



A national network of organizations working to address issues of nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup

COMMUNITIES PUSH BACK AGAINST REPORTS OF HUGE NUCLEAR WEAPONS BUDGET INCREASE

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Multiple sources indicate the FY2021 budget request from the Trump Administration will seek a dramatic increase in funding for nuclear weapons—an unprecedented leap of 20% over current spending levels, bringing the total for The National Nuclear Security Administration to \$20 billion. Reportedly, the increase is earmarked principally for modernization programs for warhead design and plutonium pit manufacturing facilities.

News reports have included outlandish statements from NNSA Administrator Lisa Gordon-Hagerty who suggested providing any less than \$20 billion would amount to “unilateral disarmament,” a claim no truer than the since discredited declaration of a missile gap with the Soviets in 1962.

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability, a nationwide coalition of grassroots watchdog groups from every major US nuclear weapons facility, notes that the current US nuclear stockpile has been certified reliable and is expected to be reliable for at least forty more years.

ANA released a [letter to Congressional leadership](#) calling for a hard look at the budget request when it arrives, scheduled for February 10, and encouraging House and Senate members to reject the increase as unjustified and unwise.

“The United States retains possession of nearly 4,000 stockpiled and deployed nuclear warheads and bombs. This is hardly disarmament,” said Marylia Kelley, executive director of Tri-Valley CAREs in Livermore, California. “Moreover, a 20% increase for weapons activities would perilously escalate an already dangerous new arms race. Rather than speed the design and production of new warheads, such as the W87-1, the country would be better served by cleaning up the contamination impacting our communities from the first cold war.”

ANA has tracked spending on nuclear weapons programs for more than thirty years.

“It will be important for the House and Senate committees that discuss this budget to be anchored in reality,” said Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch New Mexico. “There is no justification for a surge in nuclear weapons spending at this time. It is a brazen attempt by the NNSA and its contractors to exploit the last year of the Trump Administration; they want to gorge on taxpayer dollars while the trough is controlled by Republicans.”

The increase in spending would be used in part to fund new bomb production facilities, including two new facilities to produce plutonium pits—one at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina and one at Los Alamos National Lab in New Mexico. ANA members point out that funding these facilities in the FY2021 budget is premature.

“NNSA is required by a court order and by environmental law to conduct a full Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement review on expanded pit production. The recent announcement that they will not prepare the required analysis means they could well be facing a challenge in federal court” said Tom Clements, director of Savannah River Site Watch in Columbia, SC. “NNSA hasn’t demonstrated the need for producing 80 plutonium pits per year, much less explained why they need duplicate facilities to do it. Clearly they are setting the taxpayer up for another boondoggle on the scale of the failed MOX project at Savannah River.”

ANA will work to inform committee staff and members about the reality behind the President’s budget request and to debunk the false claims being made by the Administration.

“Major corporations rake in billions in profits from weapons production activities every year,” said Coghlan. “We’re on the other end of that pipeline. We’re the taxpayers. And we depend on Congress to spend our money wisely.”