

Joyce L. Connery, Chair
Thomas A. Summers, Vice Chair
Jessie H. Roberson

**DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES
SAFETY BOARD**

Washington, DC 20004-2901



October 11, 2023

The Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Granholm:

On September 26, 2023, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (Board) received the Department's "Benchmark Review Final Report for Aging Infrastructure Management." This report is intended to satisfy Deliverable 5.1.2 of the Department's Implementation Plan in response to the Board's Recommendation 2020-1, *Nuclear Safety Requirements*.

Based on a preliminary evaluation of this Implementation Plan deliverable and other ongoing staff review activities, the Board remains concerned that DOE benchmarking efforts overstate the adequacy of existing requirements and the effectiveness of currently implemented aging management processes.

In the interest of continuing productive engagement with the Department on this vital issue, the Board is considering a suite of near-term actions including additional correspondence and/or public hearings to better characterize existing weaknesses and highlight potential improvements to aging infrastructure management across the DOE complex.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce L. Connery".

Joyce L. Connery
Chair

c: Mr. Joe Olencz
Mr. Garrett Smith