



YALE UNIVERSITY

A. W. WRIGHT NUCLEAR STRUCTURE LABORATORY

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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

February 25, 2004

Dr. Raymond Orbach
Director
Office of Science
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dr. Michael S. Turner
Assistant Director
Directorate for Mathematical & Physical Sciences
National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Drs. Orbach and Turner:

On September 12, 2003, the DOE/NSF Nuclear Science Advisory Committee (NSAC) was asked to form a Committee of Visitors (COV) to assess the operations of the DOE Office of Science Nuclear Physics Program. The COV was asked to focus on the processes of proposal evaluation and program management at the Office of Nuclear Physics and to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and quality. In addition, the COV was asked to comment on how the award processes affect the breadth and depth of the Nuclear Physics research portfolio and the national and international standing of the Nuclear Physics Program.

NSAC formed a sub-committee, chaired by John Cameron of Indiana University, to prepare a response to this charge. This sub-committee has completed its work and presented its Report to NSAC at a meeting on February 19-20, 2004. NSAC unanimously accepted the Report and a copy is enclosed with this letter.

The Report presents its evaluation and finds that the methodology and processes used in the Nuclear Physics Office are fair, efficient and productive, that the Associate Director, the Senior Nuclear Physics Advisor, and the Program Managers are excellent, familiar with the research they sponsor and assess, and that the entire Office of Nuclear Physics operates in an exemplary manner. The Report specifically notes that the dedication of each Program Manager to his or her portfolio is of great benefit and stresses the importance of regular site visits to grantees, laboratories, and to university and laboratory administrators. It recommends a 20% increase in travel funds for such visits. The Report finds that the resulting research is outstanding at the international level, both in terms of the quality and the diversity of the science, noting that the approaches of the Office of Nuclear Physics, including the long term planning processes, ensure that

nuclear physics is a dynamic and successful research activity. Finally, the Report offers some suggestions regarding the operations of the Office of Nuclear Physics, and some suggestions to facilitate the work of future COV's.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. F. Casten', written in a cursive style.

Richard F. Casten
Chair, NSAC

cc: Kovar
Steadman
Dehmer
Keister
NSAC members