Provide Funding to Protect Communities Adjacent to Contaminated Former Nuclear Weapons Sites in the Fiscal 2026 E&W Development Appropriations

September 17, 2025

Dear Member of Congress:

During the course of the United States' effort to produce thousands of nuclear weapons over the past eight decades, hundreds of sites around the country, some larger and are still active, some smaller and no longer operating, have produced enormous amounts of radioactive and toxic contamination that has poisoned workers and nearby communities.

The cleanup of sites that were active mainly in the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s continues, albeit too slowly. Some of these sites, which have been part of the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), have been remediated and remain under watch, while many others remain contaminated with certain low-level radioactive materials and mixed wastes that pose risks to nearby communities. (See *The Wall Street Journal's* special report "Wastelands: America's Forgotten Nuclear Legacy" for more information.)

As representatives and allies of communities affected by nuclear weapons contamination, we write to express our deep alarm that the House Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development (E&WD) Appropriations **has zeroed-out funding for the 18 contaminated sites that are currently part of the FUSRAP program**, which has been administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers since 1997.

We call on members of the Senate Subcommittee on E&WD, and other members of the Senate, to ensure that the Senate appropriates funding for the program at the administration's full request and ensure that funding is approved in the conference committee.

The Trump administration requested a total of $200 million for the FUSRAP program for fiscal year 2026, which is a small downpayment towards safer communities near these toxic sites.

In its report, the House E&WD Subcommittee justifies the cut by saying it "understands that the Corps will carry over into fiscal year 2026 significant unobligated funds sufficient to make appropriate progress on all active FUSRAP sites." This would appear to be a misunderstanding or willful negligence of the facts.

According to the administration's budget justification tables that were published May 25, 2025, "the unobligated carry-in from FY 2024 to FY 2025 was $387,642. As of the date this justification sheet was prepared, the total unobligated dollars estimated to be carried into FY 2026 from prior appropriations for use on this effort is $0."

Zeroing out funding for environmental remediation at these sites, which are contaminated with substances, including radium, thorium, uranium, arsenic, and cadmium, would be a betrayal of the public trust and an insult to those Americans who have, most often unwillingly, lived downstream or downwind or on toxic nuclear weapons sites operated by the U.S. government and its contractors.

In addition, cutting-off funding for the FUSRAP would stop ongoing work that is necessary to help protect current future generations from the health and environmental hazards posed by these sites. This would be the first time, to our knowledge, that federal funding for cleanup of these sites, and other potential cleanup sites under evaluation, would be cut-off:

- Indiana Joslyn Manufacturing and Supply Company Site, Fort Wayne, IN
- Iowa Army Ammunition Plant, IA
- Maryland W.R. Grace & Company, Curtis Bay, MD
- Latty Avenue Properties, Hazelwood, MO
- St. Louis Airport Site Vicinity Properties, St. Louis, MO
- St. Louis Airport Site, St. Louis, MO
- St. Louis Downtown Site, St. Louis, MO
- New Jersey Dupont Chamber Works & Company, Deepwater, NJ
- Maywood Site, Wayne, NJ
- Middlesex Municipal Landfill, Middlesex, NJ
- Middlesex Municipal Landfill, Middlesex, NJ
- New York Former Guterl Specialty Steel Corp., Lockport, NY
- Niagara Falls Storage Site, Lewiston, NY
- Seaway Industrial Park, Tonawanda, NY
- Staten Island Warehouse, Staten Island, NY
- Sylvania Corning Plant, Hicksville, NY
- Ohio Former Harsaw Chemical Company, Cleveland, OH
- Luckey Site, Luckey, OH
- Pennsylvania Shallow Land Disposal Area, Parks Township, Armstrong County, PA
- Superior Steel Site, Carnegie, PA

We would also note that the FUSRAP sites in Missouri, some of which involve well-documented, serious contamination of parks, schools, residential and commercial areas, have led to adverse health outcomes for people who will now be eligible for compensation under the program established by the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) that was extended and expanded as part of the spending and tax bill passed by Congress earlier this year.

It would be irresponsible and counterproductive to eliminate funding for the remediation of these and other FUSRAP sites around the country. **We urge you to fund the FUSRAP program at the requested level of $200 million for fiscal year 2026**.

Sincerely,

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Peter Wilk, Administrative Chair, Back from the Brink Coalition

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Joni Arends, Executive Director, Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety

John Erath, Senior Policy Director, Council for a Livable World

Steve Erickson, Representative, Downwinders, Inc. (Utah)

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