

Rep. Ellen Tauscher Secures Improved Benefits Package for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Emp

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Ellen Tauscher Secures Improved Benefits Package for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory Employees
Washington, DC - Today, Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman announced that the Department of Energy will offer employees at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory a benefits package that is congruent to the current package being offered to their colleagues at Los Alamos National Laboratory. The package will be maintained through June of 2008 when a new comprehensive benefit valuation study will be done for both labs, at which time lab managers will have a role in determining which companies are evaluated as part of the study. The Energy Department had previously proposed a package that would have put the Lawrence Livermore National Lab at a significant disadvantage in retaining and recruiting world-class scientists and researchers, and had resisted a comment period for employees to register their concerns. Rep. Tauscher, in her role as Chairman of the House Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee which oversees the weapons complex, pushed for parity between the Livermore and Los Alamos benefit packages and a comment period for lab employees. After several meetings with Department officials and two letters to Secretary Bodman led by Rep. Tauscher, one co-signed by Senators Feinstein, Bingaman and Domenici, and one by Representatives McNerney, Cardoza, Honda, Lee and Lantos, Rep. Tauscher successfully convinced the Energy Department to offer an equitable benefit package, in addition to a comment period for lab employees. Rep. Tauscher issued the following statement regarding the announcement: "This is a huge a victory for our security and for the lab employees who have devoted their careers to keeping us safe. Keeping the labs on equal footing with congruent benefit packages is a first step toward ensuring the best science and security for the United States. I commend Secretary Bodman for his decision and thank him for listening to all of us who wanted to do whatâ€™s right for the future of the labs and the men and women who work there. â€œThis decision recognizes that competition amongst the labs has delivered unparalleled accomplishments in our national interest. A defining strength of the labs has always been their ability to recruit and retain the best and the brightest. Achieving parity in the benefits package and allowing the respective lab directors to have direct input when the new study is conducted are both important steps in making sure the labs can continue to compete for talent and produce the top-notch science that improves our national security.â€œI look forward to working with Secretary Bodman and the National Nuclear Security Administration to maintain the scientific capability of all our laboratories."