

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 3, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Pete Hegseth
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

The Honorable Brandon Williams
Administrator
National Nuclear Security Administration
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear President Trump, Secretary Hegseth, Secretary Wright, and Administrator Williams:

We write to express our outrage and unequivocal opposition to President Trump's reckless directive to resume explosive nuclear weapons testing and to demand clarification. While Secretary Wright has tried to clarify President Trump's Truth Social post, the president's directive announced last week on Truth Social is unnecessary, dangerous, and scientifically unjustified.¹ It threatens to reawaken one of the darkest chapters in Nevada's history, endangers American lives, and undermines decades of bipartisan work to keep our nation and the world safe from the devastation of nuclear war.²

The Nevada National Security Site (NNSS)—formerly known as the Nevada Test Site—has played a critical role in nuclear weapons development and was ground zero for the majority of the United States' explosive nuclear testing from 1951 to 1992. During that time 100 atmospheric and 828 underground tests were conducted, causing millions of people and acres of land to be exposed to toxic levels of radiation. Many Nevadans and downwind communities suffered from those exposures and are still waiting for justice and compensation under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA).³

Since President George H.W. Bush signed the testing moratorium in 1992, the United States has utilized the Stockpile Stewardship Program to verify the safety, security, and effectiveness of our nuclear stockpile. The NNSS's Principle Underground Laboratory for Subcritical Experimentation (PULSE) is where much of this work is done today. PULSE is undergoing major mining and construction, to provide Enhanced Capabilities for Subcritical Experiments (ECSE), and will host two of the most capable weapons radiographic systems in the world—the

¹ Toropin, Konstantin; Moritsugu, Ken; Yamaguchi, Mari. "Trump appears to suggest the US will resume nuclear weapons testing for first time in 30 years." Associated Press, October 30, 2025. <https://apnews.com/article/trump-us-nuclear-tests-explainer-e641db1a4c99721bbd4ecd187d7dff65>.

² Fox5 Vegas Digital Team. "Nevada's long history of nuclear training as President Trump reinstitutes testing." Fox5 Vegas, October 30, 2025. <https://www.fox5vegas.com/2025/10/30/nevadas-long-history-nuclear-training-president-trump-reinstitutes-testing/>.

³ U.S. Department of Justice. "Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA)." <https://www.justice.gov/civil/common/reca>.

ZEUS and Scorpion test beds. Together with other efforts, these will provide even greater certainty about the performance of the United States' nuclear weapons stockpile.

The United States ended explosive nuclear testing in 1992 for one clear reason: our scientists proved it is unnecessary to ensure the safety, security, and reliability of our nuclear deterrent. For decades, including through the entirety of the first Trump administration and again this year, the directors of the nuclear weapons laboratories, with concurrence of the commander of U.S. Strategic Command and the secretaries of Defense and Energy, have affirmed that the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile continues to be safe, secure, and effective and does not require the resumption of explosive testing. They continue to base their judgement on the data gathered from over a thousand subcritical and other experiments and robust computer modeling supporting those positions.

Therefore, to even contemplate detonating nuclear weapons on American soil is a betrayal of science, safety, and the American people. Radioactive contamination does not recognize state lines—every breath of air, every drop of water, and every inch of soil across this nation would bear the consequences, not just to the people of Nevada. This rash move also risks igniting a new global nuclear arms race, signaling to adversaries that the U.S. is abandoning its leadership and commitment to restraint and nonproliferation.⁴ No country except for North Korea has conducted an explosive nuclear test in this century.⁵ This sudden reversal weakens our diplomatic credibility, endangers our allies, and undermines international security. In other words, this decision invites global instability while yielding no meaningful scientific or strategic benefit.

Accordingly, we demand that your administration reverse course, retract your directive on the resumption of explosive nuclear testing, and take the following actions:

1. Reaffirm the U.S. moratorium on explosive nuclear weapons testing and immediately halt any preparatory activities that could signal intent to resume such testing, especially at the Nevada National Security Site.
2. Provide a briefing to Congress on how the combined initiatives of using artificial intelligence in weapons design, pit production, and ECSE will provide even greater certainty on stockpile performance; and
3. Provide to Congress the estimated costs required to conduct a full scale nuclear explosive test in terms of equipment, personnel, time, environmental impacts, and strategic rationale.

Congress and the American people deserve transparency, accountability, and science—not secrecy and political theater. Nevada will not be your proving ground again. Our state has borne the scars of nuclear testing once before, and we will not allow history to repeat itself. We stand united in opposition to this capricious policy and will use every legislative and oversight tool

⁴ Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. “U.S. Testing and Treaty Commitments.” Arms Control Brief, April 2024. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2024/04/15/u-s-testing-and-treaty-commitments-pub-91542>.

⁵ Klippenstein, Ken. “After Russia Conducts Nuclear Weapons Tests, Trump Announces U.S. Will Restart Its Own.” Time, October 30 2025. <https://time.com/7329758/nuclear-weapons-test-us-russia-war-trump-xi-putin-missiles/>.

available to prevent any return to explosive nuclear testing on U.S. soil.

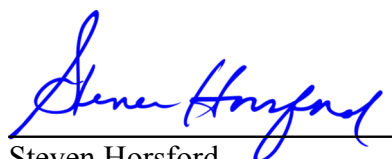
Sincerely,



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Steven Horsford
Member of Congress



Susie Lee
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress