

April 15, 2011

Mr. Robert Peck, Commissioner
Public Buildings Service
U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW, Suite 6340
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Commissioner Peck:

I write concerning the ongoing environmental concerns surrounding the Bannister Federal Complex (Complex) in Kansas City, Missouri. I am pleased that the Inspector General for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that environmental contamination at the Complex does not pose current health risks to employees and am encouraged by the recent interim report from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) which states that they do not believe employees are at risk for significant exposure from current and previous substances used at the Complex. However, as I have stated before, concerns from employees at the Complex about environmental exposure are real and understandable. I write to ensure ongoing reviews of environmental issues at the Complex continue to be taken seriously and, further, to ensure your agency is prepared for potential contingencies in the event of new developments at the Complex.

I am aware that GSA is currently working to complete a comprehensive environmental plan and additionally working with other federal and state agencies to address some of the concerns raised by Complex employees. Furthermore, as you know, the EPA is currently assessing whether to place the Complex on the National Priority List (NPL) of Superfund sites. This has, understandably, heightened the concerns of Complex employees. In light of the potential that the Complex will be included on the NPL, I believe GSA must prepare now to address such a development. Furthermore, while placement on the NPL will not necessarily mean the facility is unsafe for employees, it is possible that the best course of action could include an expedited relocation of employees currently working at the Complex and, therefore, that this contingency must be among those for which the GSA plans.

As you know, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) will be relocating to a new facility in south Kansas City beginning in 2013, with the entire transition to be completed in late 2014. However, there are currently no near term plans to relocate workers from the GSA side of the Complex. I recognize that there are certain practical considerations associated with the ongoing cost of maintaining NNSA's space once vacant, as well as costs associated with

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taking over core requirements of the Complex that are currently the responsibility of NNSA, including operating the chiller plant, providing security, and maintaining and operating the nearby flood wall. If the entire facility were to be entirely vacated around the same time as NNSA departs, it could allow GSA to mitigate some of these new responsibilities and added costs, while at the same time being responsive to the environmental safety concerns of GSA employees.

I request you undertake a comprehensive review of options available to GSA in light of the potential that the Complex will be placed on the NPL alongside the challenges associated with the upcoming departure of the NNSA. I ask that among the items included in the review that GSA study (1) available options for relocating GSA Complex employees in the same time frame as the NNSA employees, and (2) the ramifications of keeping employees at the Complex or moving them to a different temporary sight ahead of a move to the planned new Federal building in Kansas City. In addition, I request the review include a cost analysis of maintaining the site assuming GSA remains at the Complex after NNSA has relocated. Please provide this review to me within 90 days.

Thank you for your continued leadership and focused attention on the complicated challenges that face the Bannister Federal Complex. I look forward to working with you as you undertake this analysis and to reviewing the options for federal employees at the Complex in the near future. If you have any questions, please contact my Legislative Counsel, Nichole Distefano at (202) 228-6252.

Sincerely,



CLAIRE MCCASKILL
United States Senate