

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TEXAS RADIATION ADVISORY BOARD
IN SUPPORT OF A PANTEX
PIT DISASSEMBLY & CONVERSION MISSION
November 9, 1998**

WHEREAS Pantex employees have more experience in safely and responsibly handling plutonium pits than any other site in the nuclear weapons complex. Pantex employees routinely handled plutonium pits in a high explosive environment, successfully managing a much higher risk than working with plutonium alone.

WHEREAS Pantex was the first site in the nuclear weapons complex to achieve full compliance with all DOE nuclear facility training requirements and remains the only DOE site in full compliance.

WHEREAS Pantex training programs have been benchmarked as the best in the nuclear weapons complex by other DOE sites (this includes Critical Safety Systems training, General Employee Training, and Computer Based Training programs). The Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board has recommended that other DOE sites benchmark Pantex training programs. Pantex training was documented as a Best Business Practice by a national level assessment organization.

WHEREAS all Pantex operations personnel have tested out at the 10th grade reading level or higher, and in fact, over 92% of Pantex workers have documented reading skills at the "post-high school" level. Pantex is likely the only DOE site that has a documented 100% literacy rate.

WHEREAS Pantex requires no off-site shipment of pits, decreasing the risk of classified weapon parts falling into unfriendly hands, and decreasing the terrorist threat of subsequent shipments of converted pit materials.

WHEREAS Pantex possesses adequate land capacity to support a pit disassembly and conversion facility. The current design of the pit disassembly and conversion facility employs a fully contained process, including remote handling and automation, that provides at least three barriers to the environment.

WHEREAS the Pantex guard force is the highest rated in the nuclear weapons complex.

WHEREAS Pantex has an outstanding safety record. The Pantex employees have full-time union safety officers for the voicing of safety concerns and a site-wide Voluntary Protection Program — which is employee directed and supported by all levels of management — to further enhance employee and public safety.

WHEREAS Pantex personnel have demonstrated their ability to consistently perform high quality work, most notably through maintaining and the safe dismantlement of the nuclear weapons stockpile. Most recently through the selection of the Pantex design of the Sealed Insert for an improved pit storage container which was selected over competing designs from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Texas Radiation Advisory Board submits to the Governor of the State of Texas, the Texas Congressional Delegation, and the Texas Legislature, its support for the disassembly and conversion of retired plutonium weapon components (pits) for eventual use in Mixed Oxide fuel to take place at the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas