



Alliance for Nuclear Accountability

www.ananuclear.org

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

PO Box 1202, Abiquiu NM 87510

October 12, 2026

Dear Chairmen, Ranking Members, and Members of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees:

This letter is on behalf of the organizations of the [Alliance for Nuclear Accountability \(ANA\)](http://www.ananuclear.org), a national network of more than 30 organizations working in communities affected by the nation's nuclear weapons complex, nuclear waste management, and Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management activities. ANA supports the independent role of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) in overseeing the health and safety of DOE and National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) defense nuclear facilities.

ANA is concerned that DOE and NNSA are increasingly restricting the DNFSB's access to facilities, personnel, meetings, and information that the Board considers necessary to carry out its statutory responsibilities. The DNFSB has documented these concerns in its [July 2026 Report to Congress on Access Denials](#) and its [April 2026 correspondence to the Secretary of Energy](#). ANA agrees with the Board that these restrictions violate the Atomic Energy Act [42 U.S.C. § 2286c\(a\)](#) and the [February 2022 DOE-DNFSB Memorandum of Understanding](#) and [June 2022 Supplementary Agreement](#) that established a framework for communication, coordination, information sharing, access, and resolution of disputes between the agencies.

We therefore ask the Committees to include language in the FY2027 National Defense Authorization Act that:

1. **Reaffirms the DNFSB's statutory authority** to obtain prompt and unfettered access to DOE defense nuclear facilities, personnel, and information that the Board considers necessary to carry out its responsibilities under the Atomic Energy Act;
2. **Directs DOE and NNSA to remedy the physical and informational access problems identified by the DNFSB**, including restrictions and delays resulting from DOE's March 10, 2026 memorandum, and to ensure that DOE and NNSA personnel provide the Board the access required by law; and
3. **Requires the Secretary of Energy to report to the congressional defense committees** on a quarterly basis describing each action DOE and NNSA have taken to remedy the access problems identified by the DNFSB and certifying that the Board has been provided the access required by the Atomic Energy Act [42 U.S.C. § 2286c(a)].

Congress established the DNFSB in 1988 as an independent agency within the executive branch to provide independent analysis, advice, and recommendations concerning public health and safety at DOE defense nuclear facilities (See [42 U.S.C. § 2286c\(a\)](#)). The Secretary of Energy is required by this statute to fully cooperate with the Board and provide it with **"prompt and unfettered access"** to facilities, personnel, and information the Board considers necessary. The statute establishes only limited circumstances for denying information and requires written information-access denials to be reported to the congressional defense committees, which has not occurred in the recent incidents.

ANA echoes the DNFSB's concerns about DOE's [March 10, 2026 memorandum, "Clarifying Instructions Regarding Interface with the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board."](#) The Board has reported that DOE personnel have cited the

memorandum in limiting access and failing to respond to requests, and has identified provisions it believes are inconsistent with the Atomic Energy Act.

ANA groups reside near the sites with nuclear facilities that DNFSB monitors. Our groups depend on their effective oversight to ensure safe operations. In addition, we depend on DNFSB site reports for transparency into operations and safety at the sites carrying these potentially dangerous nuclear weapons and waste related missions.

Thank you for your actions.

For the member groups of the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability,

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President of the Board of Directors

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