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Dr. Patricia M. Dehmer  
Acting Director  
Office of Science  
U. S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20583

Dr. F. Fleming Crim  
Assistant Director  
Directorate of Mathematical and Physical Sciences  
National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Drs. Dehmer and Crim:

In a letter from your offices dated April 23, 2014, the Nuclear Science Advisory Committee (NSAC) was asked to conduct a new study of the opportunities and priorities for isotope research and production and to develop a long range strategic plan for the Department of Energy (DOE) Isotope Program, managed by the Office of Science Office of Nuclear Physics (NP). The plan was to indicate what resources would be needed in the timeframe 2016-2025 to increase the domestic availability of isotopes appropriate to the DOE Isotope Program portfolio and deemed to be critical for the Nation.

NSAC formed a sub-committee (NSACI) chaired by Dr. Lawrence Cardman of the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility to prepare a response to the charge. The subcommittee is a standing subcommittee for an initial period of two years. This subcommittee first presented its report to NSAC at a meeting on April 3, 2015. Following comments from NSAC, a revised report was presented at the NSAC meeting on July 16, 2015 and NSAC accepted it unanimously. A copy of the report is enclosed with this letter.

The Isotope Program in NP, formally known as the Isotope Development and Production for Research and Applications Program (IDPRA) was created in 2009 when the Isotope Program was transferred from the DOE Office of Nuclear Energy. At that time NSAC received a similar charge and issued two reports that helped set the course for the IDPRA. A quotation from the current report is, "DOE-NP has done an outstanding job of reorganizing the program and setting it on a firm footing. The DOE isotope Program now in place has realized the vision of the 2009 subcommittee and is making substantial progress towards expanding that vision. Key structures and processes are in place that have greatly enhanced DOE's productivity and impact on isotopes..."

The report makes recommendations about research and development, operation of a stable-isotope-separation capability, timely infrastructure investments, and expansion of the effort to integrate university facilities with the program to further increase the effectiveness of the IDPRA. The increases in funding required and the clear benefits to increase the domestic availability of isotopes that can be realized with each recommendation are discussed.

On a personal note, I had the privilege of serving as chair of the 2009 subcommittee to address the isotope charges. I was particularly pleased to find that the 2015 subcommittee concluded, "In summary, the subcommittee finds that the Isotope Program has addressed all of the recommendations for operations that were made in the 2009 NSACI reports." I consider the isotope program to be a valuable asset to the Nation and am proud that is part of our Nuclear Science portfolio.

Sincerely yours,



Donald F. Geesaman  
Chair, NSAC