



May 23, 2016

Dear Members of Congress:

The undersigned groups oppose continued funding for the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MOX) at the Savannah River Site in Aiken, South Carolina. The MOX facility was designed to convert weapons-grade plutonium into mixed-oxide fuel for U.S. commercial nuclear reactors. Today, however, it is vastly over budget, behind schedule, lacks even a single potential customer, and could even be putting dangerous nuclear material at risk. To date over \$5 billion has been spent on MOX construction, which remains only partially complete. The total cost of the program is estimated to be at least \$25 billion, but if the project continues to be funded at the current level, that number will more than quadruple to \$110 billion and won't be complete until 2100.¹

We believe that cutting the program entirely is in the best interest of taxpayers and we urge you to strike the \$340 million for MOX construction from the FY2017 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. But we also understand that some Members would like more information from the Department of Energy before committing to an alternative strategy. We encourage you to hold the Department accountable by withholding the additional \$70 million for MOX construction added by the committee until the Energy Department provides Congress an official updated MOX cost estimate, as well as a detailed description of the technical requirements and the nonproliferation concerns associated with the preferred alternative as mandated by last year's National Defense Authorization Act.

We look forward to working with you to be responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. For additional information, please contact Lydia Dennett at (202) 347-1122.

Sincerely,

Danielle Brian, Executive Director
Project on Government Oversight

Brandon Arnold, Executive Vice President
National Taxpayers Union

¹ The Aerospace Corporation, Plutonium Disposition Study Options Independent Assessment Phase 1 Report, April 13, 2015, p. 3. <http://fissilematerials.org/library/doe15a.pdf> (Downloaded March 2, 2016)