

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 5, 2025

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to you today to express grave reservation about any action to resume nuclear weapons testing. While Secretary Wright recently sought to provide context to the directive you announced last week, we request that you personally provide clarification. The decision to resume nuclear weapons testing would be geopolitically dangerous, fiscally irresponsible, and simply unnecessary to ensure the ability of the United States to defend itself.

The U.S. tested nuclear weapons from 1945 to the early 1990's. Many of those tests occurred in our states. While these data collecting tests improved weapon designs, they also resulted in serious and lasting health effects for our constituents, many other Americans, and our allies and partners in the Pacific, including air and groundwater contamination that remains today. You are surely aware of this, as you signed into law extensions to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act earlier this year to help right those wrongs. Additionally, the U.S. has spent billions of dollars over the last several decades to alleviate the costs of nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific, including containment, cleanup, compensation, and healthcare.

Since President George H.W. Bush signed the testing moratorium in 1992, the United States developed the Stockpile Stewardship Program and subcritical experiments to certify the reliability, safety, and effectiveness of our nuclear stockpile without the need for explosive nuclear testing. The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) has built a comprehensive set of tools for guaranteeing the readiness of our weapons. These capabilities include the most sophisticated scientific equipment in the world, including experimental facilities such as the Z Machine at Sandia National Laboratories and the National Ignition Facility at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and corresponding modeling capabilities at leading supercomputers like the upcoming Mission and Vision systems at Los Alamos National Laboratory. The Nevada National Security Sites' Principle Underground Laboratory for Subcritical Experimentation (PULSE) – an underground laboratory where scientists conduct subcritical experiments – 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 ZEUS and Scorpius test beds. Together with other efforts, these will provide greater certainty about the performance of the U.S.

nuclear weapons stockpile. Both are critical components in efforts to assess pit design as the NNSA begins to produce pits at scale at the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Savannah River Site.

For decades, the directors of the nuclear weapons laboratories in their annual stockpile reports – with concurrence from the commander of U.S. Strategic Command and the secretaries of Defense and Energy – including through the entirety of the first Trump administration, and again this year by the second Trump administration – have said that the U.S. nuclear stockpile is militarily effective and does not require a resumption of explosive testing, with over a thousand subcritical experiments and robust computer modeling providing the data to support those positions. There is simply no need to break something that is already working.

Your decision to potentially resume nuclear weapons testing not only undermines international nonproliferation efforts but also exacerbates what can be perceived as a nuclear arms race by world powers. The fact that Russia and China, two of the world's nuclear powers, have abstained from nuclear weapons testing in the 21st century, with only North Korea choosing to recklessly break restraint, underscores a shared recognition that the pursuit of security must never outweigh the risk of global stability. We know that at least one nuclear adversary, Russia, has committed to resume nuclear weapons testing should the U.S. resume as well. This is an extremely dangerous precedent that can relegate world powers back to a Cold War footing.

We strongly urge you to reverse course and continue America's leadership in demonstrating to the world that we can maintain deterrence without inflicting the health, environmental, and fiscal costs of nuclear weapons testing.

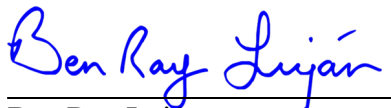
Sincerely,



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



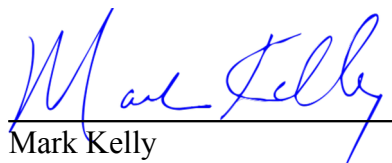
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



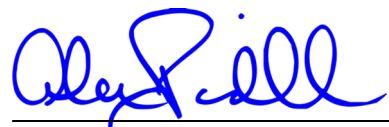
Mark Kelly
United States Senator



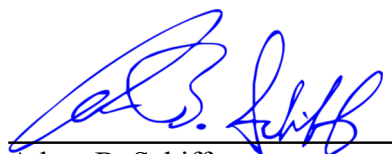
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



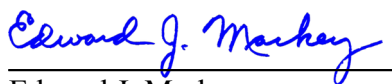
Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



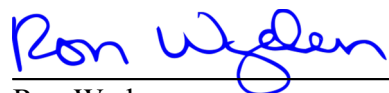
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator