

Please continue to keep radioactive metal from nuclear bomb factories and weapons laboratories out of the commercial metal supply, commerce, and our personal items!

The current Department of Energy bans (suspension and moratorium begun in 2000) should be made permanent and expanded to keep all radioactive waste—plastic, concrete, soil, asphalt, etc. in addition to all metals—under control and out of commercial recycling. Do not lift the metal bans.

I do not authorize DOE to use so-called “authorized” contamination levels to allow nearly 14,000 metric tons (to start with) of radioactive metal from nuclear bomb factories and laboratories out of control and into items with which I come into daily contact. I also oppose sending man-made radioactive waste at any level to solid and/or industrial landfills not intended for radioactive waste.

Such an irresponsible, irreversible plan would require a full Environmental Impact Statement and public hearings, especially given the precedent this would set. DOE cannot claim a “finding of no significant impact” from this action because there is not even an estimate of the total amount of radioactivity that would be released. There has been no assessment of the impact on women, who are more likely than men to get cancer from radiation exposure, or on children even more so. There has not been a full economic analysis of how much government money, if any, would be saved and how much would be spent on the consequent health costs incurred by putting the public at this unnecessary, preventable risk. The Presidential orders encouraging recycling do not support radioactive recycling. This action would actually hinder the intent of the Presidential orders by tainting or poisoning the recycling supply, potentially increasing the demand for new metal mining.

Since there is no safe level of radiation, our government should prevent unnecessary, involuntary exposures to this and future generations. Lifting the ban would allow release of all kinds of radioactivity including very long-lasting isotopes like plutonium-239 (hazardous for a quarter to half million years) and niobium-94 (200 to 400 thousand years hazardous) and very intense ones like cobalt-60 and polonium-210.

We get enough exposure from big accidents like Fukushima, Chernobyl and Three Mile Island, and less publicized accidents and routine releases from every nuclear fuel chain facility from mining to waste management and from other sources. We do not need deliberate, additional dispersal of radioactive metal or other materials into the metal supply and marketplace.

Doses in millirems, which DOE claims establish the regulatory exposure limit, can't be measured because they are calculations. To avoid unnecessary, involuntary exposure of this and future generations, prevent radioactive pollution of the metal supply.

Again, a full EIS would be required before DOE could begin such a program. But this heinous concept should simply be dropped, the suspension made permanent and efforts shifted to isolating and preventing radioactive releases and exposures.

Thank you.