

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

May 9, 1985

The Honorable Tom Bevill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and
Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to urge that the Subcommittee restore deep cuts proposed by the Department of Energy for Argonne National Laboratory. As you know, the Department has proposed cutting operating funds by \$46 million, from \$197 million to \$151 million for the Laboratory overall, and breeder research would be slashed from \$74.9 million to \$53.2 million for Argonne overall (East and West), and from \$33.4 million to \$15 million for Argonne East.

These cuts would have an immense impact on the the Chicago area and the state. In a state troubled with problems in the smokestack industries, it has become increasingly important that we encourage growth in the "high tech" companies now forming a new "silicon valley" in Illinois. In the suburbs of Chicago we now have, in addition to Argonne and Fermi Laboratories, such industries as Amoco Oil, AT&T, Bell Labs, Western Electric and many others.

While Argonne is vitally important to our state, our interest here is more than a parochial one. The Department's cuts would virtually shut down advanced reactor research, and with it, the Integral Fast Reactor (IFR) program. As you know, experts testifying before your committee in April emphasized that the IFR is the only truly new liquid metal reactor concept and represents one of the most promising approaches to developing a safe, economical, and environmentally acceptable source of electrical power. Argonne could complete the feasibility demonstration for the IFR next year. The complete concept could be in operation in three years, with fuel being irradiated, power being produced and fuel being reprocessed, refabricated, and cycled back into the prototype reactor. Argonne's Idaho site has facilities to complete the project in place today.

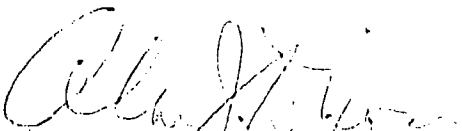
Moreover, these proposed cuts follow a \$13 million cut Argonne sustained last year. It appears that, once again, the lab is being asked to take more than its share of budget cuts. For instance, of the eight major multi-program labs funded by the Department, all but two (Argonne and Lawrence Livermore) are having their budgets increased in 1986. The cut at Argonne represents a 23 percent reduction overall, and a 45 percent cut in breeder research. It is estimated Argonne would have to lay off 34 percent of its personnel, including 700 scientists and other professionals.

We urge that the Subcommittee fully restore the cuts in Argonne's nuclear budget, specifically that restoration of \$22 million to the \$53.2 million allocation in the 1986 budget to bring the total back to \$74.9 million for liquid metal reactor research including the IFR.. Doing so would be consistent with a budget "freeze" approach, since we are only asking that Argonne be funded at 1985 levels.

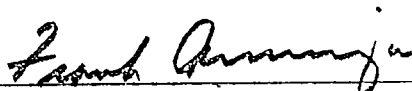
We understand that there are many competing demands for the nuclear research and development dollars, and the Subcommittee must weigh all of these factors. However, we feel that Argonne's IFR is so promising, and so near completion, that it should be fully funded.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.


Sincerely,



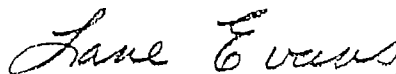
Alan J. Dixon, U.S.S.



Frank Annunzio, M.C.



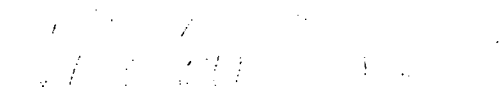
Bob Michel, M.C.



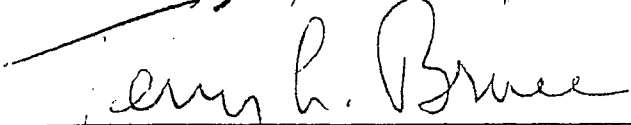
Lane Evans, M.C.



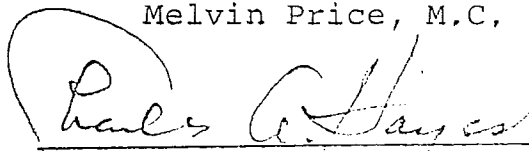
Harris W. Fawell, M.C.



Melvin Price, M.C.



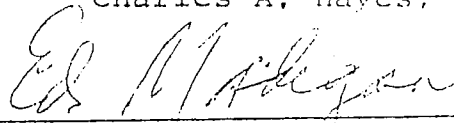
Terry L. Bruce, M.C.



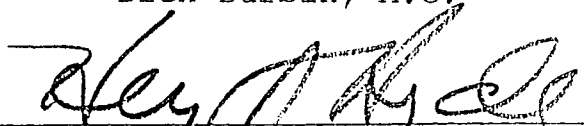
Charles A. Hayes, M.C.



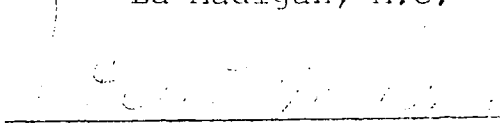
Dick Durbin, M.C.



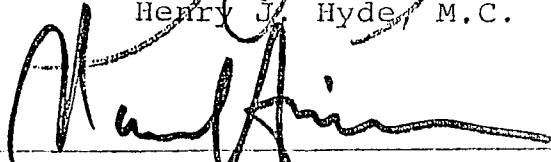
Ed Madigan, M.C.



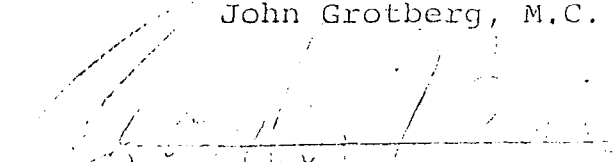
Henry J. Hyde, M.C.



John Grotberg, M.C.



Paul Simon, U.S.S.



George O'Brien, M.C.

~~Dan Rostenkowski~~
Dan Rostenkowski, M.C.

~~Lynn Martin~~
Lynn Martin, M.C.

~~Ken Gray~~
Ken Gray, M.C.
