



HEALTH PHYSICS SOCIETY

Specialists in Radiation Safety

March 19, 2018

Senator Lamar Alexander
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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Executive Vice President, ORAU
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Subject: Support for Low-Dose Radiation Research Program and H.R. 4675

Dear Senator Alexander,

As President of the Health Physics Society and Tennessee constituent, I am writing today to ask that you support legislation to reauthorize and restart the Low-Dose Radiation Research program at the U.S. Department of Energy. The HPS¹ is a professional organization whose mission is to promote excellence in the science and practice of radiation safety. In February, the House of Representatives unanimously passed H.R. 4675, the Low-Dose Radiation Research Act of 2018 authorizing specific funding level and coordination for a low-dose radiation research program to be led by the Department of Energy and coordinated with other government agencies. In January, testimony before the House Science Committee, Under Secretary of Energy for Science Paul Dabbar, a former radiation protection officer in the U.S. Navy, endorsed a low-dose radiation research program.

We urge the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to support the re-establishment of the low-dose radiation research program at the Department of Energy. We would ask that you include H.R. 4675, or a similar authorization for a low-dose radiation program, in any comprehensive energy bill or passed as stand-alone legislation to quickly move this authorization to the Senate and Congress.

DOE, with its thorough understanding of radiation health impacts and studies of radiation on the workforce, is well-positioned to lead this research program with NASA, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the National Institutes of Health, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security and EPA, as authorized in the bill.

A greater understanding of the effect of exposure to low dose sources of radiation will ensure safe working environments and potentially lead to revised radiation protection standards that could result in substantial savings in the national efforts to maintain adequate radiation safety protections. On this latter point, a more complete understanding of low dose radiation effects could lead to billions of dollars in savings for the

¹ The Health Physics Society is a non-profit scientific professional organization whose mission is to promote the practice of radiation safety. Since its formation in 1956, the Society has grown to include over 4,000 scientists, physicians, engineers, lawyers, and other professionals representing academia, industry, government, national laboratories, the Department of Defense, and other organizations. Society activities include encouraging research in radiation science, developing standards, and disseminating radiation safety information. Society members are involved in understanding, evaluating, and controlling the potential risks from radiation relative to the benefits.

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Federal government over the foreseeable future through reductions in cleanup costs of Federal and private sites, among others.

It is important to being this research program now, to enhance our understanding of low-dose radiation health effects and the ability to set appropriate standards that could lead to savings in low-dose radiation environments and radiation cleanup activities.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (865) 574-1649 or email at eric.abelquist@orau.org.

Sincerely,

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President, Health Physics Society
Executive Vice President and CRO
Oak Ridge Associated Universities

cc: David Connolly, HPS Congressional Liaison
Brett Burk, HPS Executive Director