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**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES  
SAFETY BOARD**

Washington, DC 20004-2901



August 16, 2010

The Honorable Thomas P. D'Agostino  
Administrator  
National Nuclear Security Administration  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585-0701

Dear Mr. D'Agostino:

On April 7, 2009, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) sent a letter to Secretary Chu expressing concern about the storage of plutonium-238 enriched materials at the Los Alamos National Laboratory Plutonium Facility. In response, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) outlined near-term compensatory measures and a longer-term plan for resolving this concern. A significant component of the longer-term plan included either dispositioning, repacking, overpacking, or analytically demonstrating that all plutonium-238 containers were robustly packaged by June 2010.

The Board understands that NNSA completed this important activity on schedule, which required overpacking approximately 160 containers into qualified safety-class containers. This effort significantly improved the safety posture of the Plutonium Facility. The Board encourages NNSA to continue using safety-class containers to package any additional plutonium-238 enriched materials that are not required for near-term missions.

The Board congratulates NNSA on timely completion of this important safety improvement at the Plutonium Facility.

Sincerely,

Peter S. Winokur, Ph.D.  
Chairman

c: Mr. Roger E. Snyder  
Mr. Kevin W. Smith  
Mrs. Mari-Jo Campagnone