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July 3, 2007

Secretary Samuel W. Bodman
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Secretary Bodman,

The recent proposal to alter retirement benefits for employees of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) greatly concerns me as well as many of my constituents. With approximately three thousand of LLNL's employees living in the congressional district that I represent, I have heard from hundreds of individuals in the past few weeks regarding proposed changes to their retirement benefits.

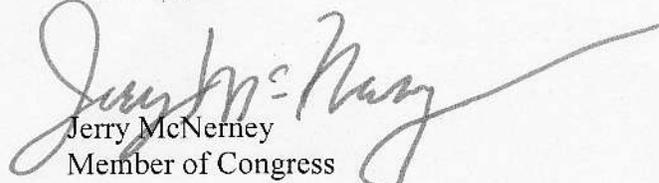
Last night, in California, I held a town hall meeting and invited all of my constituents who contacted me with concerns about their benefits packages. Over three hundred people attended, and I listened to their input for more than two hours. I was struck by the careful analysis they offered and the soundness of the arguments they developed in the short time available to examine the proposed benefits structure.

While some of my constituents are wary that they will lose the benefits they earned after making decades of contributions to the University of California's retirement system, many more are concerned about the long-term success of LLNL and America's advancement in science. For decades the lab has been at the forefront of advanced scientific research in the national security interest. Lab employees are fearful that without a sufficiently competitive benefits package, the consistently high caliber research conducted at LLNL will suffer, which will have ripple effects throughout the scientific community.

Attached to this letter is a sampling of the written concerns of my constituents, an audio recording of last night's town hall meeting, a copy of the sign-in sheets from that town hall meeting, and a copy of the press release issued by my office this morning. The comments and sign-in sheet have been redacted to protect the privacy of my constituents. However, you can surmise from the volume and comprehensive nature of the input from Livermore employees that concerns are widespread and should be addressed immediately.

I eagerly anticipate your thoughtful response to my constituents' concerns. Please feel free to direct any follow-up correspondence to me, and I look forward to working with you as the management transition moves forward at LLNL.

Sincerely,


Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress