

Office of Science Advisory Committee Chairs

August 11, 2003

The Honorable Spencer Abraham
The Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Secretary Abraham:

We are writing to you as chairs of the six Advisory Committees that provide technical and strategic advice to the DOE Office of Science on its science programs. Our Committees have broad representation from the academic, national laboratory and private sectors, and we report to Dr. Raymond Orbach, responding to his requests for guidance and advice.

During the past few years, our Advisory Committees have been deeply engaged in the first stages of developing a facilities plan. In late 2002, Dr. Orbach asked each Committee to consider a list of facilities in its respective discipline that could be built and operated by DOE over the next 20 years to enable forefront science. We were asked to categorize the facilities so defined in terms of scientific impact and readiness for construction. The Advisory Committees, following extensive considerations by Sub-Committees and input from our communities, accomplished the categorizations through thoughtful, open and diligent efforts. Much of the information, including presentations and conclusions, has been made available on the Advisory Committee Web sites. Dr. Orbach was provided with complete reports on our assessment of facilities and their impact.

On July 29, Dr. Orbach briefed the six of us in confidence on the integrated 20-year plan as it has been developed by DOE SC under his leadership. In discussions after this briefing, we concluded that the overall process that has been followed was fair and thorough. Dr. Orbach has effectively prepared an integrated plan whose development takes into account the priorities in our fields as identified by our Committees, working within a set of boundary conditions that necessarily involve making difficult choices. We think that scientific opportunities as well as the mission needs of DOE were carefully considered in a process that was appropriately transparent and that can be rigorously defended.


Finally, we have read your testimony and watched the video that you narrated on the occasion of your recent testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Energy. We share your passion for DOE science and its unique role in our Nation's science portfolio. Its key responsibilities for stewardship in the physical sciences as well as areas of the biological

sciences and advanced computing research fully justify the optimism that you have expressed so well. We hope that the priority that DOE places on its science programs will indeed set the stage for discoveries supporting the Department's missions while greatly enhancing our Nation's economic well being.

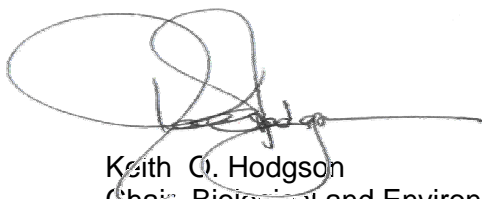
Sincerely yours,



Fred Gilman
Chair, High Energy Physics
Advisory Committee
Carnegie-Mellon University



Richard D. Hazeltine
Chair, Fusion Energy Sciences
Advisory Committee
University of Texas at Austin



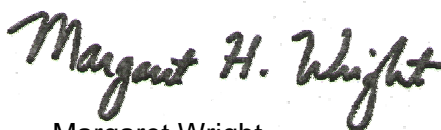
Keith O. Hodgson
Chair, Biological and Environmental
Research Advisory Committee
Stanford University



Geraldine Richmond
Chair, Basic Energy Sciences
Advisory Committee
University of Oregon



Richard Casten
Chair, Nuclear Science Advisory
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Margaret Wright
Chair, Advanced Scientific Computing
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New York University