§ 2286d. Board recommendations

(a) Public availability and comment

Subject to subsections (g) and (h) of this section and after receipt by the Secretary of Energy of any recommendations from the Board under section 2286a of this title, the Board promptly shall make such recommendations available to the public in the Department of Energy’s regional public reading rooms and shall publish in the Federal Register such recommendations and a request for the submission to the Board of public comments on such recommendations. Interested persons shall have 30 days after the date of the publication of such notice in which to submit comments, data, views, or arguments to the Board concerning the recommendations.

(b) Response by Secretary

(1) The Secretary of Energy shall transmit to the Board, in writing, a statement on whether the Secretary accepts or rejects, in whole or in part, the recommendations submitted to him by the Board under section 2286a of this title, a description of the actions to be taken in response to the recommendations, and his views on such recommendations. The Secretary of Energy shall transmit his response to the Board within 45 days after the date of the publication, under subsection (a) of this section, of the notice with respect to such recommendations or within such additional period, not to exceed 45 days, as the Board may grant.

(2) At the same time as the Secretary of Energy transmits his response to the Board under paragraph (1), the Secretary, subject to subsection (h) of this section, shall publish such response, together with a request for public comment on his response, in the Federal Register.

(3) Interested persons shall have 30 days after the date of the publication of the Secretary of Energy’s response in which to submit comments, data, views, or arguments to the Board concerning the Secretary’s response.

(4) The Board may hold hearings for the purpose of obtaining public comments on its recommendations and the Secretary of Energy’s response.

(c) Provision of information to Secretary

The Board shall furnish the Secretary of Energy with copies of all comments, data, views, and arguments submitted to it under subsection (a) or (b) of this section.

(d) Final decision

If the Secretary of Energy, in a response under subsection (b)(1) of this section, rejects (in whole or part) any recommendation made by the Board under section 2286a of this title, the Board shall either reaffirm its original recommendation or make a revised recommendation and shall notify the Secretary of its action. Within 30 days after receiving the notice of the Board’s action under this subsection, the Secretary shall consider the Board’s action and make a final decision on whether to implement all or part of the Board’s recommendations. Subject to subsection (h) of this section, the Secretary shall publish the final decision and the reasoning for such decision in the Federal Register and shall transmit to the Committees on Armed Services and on Appropriations of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives a written report containing that decision and reasoning.

(e) Implementation plan

The Secretary of Energy shall prepare a plan for the implementation of each Board recommendation, or part of a recommendation, that is accepted by the Secretary in his final decision. The Secretary shall transmit the implementation plan to the Board within 90 days after the date of the publication of the Secretary’s final decision on such recommendation in the Federal Register. The Secretary may have an
additional 45 days to transmit the plan if the Secretary submits to the Board and to the Committees on Armed Services and on Appropriations of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives a notification setting forth the reasons for the delay and describing the actions the Secretary is taking to prepare an implementation plan under this subsection. The Secretary may implement any such recommendation (or part of any such recommendation) before, on, or after the date on which the Secretary transmits the implementation plan to the Board under this subsection.

(f) Implementation

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), not later than one year after the date on which the Secretary of Energy transmits an implementation plan with respect to a recommendation (or part thereof) under subsection (e) of this section, the Secretary shall carry out and complete the implementation plan. If complete implementation of the plan takes more than 1 year, the Secretary of Energy shall submit a report to the Committees on Armed Services and on Appropriations of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives setting forth the reasons for the delay and when implementation will be completed.

(2) If the Secretary of Energy determines that the implementation of a Board recommendation (or part thereof) is impracticable because of budgetary considerations, or that the implementation would affect the Secretary’s ability to meet the annual nuclear weapons stockpile requirements established pursuant to section 2121 of this title, the Secretary shall submit to the President, to the Committees on Armed Services and on Appropriations of the Senate, and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report containing the recommendation and the Secretary’s determination.

(g) Imminent or severe threat

(1) In any case in which the Board determines that a recommendation submitted to the Secretary of Energy under section 2286a of this title relates to an imminent or severe threat to public health and safety, the Board and the Secretary of Energy shall proceed under this subsection in lieu of subsections (a) through (d) of this section.

(2) At the same time that the Board transmits a recommendation relating to an imminent or severe threat to the Secretary of Energy, the Board shall also transmit the recommendation to the President and for information purposes to the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary of Energy shall submit his recommendation to the President. The President shall review the Secretary of Energy’s recommendation and shall make the decision concerning acceptance or rejection of the Board’s recommendation.

(3) After receipt by the President of the recommendation from the Board under this subsection, the Board promptly shall make such recommendation available to the public and shall transmit such recommendation to the Committees on Armed Services and on Appropriations of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The President shall promptly notify such committees and the Speaker of his decision and the reasons for that decision.

(h) Limitation

Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the requirements to make information available to the public under this section—

(1) shall not apply in the case of information that is classified; and

(2) shall be subject to the orders and regulations issued by the Secretary of Energy under sections 2167 and 2168 of this title to prohibit dissemination of certain information.