer. The letter was in response to recent reports that senior White House officials had discussed conducting the first U.S. nuclear weapon test explosion since 1992.

The proposal, a chest-thumping gesture aimed at Russia and China, is likely to spur the two countries and other nuclear-armed states to conduct their own tests, reviving the danger, devastation, and cost of a nuclear arms race.

The NGOs wrote to urge Congress to “demand a prohibition on the use of any funds to resume or prepare to resume such a test.” The following day, taking a cue from the letter, Sen. Ed Markey, D-Massachusetts, drafted a bill to disallow the use of U.S. funds for an explosive nuclear weapons test.

Nuclear testing has killed or sickened thousands of military personnel involved in detonations, as well as civilians who lived on, or downrange from, testing sites. Now officials are toying with lives again, as they entertain the idea of spending billions for a high-risk nuclear bargaining chip, while the costs of a deadly pandemic and depression-era unemployment continue to rise.

For high White House staff to entertain the idea of even one test strikes me as reckless, tone deaf, and way beyond the pale. If you agree, let’s act. Call California Senators Dianne Feinstein (415-393-0707) and Kamala Harris (415-981-9369). Urge them to sign on as original cosponsors of Markey’s bill. Tell them you object to the U.S. spending any funds to conduct or prepare for a yield-producing explosive nuclear weapons test.

For more information, visit [www.trivalleycares.org](http://www.trivalleycares.org)

By Mary Perner, Livermore, CA