

TVC on Nuclear Weapons

By Tanvi Kardile, Nuclear Programs Manager

Budget

1.5 T requested for Defense spending in 2027 is staggering. What is more staggering is that this figure does not even include the budget for the NNSA nuclear weapons activities (\$25B) So while it does include the money that goes to procuring new delivery vehicles - submarines, bombers (airplanes for air deliver of nuclear weapons, and missiles for the ground based strategic deterrent, it does not include the funding for the nuclear warheads themselves.

Maintains the current US stockpile, developing a whole new generation of nuclear weapons. The Congressional Budget Office estimates we will spend \$1T on nuclear weapons over the next decade (\$274m per day) and a total of \$1.7 T over the next 30 years. These programs are prone to massive cost overruns. Giving opening remarks at STRATCOM's annual Deterrence Symposium, U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) Commander Adm. Richard Correll said the Pentagon is simultaneously recapitalizing all three legs of the nuclear triad. It is also modernizing nuclear command, control and communications, fielding advanced conventional capabilities and integrating artificial intelligence and autonomous systems while maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent.

- **Land-based missiles:** Replacing Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles with the new LGM-35 Sentinel system.
- **Sea-based missiles:** Building new Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines.
- **Strategic bombers:** Fielding the B-21 Raider stealth bomber along with new long-range standoff cruise missiles.
- **Infrastructure:** Upgrading Department of Energy and National Nuclear Security Administration facilities to process warhead components

Replacing every nuclear weapon in the stockpile with a newly designed warhead. And this is where our local Livermore Lab comes in.

This year's budget request for Livermore Lab is staggering—\$3.2 billion (the highest it has ever been). With nearly 90% of the Lab's budget going for nuclear weapons activities (\$2,836,353,000, which is up 8% over last year's request), the lab is positioning itself both as the primary new nuclear warhead research and design laboratory and as the production coordinator of those warheads. With 3 new nuclear weapons (W87-1, W80-5 and W93) and one "Life Extension Program" (W80-4) all in various stages of development at the Lab in FY2027, this budget request highlights the extent of LLNL's commitment to nuclear weapons forever.

LLNL is the lead design lab for the W87-1 warhead that will sit atop the new Sentinel Intercontinental Ballistic Missile. With a budget of \$188,666,000, the W87-1 will need all new plutonium pits. In addition, LLNL is also the lead design lab for the W80-4 warhead life extension program, for which \$68,134,000 is

requested, which will arm the new Sea Launched Cruise Missile, putting nuclear weapons on attack class submarines for the first time in decades

PEIS - LLNL Does not actually Produce weapons, they do support the production

Livermore Lab is going to be involved in pit production support work through NNSA's pit production plan at Los Alamos Lab in NM and Savannah River Site in SC - Explain Pit production.

- NNSA's Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on plutonium pit production, which was tasked with analyzing the plan's nation-wide impacts, fails to include analysis of the potential impacts of plutonium pit support work at Livermore Lab.
- Tri-Valley CAREs, along with many other organizations, submitted comments on the Draft PEIS asking for more clarity on the project
- In addition, the federal government is failing to release crucial documents relevant to pit production that communities need to be aware of, these being the newest JASON report about pu pit aging and DOE's special assessment on plutonium pit production, which is assumed to show the failures of the plan.

Enhanced plutonium utilization ties directly to plutonium pit production

LLNL's "Enterprise Plutonium Pit Production Support" work will more than double in FY2027 to \$166,696,000. This work is the primary driver for its proposed "Enhanced Plutonium Utilization." LLNL announced in 2025 its proposal to "Enhance Plutonium Utilization," showing its intent to increase the centrality of nuclear weapons activities to its mission, and repositioning itself as a full-service nuclear weapons laboratory, despite any potential security concerns.

In May, Livermore Lab and NNSA quietly posted a simultaneous Record of Decision (ROD) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) approving "Enhanced Plutonium Utilization" at the Lab. No draft EIS was ever publicly circulated and no public hearing on the draft plan occurred due to President Trump's executive order to expedite energy projects and get rid of certain regulations under the National Environmental Policy Act, which has historically required draft environmental impact statements with opportunities for public comment.

The EIS and ROD, effective immediately, "green light" the most significant changes in plutonium work at Livermore Lab since 2008, when the Lab failed a security drill and was compelled to downsize its plutonium usage, storage and transportation by 2012.

The new EIS and ROD reveal a major increase in plutonium work and raise the amount of plutonium throughput at the Lab. The new decision codifies that:

- There will be an **180% increase** in the number of plutonium shipments into and out of Livermore Lab;

- There will be a **400% increase** in transuranic nuclear waste (which designates a higher concentration of plutonium than “low level” plutonium-contaminated waste);
- There will be a **6.6% increase** in the dose to transportation crews;
- There will be a **21% increase** in latent cancer fatalities in the populations along the transportation routes; and,
- There will be a **27% increase** in the collective worker dose from radiological emissions.

This momentous change at LLNL is not happening in a vacuum. It is part of an overarching, multifaceted scheme to vastly increase funding for new nuclear warheads and to reinstate industrial-level production to manufacture new plutonium cores, new uranium secondaries at Y-12, all new components at KCP, for an all new nuclear weapons stockpile to use to threaten our adversaries, and potentially to use in a nuclear war.

The lab also has Expansion plans:

In 2024 Livermore Lab concluded its 15 year planning review in a Site wide environmental impact statement for continued operations. So by 2040 the lab plans to construct 75 new facilities totaling 3.3 million square feet. Many of these buildings will be conducting dangerous, internationally provocative nuclear weapons activities, For example,

1. a new, 60,000 square foot, “Next Generation Life Extension Program Research & Development Fabrication Building” to work on new nuclear warheads, including the fabrication (production) of new-design weapons components in order to test them out.
2. A 75,000 square foot “Advanced Hydrotest Facility” (AHF) at Site 300 which was previously proposed in the 1990’s but at that time Site 300 was determined to be an *inappropriate* location due in part to the AHF’s associated hazards and the proximity of the public. Additional new facilities at Site 300, include a “Weapons Test Facility,” and a new “Accelerator Bay and Support Bunker” expansion, among others.
3. Other new projects at the Lab’s Main Site include a new Engineering Shop support facility, a new Nuclear Science Center, a new High Bay, a new “Classified Lab” , and more. These are all directly related to new weapons activities,
4. Specific to NIF and related weapons research, the proposed action includes a new “High Energy Density” support facility and a “Future NIF Laser Expansion”.

NTI Poll that showed people were not swayed by \$ when told Nuclear weapons were necessary to keep us safe. Any amount of money was worth it. But when told that experts believe that huge sums of money are being spent unnecessarily that opinion was flipped

Deregulation is also occurring all around

Currently, with just one member on the board, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board lacks a quorum to be able to give recommendations to DOE on safety and public health risks at defense nuclear facilities.

DNFSB is now suspending publication of many regular reports, such as site inspections, on DOE operations. DNFSB said NNSA and Office of Environmental Management are denying access to DOE records, meetings and staff concerning safety of DOE nuclear defense facilities.

We have some Policy priorities we will be working on in the coming year

Opposing Lab expansion

W87-1

We are advocating for a funding cut for the W87-1 for the Sentinel ICBM

Nuclear testing

The President's vague statement to resume nuclear testing is dangerous and reckless.

A resumption of nuclear explosive testing poses grave human and environmental health threats caused by radioactive material in the air and groundwater. Resumption of testing could disrupt global security, prompting other countries to test their nuclear weapons.

Several NNSA administrators and lab directors have said testing is not required to ensure the stockpile safety.

Tri-Valley CAREs is advocating for policies to oppose the resumption of testing, such as the RESTRAIN Act in the House and the No Nuclear Testing Act in the Senate.

Whether it is plutonium pits, weapons programs, or tritium and other "defense fuels," the Lab's nuclear weapons "production modernization" budget has grown 106% in the last two years! A big concern is that NNSA is moving ahead with plans without integrated master schedules or total cost estimates, despite all these weapons programs experiencing scheduling delays and cost overruns. All these programs are proliferating and lead to destabilization, instead of national security. Nuclear weapons do not make our communities safer—we are put in more danger because of them. DOE EM has spent \$215B to clean up the mess that nuclear weapons development has caused to the environment from Hanford to Livermore since 1989 when cleanup processes began. We are currently spending \$8-9B year on this cleanup, while its costs go up by that amount each year. The remaining cleanup is currently estimated to cost \$815 billion and take until beyond the year 2100.