

Honorable Senator Tom Udall

Chairman, Subcommittee on Superfund, Toxics and Environmental Health

Dear Senator Udall,

I'd like to bring to your attention the attached resolution released today by Santa Fe Mayor David Coss regarding the urgent need for cleanup at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). I strongly support this resolution and hope that our state delegation will do the same. Cleanup is essential to protect our groundwater and drinking water, create jobs and to ensure that LANL does not become a permanent site for nuclear waste.

The recent decision by LANL to leave approximately 1M cubic meters of radioactive materials and hazardous waste in place at Area G poses a danger to our community. Since 1957 Area G has grown from a 5 acre site to a current area size of 63 acres and currently stores over 10.7 million cubic feet of radioactive waste. This decision by LANL presents great harm to the environment and the people of Northern New Mexico.

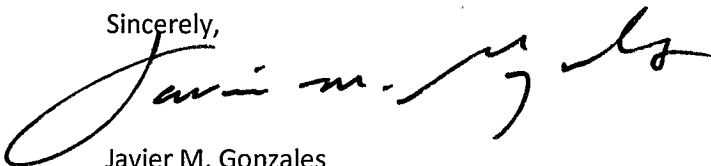
Currently, waste is stored in substandard pits that are unlined and dug into volcanic tuff. This, in addition to conclusive evidence that radioactive tritium has been found in the aquifer beneath Los Alamos presents a clear danger to the water supply for over 270,000 people but as well the soils and vegetation that has supported traditional farming families since the days of the Anasazi.

The people of Santa Fe and northern New Mexico are experiencing the damaging effects of climate change and that has lead to an historic drought in our region. We cannot risk further damage to our precious water supply by failed action of the United States government to hold LANL responsible for removing this harmful waste. Furthermore, the recent recession has lead to great hardship on many families in the area, especially our building trades.

A commitment by LANL that is properly funded to remove the radioactive waste and hazardous materials will have several benefits to the area. First, it will protect the quality of our limited water resources for current and future generations. Second, the removal and clean up would generate hundreds of high paying jobs for many that have been left behind as a result of the recession.

I'm asking you to consider holding Congressional hearings on this serious matter and assure that this is addressed in a timely matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Javier M. Gonzales". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Javier M. Gonzales

Candidate, Mayor of Santa Fe