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June 9, 2006

Dr. Ray Orbach
Director, Office of Science
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Dr. Orbach,

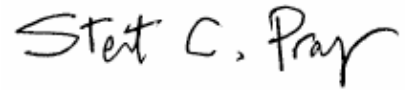
In your letter of February 27, 2006 you requested that FESAC assess how the fusion program should evolve over the coming decade. This is a potentially large endeavor, whose breadth depends upon the interpretation of the charge. At the prior FESAC meeting (February 28, 2006) our discussions tended toward a broad interpretation: to project forward the overall OFES program, not just a subset of the program. To consider carefully how to approach the charge, a FESAC subgroup of six persons was formed with the aim of bringing a proposed interpretation and process to FESAC at its June 1 meeting.

The subgroup has prepared a memo that is enclosed and entitled “Goals and Process to Address FESAC Ten-Year Program Planning Charge.” The recommendations of the subgroup were presented to FESAC on June 1 by Prof. Gerald Navratil, chair of the subgroup. The proposed process includes a community effort to enunciate and evaluate potential major building blocks of the fusion program. FESAC suggests that the scope include the overall magnetic fusion energy program, and the inertial fusion energy program to an extent to be determined. It would also consider the full international activity. The effort would include the larger fusion community. An example of a possible approach is a Snowmass-like process, as described in the attached document. A FESAC-appointed panel would define the approach, guide the process, and produce a set of recommendations for which the activities of the community would serve as technical input.

There are two time deadlines that are proposed. First, an interim report would be delivered by about March, 2007. This would contain a description of possible major initiatives to be undertaken or initiated within about a decade. The intention is that this would satisfy the needs for budget planning that occurs in the spring. Second, the final report would be delivered by about October, 2007. This would include tactical options, decision criteria, and priorities to plan the fusion program, including the evolution of major facilities.

We offer this proposal as an effective approach to answer your challenging charge to FESAC. We welcome your feedback and stand ready to modify our approach if it does not best serve your aims.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stewart C. Prager". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' and 'P'.

Stewart C. Prager
Chair, Fusion Sciences Energy Advisory Committee

Cc: Dr. J. Decker
FESAC

Enclosure