

Mr. Kenneth A. Moore

8133

May 11, 2000

U. S. Department of Energy
% Mr. Gary Stegner
DOE-FEMP Public Affairs Officer
P.O. Box 538705
Cincinnati, Ohio 45253-8705

RE: Silos 1 & 2 Public Hearing

As a member of the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board I was invited to attend a Public Hearing on April 25, 2000 conducted by the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) to receive comments pertaining to the Silos 1 and 2 project. There were two speakers at the hearing, Dr. Joanne Wilson, Physician and Mr. Jerry Gels, Health Physicist, who presented information about the possible positive health benefits of the radium stored within Silos 1 and 2, the largest single source of radium in the world. They presented information that indicated studies are currently being conducted and funded by U.S. Government, using radium which might lead to a treatment for certain types of cancer with reduced side effects. They indicated that the proposed treatment of the Silos 1 and 2 materials would render the radium useless for future bio-medical purposes.

The DOE has an opportunity and a responsibility to mankind to fully evaluate and fund research into the bio-medical benefits of radium before the Silos 1 and 2 materials are permanently lost for that purpose. If we fail to act in a responsible manner and dispose of the radium and then discover that radium is a bio-medical asset, the costs, both monetary and environmental would be significantly higher for new radium production and would far outweigh the cost of storing the existing radium in a form that would not degrade it for bio-medical purposes.

Everyone involved with the Fernald Environmental Management Project has a mission of remediation for the site through decontamination and dismantlement. However, we should not have such a narrow view as to overlook the possible bio-medical benefits of radium, which could provide significant health benefits for society. Will the legacy of Fernald be forty years of cold war activities and fifteen years of cleanup costing billions of dollars or the use of cold war radium for world wide bio-medical cancer treatment in the 21st century?

How can the radium be extracted for bio-medical purposes while maintaining a realistic timetable for the safe removal of the other Silos 1 & 2 materials? It is being proposed that the Silos 1 & 2 materials be moved to a Transfer Tank Area and placed into metal storage tanks prior to the recommended chemical stabilization-cement alternative. The November 1999 Silos Report indicates that there is as much as four and one-half years (54 months) available for extraction of radium prior to the start of operations. It would appear that a private commercial organization could implement a radium extraction process within that time frame. Even if the time frame for commencing operations was extended by a year or two, the benefits would far outweigh the incremental time lost.

The single most responsible action that DOE should take would be to fully evaluate the use of Radium from silos 1 & 2 for bio-medical purposes prior to implementing the *Revised Proposed Plan for Remedial Actions at Operable Unit 4 (Silos 1 & 2)*. This would include preplanning to identify private commercial operations.

The intent of this letter is to assist others who are actively trying to identify radium as a treatment for cancer and to save a vital resource for that treatment.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Moore