

Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

November 17, 1999

Dr. Geraldine L. Richmond, Chair
Department of Chemistry
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403-1253

Dear Geri:

As you know, on November 16th, Secretary Richardson announced his decision to permanently close the High Flux Beam Reactor (HFBR) at Brookhaven National Laboratory. The Basic Energy Sciences Advisory Committee (BESAC) under your leadership and that of your predecessors has provided sound technical advice and thoughtful analysis to the Department on the HFBR for many years and particularly during the past three years when the HFBR has been in standby mode. I want to express my gratitude for these efforts. I especially want to thank you for your personal commitment to this effort and for the role that you played in providing a balanced perspective to the Secretary on HFBR as part of the Basic Energy Sciences portfolio.

Following the Secretary's decision, I have renewed all of the BESAC reports on the HFBR produced since 1996, and I was reminded of the fifth recommendation made by BESAC following its meeting on July 30-August 1, 1997 -- a meeting that was devoted solely to the role that the HFBR played in the Nation's neutron scattering enterprise. That recommendation reads, in part, " ... we [BESAC] request that, should a decision be taken not to restart HFBR under the conditions outlined above, we have the opportunity to review the implications for the whole field of neutron-based research in the United States once again." I agreed to this recommendation, which I believed to be both necessary and prudent.

Therefore, I am now requesting that BESAC assess the consequences of the shutdown of the HFBR. I would like BESAC to advise the Office of Science on how best to use the neutron scattering resources available to the Nation's researchers and what, if any, changes should be made in the BES plans for the facilities that it stewards -- IPNS, the Lujan Center at LANSCE, HFIR, and SNS. I would like this report to be presented to BESAC and acted on at the time of your February 2000 meeting.

With Very Best Regards,

/s/ by

Martha A. Krebs
Director |
Office of Science