U.S. Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation

September 12, 2003

Professor Richard Casten
Chairman
DOE/NSF Nuclear Science Advisory Committee
A.W. Wright Nuclear Structure Laboratory
Yale University
New Haven, CT 06520

Dear Professor Casten:

This letter requests that the DOE/NSF Nuclear Science Advisory Committee (NSAC) establish a Committee of Visitors to assess the operations of the DOE Office of Science Nuclear Physics program, and provide guidance regarding performance measures for the Nuclear Physics program of the Office of Science.

(1) NSAC is requested to establish a Committee of Visitors (COV) that can provide an assessment of process-related matters pertaining to the management of the Office of Science Nuclear Physics program. The COV should review the program management of the Nuclear Physics program to provide an assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of the processes used to solicit, review, recommend, and document proposal actions and monitor active projects and programs. In addition, the COV should also comment on how the award process has affected the breadth and depth of the Nuclear Physics portfolio elements, and the national and international standing of the Nuclear Physics program. Such an assessment is planned to be requested every three years. You should work with the Associate Director of the Office of Science for Nuclear Physics to establish the processes and procedures so as to enable the first COV to meet before the end of the 2003 calendar year. A report by the COV should be submitted by February 27, 2004.

(2) NSAC is requested to provide an assessment and recommendations to the Office of Science regarding performance measures for the Nuclear Physics program. The performance measures are intended to focus on outcomes and meaningfully reflect the purpose of the program, to guide program management and budgeting, and to promote results and accountability. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance for these measures and the proposed Nuclear Physics measures are given in the enclosure. Assessments of progress towards meeting the goals are to be made every five years and some appropriate milestones have been requested by OMB to judge the

quality of progress that has been made. NSAC is requested to submit a report with comments on the appropriateness of these measures, that these measures are suitably ambitious and validly encompass the DOE Nuclear Physics program, and with recommendations for appropriate milestones for each of these measures. Your report should be submitted before the end of November 2003.

We appreciate NSAC's willingness to take on these important activities, and we look forward to learning of your progress in these important tasks.

Sincerely,

Raymond L. Orbach
Director
Office of Science

John B. Hunt
Acting Associate Director for
Mathematical and Physical Sciences