

Department of Energy

Secretary Granholm Statement on DOE Order Vacating 1954 Atomic Energy Commission Decision In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer

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Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer occupies a central role in our history for leading the nation's atomic efforts during World War II and planting the seeds for the Department of Energy's national laboratories—the crown jewels of the American research and innovation ecosystem.

In 1954, the Atomic Energy Commission revoked Dr. Oppenheimer's security clearance through a flawed process that violated the Commission's own regulations. As time has passed, more evidence has come to light of the bias and unfairness of the process that Dr. Oppenheimer was subjected to while the evidence of his loyalty and love of country have only been further affirmed. The Atomic Energy Commission even selected Dr. Oppenheimer in 1963 for its prestigious Enrico Fermi Award citing his "scientific and administrative leadership not only in the development of the atomic bomb, but also in establishing the groundwork for the many peaceful applications of atomic energy."

The Department of Energy has previously recognized J. Robert Oppenheimer in other ways including the creation of the Oppenheimer Science and Energy Leadership Program in 2017 to support early and mid-career scientists and engineers to "carry on [Dr. Oppenheimer's] legacy of science serving society."

As a successor agency to the Atomic Energy Commission, the Department of Energy has been entrusted with the responsibility to correct the historical record and honor Dr. Oppenheimer’s profound contributions to our national defense and the scientific enterprise at large. Today, I am pleased to announce the Department of Energy has vacated the Atomic Energy Commission’s 1954 decision *In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer*.

To view the Order from the Secretary, visit: </sites/default/files/2022-12/S1%20Oppenheimer%20Order%2012.12.22%20signed%20by%20S1%2012-16-2022.pdf>

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