

---

To: Ohio Delegation

Re: Request for assistance in reversing cuts to NIOSH staff who perform radiation dose reconstructions needed for making claims determinations under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act

---

As a worker at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion site in Piketon, Ohio I urgently need you to reach out to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) and request that he reverse a decision to fire 78% of the NIOSH staff who produce radiation dose assessments used by the Department of Labor (DOL) to decide claims for compensation under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA). Reduction in Force (RIF) notices were issued on May 2 and effective July 2.

Once the RIF is implemented, existing and future radiation-related claims for cancer will grind to a halt, as only 6 of the 27 scientific staff will be left to handle 2,600-3,000 claims per year.

NIOSH radiation dose reconstructions that now take an average of 5 months will take up to 4 years. Seriously ill claimants will die before their EEOICP claims are decided due to personnel cuts at NIOSH. Without the NIOSH radiation dose reconstructions, the DOL cannot adjudicate radiation-related compensation claims, and the compensation and medical care to which these claimants are entitled will not be provided.

The goal of EEOICPA was to ensure that workers like myself and their families received on “timely, uniform and adequate compensation.” That is why benefits and administrative costs are provided through mandatory funding.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) says that “as the agency continues to streamline operations, the essential services provided by NIOSH will remain full intact and uninterrupted.” This simply cannot happen with the deep reduction in NIOSH (Division of Compensation and Analysis Support) staff dedicated to its activities under the EEOICPA.

---

Background:

This legislation was passed with leadership from the Ohio delegation, including then-Senators Mike DeWine and George Voinovich and then-Representative Ted Strickland, to compensate the thousands of workers who were placed in harm's way—often without their knowledge or consent—as part of the government's effort to develop, build and test nuclear weapons.

More than 2,400 Portsmouth uranium enrichment workers have been compensated at Portsmouth for radiation-related illnesses, and more claims are in the pipeline. Workers and survivors at dozens of nuclear sites in Ohio are also impacted by the HHS decision to gut this program.

I urge you to contact HHS Secretary Kennedy and urge him to reinstate the entire group of scientists and support staff at NIOSH who have helped thousands of workers in Ohio and across the country who were exposed to harmful levels of radiation (and chemicals) while serving in our nation's defense nuclear facilities.

Sincerely,

---

Signature

---

(Print) First Name      Last Name

---

Address

---

City, State Zip