



A national network of organizations working to address
issues of nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup

September 11, 2025

Subject: Urgent! Senate Republicans Must Act to Keep the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board from Losing its Quorum on October 16.

Dear Senator,

We are writing today because a small government agency that is very important to our alliance (and the safety of many Americans) is in trouble, and we need you to take action to preserve it!

The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (**DNFSB** or Board) is an independent agency within the executive branch of the Federal Government. (<https://www.dnfsb.gov/>) The DNFSB is chartered with the responsibility to provide recommendations and advice to the Secretary of Energy regarding public health and safety issues at DOE defense nuclear facilities, including with respect to the health and safety of employees and contractors and the nearby communities. Congress established the Board in 1988 in response to longtime, ongoing concerns about the level of health and safety protection that DOE was providing the public and workers at defense nuclear facilities, including concerns from Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA) groups.

There are five positions on the Board for experts in the field of nuclear safety with demonstrated competence and knowledge relevant to its independent investigative and oversight functions. However, since early 2025, the Board has been reduced to just two members, Mr. Thomas A. Summers (a Republican nominee whose term ends on October 16, 2025), and Dr. Patricia L. Lee. The board currently has a temporary one-year statutory quorum. Since there is no indication that Mr. Summers might be allowed to extend his term, the Board may be down to one person after October, and will then lack a quorum. Without its quorum, the DNFSB can not carry out its mission effectively. **Republicans on the Senate Armed Services committee must take action to protect nuclear safety by preserving DNFSB's quorum!**

DNFSB has sent a list of potential nominees (both Republicans and Democrats) to the President. Maintaining a quorum requires **Republicans on the Senate Armed Services Committee recommend a Presidential nomination of at least one new Board Member that the Senate approves.** Better still would be three Senate-approved nominees (two Republicans and one Democrat), bringing the Board to full membership (4).

This nomination will not cost any extra taxpayer dollars!

As the U.S. continues its nuclear weapons modernization plans, including the massive plan to produce new plutonium pits (the plutonium trigger at the core of all nuclear weapons), the DNFSB provides increasingly important independent analysis and expert recommendations to DOE. The Board ensures accountability in regard to safety standards and increased public transparency during this potentially dangerous expansion.

Past board recommendations have resulted in saving millions of dollars by preventing accidents and providing a basis to modify or not build facilities. Maintaining a Board quorum preserves the DNFSB's ability to issue formal recommendations, impose reporting requirements, and conduct hearings, thus ensuring that DOE avoids accidents and remains accountable.

ANA has supported the Board since its beginnings and has relied on its reports, recommendations and public transparency to supplement our calls for safety and accountability across the sites it oversees. At this time of rapid program expansion to carry out nuclear weapons modernization, the DNFSB's work is more important than ever!

Respectfully,



Tanvi Kardile, Esq.
Alliance for Nuclear Accountability, Board President

On behalf of the ANA organizations:

Beyond Nuclear
Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League
Colorado Coalition for the Prevention of Nuclear War
Columbia Riverkeeper
Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety
Fernald Residents for Environmental Safety and Health
Georgia Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)
Hanford Challenge
Heart of America Northwest
Justpeace
Marshalllese Educational Initiative
Miamisburg Environmental Safety & Health
Native Community Action Council
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation
Nuclear Energy Information Services
Nuclear Watch New Mexico
Nuclear Watch South
Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance

Parents Against Santa Susana Field Laboratory
Peace Action
Peace Farm
Peaceworks Kansas City
Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR)
PSR Los Angeles
PSR Kansas City
Portsmouth/Piketon Residents for Environmental Safety and Security (PRESS)
Rocky Mountain Peace & Justice Center
Savannah River Site Watch
Snake River Alliance
Southwest Research & Information Center
Tri-Valley Communities Against a Radioactive Environment (CAREs)
Women's Action for New Directions
Women's International League for Peace & Freedom