

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 6, 2018

The Honorable Anne M. White
Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Assistant Secretary White:

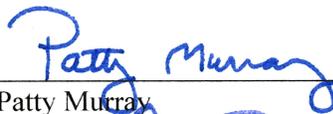
We write to request that the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) consider holding additional public hearings in the Pacific Northwest regarding the “Draft Waste Incidental to Reprocessing Evaluation for Closure of Waste Management Area C at the Hanford Site, Washington” (Draft WIR Evaluation). Public hearings are an important avenue for DOE to both explain the Draft WIR Evaluation and to receive comment from states, tribal nations, stakeholder groups, and the public.

We appreciate that DOE has extended the original 96-day comment period by an additional 60 days, providing more time for the public to review, evaluate, and provide input on the Draft WIR Evaluation. However, to date, DOE has only held one public meeting on the Draft WIR Evaluation in Richland, Washington. We have heard from stakeholders expressing the importance of holding additional public hearings at times and locations that allow for full participation.

The Waste Management Area C, also known as the C Tank Farm, consists of 16 single-shell tanks. We commend DOE and the Hanford workforce for retrieving more than 1.7 million gallons of waste from these tanks and transferring it into double-shell tanks. While we understand the Draft WIR Evaluation is the natural next step from DOE’s perspective, we also recognize this is a complex decision that involves managing waste differently, reclassifying waste, and has the potential to set precedent for the 17 other tank farms at Hanford. A decision of this magnitude should be made in an open and transparent manner with multiple avenues for public engagement. Therefore, we join the Washington State Department of Ecology and stakeholders groups in calling on DOE to hold additional public hearings in the Pacific Northwest to ensure the views of Washingtonians are heard.

Thank you for consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

cc: Brian Vance, Manager, Office of River Protection, U.S. Department of Energy
The Honorable Kristine L. Svinicki, Chairman, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission