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Mr. Vance Reed
President, Amarillo Economic Development Corporation

Comments on the Stockpile Stewardship & Management PEIS,
the Storage & Disposition of Fissile Materials PEIS, and
the Pantex Site-Wide EIS

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input to the Department of Energy regarding the operation of the Pantex plant. I would like to address two primary issues tonight regarding Pantex's future: 1) the environment, and 2) jobs.

Starting with the environment, I would like to reiterate this community's adamant position that all work performed at Pantex continue to be done in a fashion that protects the environment. While the public has heard a great deal about "contamination" at Pantex, there has been little media attention given to the nature of pollution problems at Pantex. Most contaminants at Pantex are related to solvents and hydrocarbons that are very similar to those that would be found at practically any large manufacturing facility. This community is very reassured by the fact that Pantex has not had contamination problems from radioactive materials, such as occurred at Rocky Flats and Hanford.

The Amarillo Economic Development Corporation views Pantex in much the same manner as we view other large manufacturers in terms of presenting risks to the environment. For instance, if we were recruiting a computer chip manufacturer, we would realize that these plants have hazardous waste streams including arsenic and other heavy metals. The A.E.D.C. would only recruit a company that is committed to full compliance with E.P.A. and state environmental regulations. High tech businesses have created whole new industries and thousands of jobs, while working with very hazardous substances. This shows that protection of the environment and job creation can go hand-in-hand.

Likewise, we believe that Pantex can be a site where good, high-paying jobs are created in a work environment that includes potentially dangerous materials. When

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measured in terms of total payroll, Pantex is by far the area's largest employer. With 3,500 employees at the plant, a job multiplier of 3.87 shows that Pantex is responsible for a total of over 13,500 jobs in this region. This multiplier was established by Dr. Ray Perryman at Southern Methodist University. The multiplier reflects the fact that the money that Pantex brings into the local economy supports many retail, medical, educational, finance, insurance and real estate jobs. All told, employment related to Pantex represents over 12% of all jobs in the Amarillo metropolitan area. I urge the D.O.E. to correct the socio-economic impact portions of all three EIS documents to accurately reflect the impact of Pantex on our local economy. 1/09.08.04

Because of the importance of Pantex to our local economy, the A.E.D.C. is very pleased that Pantex has been chosen as the preferred site for continued assembly and disassembly functions. We also believe this decision is in the best economic interests of the nation, as it saves more than 1.5 Billion dollars to American taxpayers. I also urge the D.O.E. to continue the high explosive fabrication mission that is currently performed at Pantex. Again, this not only protects jobs in our region, it saves American taxpayers 50 Million dollars compared with the cost of moving these operations to New Mexico.

For Pantex's future, the D.O.E. should locate storage and disposition missions at Pantex, as long as they can be done in an environmentally safe fashion. I urge the Department to make use of the expertise of the Amarillo National Resource Center for Plutonium. This resource center, which is operated by the University of Texas System, the Texas A&M University System, and the Texas Tech University System, can provide world-class evaluation of disposition options. I believe the Amarillo area will prove to be an outstanding operating environment for those storage and disposition functions that have been fully scientifically evaluated and safely implemented. 2/08.03.01 3/15.00.00

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to address you in this workshop tonight.

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09 08 04 **Comment Number 1**

The number of indirect jobs generated by the Proposed Alternatives was derived using the RIMS II model developed by BEA. The multipliers used in the model are available for every economic region in the Nation (each of the DOE sites). This allowed a consistent method to be applied to all sites. Site-specific numbers should be used in site-specific EISs. Section 4.1.8 of the PEIS has been modified to clarify the utilization of the RIMS II model.

08 03 01 **Comment Number 2**

The Department of Energy acknowledges the commentor's support of Pantex. Decisions related to future missions at Pantex will be based upon environmental analyses, technical and economic studies, national policy considerations, and public input.

15 00 00 **Comment Number 3**

Comment noted. The Amarillo National Research Center for Plutonium currently provides support to DOE for the Materials Disposition Program.