

New Uranium Processing Facility Needed

By Ron Woody, Roane County Executive

Y-12 involves much more than maintaining the nation's nuclear stockpile.

Work completed in the uranium processing facility will include dismantlement and disposition, material recycle and recovery, nuclear nonproliferation, producing fuel for naval reactors, and supplying medical isotopes that will be used in cancer treatment.

Opponents of the new Y-12 uranium processing facility are simply misleading the public in referring to this facility as a "bomb plant." Our nation has not built a new nuclear weapon in more than 20 years.

The current Y-12 facility for processing uranium is rapidly coming to the end of its productive life. The building is 70 years old and there is a great need for a modern facility with safety features and structural capacity to withstand potential natural and manmade hazards.

A new facility also makes economic sense. After construction, Y-12 will continue the nation's uranium processing and national security mission in less space with lower cost. In addition to operating at less cost, other benefits of the uranium processing include reliable, long-term, consolidated enriched uranium processing capability, improved security posture, improved health and safety, and a highly attractive return on investment for the U.S. taxpayer.

We support the construction of the new UPF not only for the benefit of the workforce from our counties but also for the critical national security of our country.

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