



## The Secretary of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

August 20, 2022

The Honorable Joyce L. Connery  
Chair  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
625 Indiana Avenue NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chair Connery:

The Department of Energy (DOE) is in receipt of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's (DNFSB) June 16, 2022, letter requesting a response on the implementation of the unreviewed safety question (USQ) process following a probabilistic seismic hazard analysis (PSHA) update. Specifically, the Board requests that DOE clarify the expectations on timing for entry into the USQ process in cases where a PSHA update identifies an increased seismic hazard that exceeds qualification assumptions for seismic safety controls.

The Department is coordinating its response to the DNFSB letter and evaluating additional actions necessary to clarify expectations for entering the USQ process following a PSHA update. This evaluation and coordination will necessitate an additional 45 days to deliver the requested report to the Board.

DOE continues to appreciate the Board's advice and assistance. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Todd Lapointe, Acting Director for the Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security, at 202-586-6740.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Granholm".

Jennifer M. Granholm