



October 9, 2013

STEVAN PEARCE
Second District, New Mexico

Dr. Ernest Moniz
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Moniz,

It is with great concern that I write today regarding the government shutdown and its impacts on the employees at Los Alamos National Lab, Sandia National Lab, and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad. As you are well aware, the work completed at these facilities is critical to the national security of our nation. Unfortunately, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced last week that furloughs at these facilities will soon be necessary. Many at these facilities cannot afford to miss a paycheck, and the surrounding communities rely heavily on the economic development that the sites provide. I therefore request that you ensure that all furloughed employees at these facilities receive back pay regardless of the duration of the government shutdown.

The employees at our national labs and WIPP play a key role in our nation's defense and growing our economy by focusing on everything from the development of weapons systems to energy efficiency studies. While the employees at these facilities technically work for the contractors who manage the facilities, they will still be subject to the uncertainty of the federal workforce forced into furloughs. The labs alone contribute billions of dollars to the state's economy—a vital reason New Mexico's unemployment rate remains below the national average. Additionally, DOE announced that massive furloughs at WIPP would cut the number of active employees from 1000 to 76. This would have serious and lasting economic consequences for the nearby community of Carlsbad and the surrounding area.

Last week, the House of Representatives passed HR 3223, the Federal Employee Retroactive Pay Fairness Act, ensuring that furloughed federal employees receive back pay for the duration of the shutdown. It is my understanding that DOE can certify to these sites that it is an 'allowable cost' for them to use appropriated dollars to compensate employees for back pay due to the shutdown. In the spirit of HR 3223, I again ask you to certify these expenses and to guarantee any and all furloughed personnel at these critically important facilities are compensated accordingly.

Thank you for your service and for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Pearce".

Steve Pearce
Member of Congress