Don’t *Nuclear* Waste America!

August \_\_ 2019

**Dear [Senator / Representative]:**

Congress may be called to vote this session on legislation and appropriations to initiate nationwide, mass shipments of long-lasting intensely radioactive waste.

I ask you to **vote NO--against** **funding and authorization\*[[1]](#footnote-1) of both Yucca Mountain and Consolidated “Interim” Storage** (CIS). Both of these proposals are *false* solutions which will only *worsen* the problems we face with nuclear waste, while creating new and potentially intractable problems. Yucca Mountain and CIS will divert the nation from what is really needed to protect communities and manage nuclear waste in the long run.

**Officially cancel and do not fund any further licensing actions for Yucca Mountain,** a proposed and rejected site which is proven to be unable to isolate radioactive waste. Yucca Mountain is on land near to groundwater and riddled with earthquake and volcanic activity. The site’s standards were lowered four times to keep it from being disqualified. The proposed site is also on sacred Western Shoshone land, in violation of the 1863 Ruby Valley Treaty, violating basic principles of environmental justice. The project would require overriding state water rights and the will of the State of Nevada, which has filed over 200 technical objections to the proposed license. Don’t throw good money after bad. Stop propping up this failed, proposed site.

**Centralized or Consolidated “Interim” Storage, or CIS** would create one or more supposedly temporary sites to store high-level and highly radioactive waste. Under current law, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, Congress prohibited Consolidated “Interim” Storage (referred to as Monitored Retrievable Storage (MRS) in the Act) from being implemented prior to an operating because lawmakers knew that supposedly interim storage sites could turn into *de facto* permanent dumps by default, even though they are not designed or suitable for permanent isolation.

CIS is a dangerous, unprecedented program to haul, ultimately, over a hundred thousand tons of irradiated nuclear fuel thousands of miles across the country—only to move it once again to a permanent repository. This would be counterproductive and senseless. It means creating one or more new radioactive sites, in addition to the ones already contaminated, while taking the government’s eyes off the ball of a responsible, long-term strategy for isolating nuclear waste.

Neither of these false solutions—Yucca Mountain or Centralized Interim Storage—will permanently isolate nuclear power waste. Either one would trigger decades of high-level radioactive waste shipments through more than 80% of Congressional districts: on streets and railroads … on rivers and lakes … over bridges … through valuable farmland and dense cities, including Washington, DC. Nuclear waste canisters constantly emit radiation, and entail the potential for mass devastation all along the way, whether by accident or ill-intent.

**What IS needed** is Hardened On-Site Storage (HOSS) at or as near as safely possible to the sites where high-level radioactive waste is currently produced and stored, until the waste can go to permanent isolation. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission must be required to continue emergency planning and active vigilance over nuclear waste sites and to maintain and store the waste in hardened, inspectable, monitored systems to prevent releases and isolate the waste.

I ask you to oppose all funding and authorization for both the proposed Yucca Mountain repository and Consolidated “Interim” Storage(CIS/ MRS). These irresponsible proposals would put our district and the whole country at risk from a massive, unnecessary, multi-decade, highly dangerous nuclear waste shipping campaign.

Sincerely,

1. Bills include but are not limited to:

[H R. 2699, the “Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2019”](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2699)

[H.R. 3136, the “STORE Nuclear Fuel Act of 2019”](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/3136)

[S. 1234, "The Nuclear Waste Administration Act of 2019"](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1234)

[Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Discussion Draft Bill, S. \_\_, “Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2019”](https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2019/4/barrasso-releases-discussion-draft-legislation-to-address-nuclear-waste) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)