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Nuclear Weapons Labs Made Improper Payments to Heather Wilson; She Should Resign from NNSA Council Determining Their Future

Santa Fe, NM - The Department of Energy (DOE) Inspector General has found that the Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories made improper payments of approximately \$450,000 to ex.-NM Rep. Heather Wilson from January 2009 to March 2011. This last February House Speaker John Boehner appointed Wilson to a congressional advisory council that will recommend how the nuclear weapons laboratories will be managed and operated by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). The stated purpose of this NNSA Council is "to examine options and make recommendations for revising the governance structure, mission, and management of the nuclear security enterprise." Heather Wilson should resign from the NNSA Council because of her clear conflict-of interest.

Wilson was a protégé of the powerful ex-New Mexico Senator Pete Domenici who protected the nuclear weapons labs and engineered lavish appropriations for them. Upon Domenici's retirement Wilson unsuccessfully ran for his seat, promoting herself as a staunch champion of the labs. For example, during her 2012 campaign she strongly denounced a NNSA decision to delay a controversial nuclear weapons plutonium facility at Los Alamos, playing on employment fears while inaccurately claiming that the delay would cost a thousand jobs (which the government's own documents contradicted). At the time it was unknown how much she had been paid for her own consulting jobs for Los Alamos and Sandia.

The DOE Inspector General report identified a number of issues concerning payments made by the labs to Heather Wilson and Company, LLC (HWC). It found: "• 23 payments totaling \$226,378 made by Sandia between January 2009 and March 2011; • 19 payments totaling \$195,718 made by Los Alamos between August 2009 and February 2011; and • Payments totaling approximately \$30,000 made by Nevada and Oak Ridge."

The DOE IG report went on to find "[n]one of the 23 invoices submitted by HWC contained details as to the time expended and nature of the actual services provided as required." Wilson's billing justifications did "not meet even minimum standards" for federal payments. There was also an "absence of detailed evidence of the actual services provided" and that the Sandia Corporation (a wholly owned subsidiary of Lockheed Martin) "developed an after-the-fact schedule of activities."

The four management contractors at Los Alamos, Sandia, Nevada and Oak Ridge were required to pay the government back \$442,000 for their irregular payments to

Heather Wilson. Jay Coghlan, Director of Nuclear Watch New Mexico, commented, "The question now becomes whether Wilson should personally be paying the government back. In any event, these new findings on the depth of her conflict-of-interest should bury her political future in New Mexico for once and for all. Further, she should resign from the NNSA Council on the future of the nuclear weapons labs, or replaced by congressional leadership if she doesn't go voluntarily."

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The DOE IG Report (DOE/IG-0889) is available at
<http://energy.gov/ig/downloads/inspection-report-doeig-0889>

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