

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Kaptur:

We are writing to express our strong support to provide at least \$344 million in funding for the National Ignition Facility (NIF), located at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, under the National Nuclear Security Administration's Inertial Confinement Fusion and High Yield Campaign, in FY 2019, and to reject the President's budget request.

NIF is the world's largest laser and uses inertial confinement fusion technology to study the state of modern nuclear weapons. Since the end of underground nuclear weapons testing in 1992, NIF is the only facility in the United States that can replicate the high temperatures and pressures of these weapons, which is essential to ensuring the safety and reliability of our nuclear stockpile. Understanding more about fusion through the research at NIF also gets us closer to achieving fusion ignition, which would allow us to harness a tremendous source of clean power.

We are concerned that President Trump's budget request of \$286.9 million, which, when paired with the recommendation to require the NIF to cover cost of target development directly, would mean a funding level of approximately \$270 million. An 18 percent cut from the FY 2017 level of \$330 million may lead to a reduction in staff and the number of experiments conducted at the facility. These actions would hinder this critical facility's role in nuclear stockpile stewardship and domestic fusion research. A level of at least \$344 million is needed to maintain current NIF operations.


At a time when other nations are expanding their investments in inertial confinement fusion, it is essential that we provide the funding needed for NIF to maintain American leadership in this field. We look forward to continuing to work with you to support nuclear stockpile stewardship and fusion energy research.

Thank you for considering our request.


Sincerely,



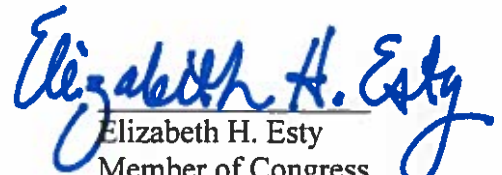
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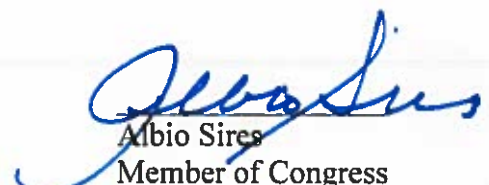

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