



ECOS

Environmental Council of the States

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May 29, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair, Appropriations Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair, Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chair, Armed Services Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Armed Services Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable John Kennedy
Chair, Subcommittee on
Energy & Water Development
Appropriations Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC

The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy &
Water Development
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Scott DesJarlais
Chair, Subcommittee on Strategic
Forces
Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Energy & Water Development
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Seth Moulton
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Strategic Forces
Armed Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Congressional Leaders:

As Congress considers appropriations for federal fiscal year 2027, ECOS, the nonpartisan, nonprofit association of state environmental agency leaders, requests that you adequately fund cleanup of the nuclear weapons complex legacy waste sites to protect human health and the environment. State environmental agencies play a vital role in this cleanup as regulators overseeing this work in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. As the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) looks to revitalize sites in the nuclear weapons complex and support a nuclear renaissance, we urge Congress to support the cleanup work that is necessary across states and Congressional districts to allow for site reuse while protecting human health and the environment.

In order for DOE's Office of Environmental Management (EM) to maintain momentum to complete cleanup consistent with state and federal regulatory and legal agreements, substantial additional funding is required. The U.S. Treasury Department has identified the remaining cleanup of these legacy waste sites as the third largest federal government liability, emphasizing the magnitude of the required funding. As stated in [ECOS Resolution 10-3: Cleanup Budgets for the Nuclear Weapons Complex](#), federal funding to complete this work is a priority for states because proper cleanup of the complex is critical to protecting human health, mitigating damage to natural resources, and promoting economic development.

Since the creation of EM in 1989, cleanup efforts have reduced the complex from its original 100 sites in 33 states to 15 sites in 11 states. Important progress is being made at these remaining sites in the management of waste and remediation of land for reuse. For example, at the Hanford site, over 100,000 gallons of low activity tank waste have been turned into glass through the vitrification process at the Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant this year. In April, work near Moab, Utah to move uranium

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Ben Grumbles
ECOS Executive Director

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mine tailings away from the Colorado River was completed with a cumulative 16 million tons of residual radioactive material moved.

While states understand recent efforts by the federal government and local communities to develop new economic opportunities on and around the nuclear weapons complex sites, we encourage Congress to ensure that cleanup funding is used only for cleanup work. According to DOE's website the mission of EM is "to complete the safe cleanup of environmental legacy resulting from decades of nuclear weapons development and government-sponsored nuclear energy research." When appropriate, economic development and site reuse should be funded by other sources such as DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy, Office of Energy Dominance, the Office of Critical and Emerging Technologies, and the National Nuclear Security Administration, and the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

Despite significant progress, some of the most challenging work still lies ahead. Remaining work includes remediation of additional facilities and waste sites, packaging and shipment of large volumes of transuranic (TRU) waste, treatment of billions of gallons of impacted groundwater, and retrieval and treatment of millions of gallons of radioactive and chemical waste currently stored in aging underground tanks.

ECOS urges Congress to appropriate cleanup funding necessary for the EM program to achieve or exceed negotiated milestones as required by enforceable federal facility agreements, permits, and consent orders, and to support the reduction in the federal government's liability at these sites. Thank you for your careful consideration of this urgent national priority. We welcome the opportunity to discuss it with you further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Grumbles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Ben Grumbles
Executive Director, ECOS