January 25, 2012

Honorable Steven Chu
U.S. Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary:

Soon your Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future (Commission) will send you its recommendations. We, who represent communities around closed nuclear reactor sites, urge you to reject the Commission's finding that centralizing irradiated fuel at so-called "temporary" storage sites is an urgent national priority, and to roundly reject reprocessing of this waste. The Commission you appointed is claiming that it is acting in the interest of communities such as ours where closed nuclear power reactors are located, when in fact the Commission's recommendations are in opposition to our number one priority: isolation of radioactivity from our environment for as long as it is a hazard. Centralizing waste storage for purposes of expanded waste production or for reprocessing is contrary to this goal, and is not responsible policy.

Simply relocating the exact same waste storage technology as is currently in use at nuclear reactor sites to a new "interim" storage site is not logical. The underlying reasons that claim to make such an exercise attractive contradict the goal of isolating waste:

- First: the continuing production of more and more highly radioactive waste at existing and new nuclear reactors makes permanent isolation that much more of a challenge. The attitude of previous policymakers was that more waste simply required a bigger hole; but this neglects all the steps in the making of nuclear fuel and the management of the highly radioactive waste that results, many of which will lead to "incidental waste," leaks, accidents and cumulative impacts which multiply with the mass of waste handled.
- Second: reprocessing (plutonium separation) is the antithesis of isolation of radioactivity since the solid ceramic fuel rod is rendered into a series of additional wastes, sludge, caustic liquid, leaks, liquid discharges and gaseous emissions.
- Third: unnecessary transportation to and from the interim storage site(s) causes unnecessary risks (assuming that the "interim" site is actually temporary).

Secretary Chu, we ask you to apply the logic that is missing. Our community has made some unprecedented recommendations, in addition to our ongoing call to stop making more waste:

- Don’t move the waste from the reactor sites for now---until a permanent isolation program is available. If an existing site is not qualified for interim waste storage, it is also not qualified for reactor operation.
- Harden waste storage at the reactors--heed, adopt and implement the Principles for Safeguarding Nuclear Waste at Reactor Sites as has been repeatedly presented to the Blue Ribbon Commission.
Many organizations support the idea of using the Waste Fund or the Court-awarded-damages for the hardening of the waste at reactor sites, with a concomitant adjustment in waste fund fees collected.

Unlike the Commission, we believe, along with the Department of Energy's former Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management and independent analysts such as those retained by the State of Nevada, that the thousands of shipments required to transport the nation's irradiated fuel will result in accidents--some of them very harmful and expensive. We are also concerned about greater security risks during shipment. For these reasons unnecessary or arbitrary movement of this waste must be avoided.

Our sites are not suitable for waste "disposal" and so we will remain engaged until there is a path forward for permanent isolation of this waste for as long as it is a hazard.

Since there is no representation of any impacted community on the Commission, and comments that have been given in good faith by our community have been ignored by the Commission, we turn to you.

We are organizations that are actively engaged with radioactive waste policy and have been for a long time. Our members include those living near nuclear power reactors and also former reactor sites that we helped to close; we celebrate that no more radioactive waste is being generated at these closed sites and yet we remain engaged and willing to support a responsible waste policy going forward. Centralizing waste storage for purposes of expanded waste production or for reprocessing is not responsible. Plutonium that results from reprocessing is nothing but trouble; all the data support this.

Please do not let the situation at closed reactor sites be misused by the politics of the commercial nuclear industry to justify irresponsible policies that would be bad for all.

Sincerely,

**Convening group—Signers representing organizations around closed reactor and reprocessing sites:**

Christa Maria  
Big Rock Point Intervenor  
Charlevoix, MI

Victor McManemy  
Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical Contamination  
Lake, MI
Michael Welch  
Redwood Alliance  
Arcata, CA

Deb Katz  
Citizen Awareness Network  
Shelburne Falls, MA

Alice Hirt  
Don't Waste Michigan  
Holland MI

Michael J. Keegan  
Coalition for a Nuclear Free Great Lakes  
Monroe, MI

David Kraft  
Nuclear Energy Information Service  
Chicago, IL

William Linnell  
Cheaper, Safer Power  
Portland, ME

Charles K. Johnson  
Center for Energy Research  
Portland, OR

Nina Bell, J.D., Executive Director  
Northwest Environmental Advocates  
Portland, OR

Lois Gibbs  
Center for Health and Environmental Justice  
Falls Church, VA

Barbara Warren  
Citizens Environmental Coalition  
Albany, NY

Michael Mariotte  
Nuclear Information and Resource Service  
Takoma Park, MD
Kevin Kamps  
Beyond Nuclear  
Takoma Park, MD

Dave Hamilton  
Sierra Club  
Washington, DC

Catherine Thomasson, M.D.  
Physicians for Social Responsibility 
Washington, DC

Glenn Carroll  
Nuclear Watch South  
Atlanta, GA

**The following groups engaged with nuclear policy sign in support:**

Gretel Johnston  
Mothers Against TN River Radiation  
Scottsboro, AL

Patricia T. Birnie  
GE Stockholders Alliance  
Tucson, AZ

Russell Lowes  
www.SafeEnergyAnalyst.org  
Tucson, AZ

Dennis Larson  
People's Action for a Safe Environment  
Parthenon, AR

Bradley Angel  
Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice  
San Francisco, CA

Elaine Holder  
San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace  
San Luis Obispo, CA

Mary Beth Brangan, James Heddle  
Ecological Options Network, EON  
Bolinas, CA
Linda Seeley  
Terra Foundation  
San Luis Obispo, CA

Lillian Light  
Environmental Priorities Network  
Manhattan Beach, CA

Robin Bayer  
Magic  
Palo Alto, CA

Rinaldo Brutoco  
World Business Academy  
Santa Barbara, CA

David Hartsough  
PEACEWORKERS  
San Francisco, CA

Molly Johnson  
Grandmothers for Peace/San Luis Obispo County Chapter  
San Miguel, CA

Marylia Kelley  
Tri-Valley CAREs (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment)  
Livermore, CA

Alan Muller, Executive Director  
Green Delaware  
Port Penn, DE

Cara L. Campbell  
Ecology Party of Florida  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Nancy O'Byrne  
Pax Christi Florida  
St. Augustine, FL

Carolyn Treadway  
No New Nukes  
Normal, IL
Ellen Rendulich  
Citizens Against Ruining the Environment  
Lockport, IL

Laureen Dunne  
C.A.R.E. Citizens Active in Reclaiming the Environment  
La Grange, IL

Maureen Headington  
Stand Up/Save Lives Campaign  
Burr Ridge, IL

Franklin Dmitryev  
Co-National Organizer of News and Letters Committees  
Chicago, IL

Joyce Harant  
Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste  
Peoria, IL

Tracy Meints Fox  
Global Warming Solutions  
Peoria, IL

The Iowa Beyond Nuclear Coalition  
Des Moines, IA

Jane E. Magers  
EarthCare, Inc.  
Des Moines, IA

Ken Bossong  
SUN DAY Campaign  
Takoma Park, MD

Dagmar Fabian  
Crabshell Alliance  
Cockeysville MD

Sandra Gavutis  
C-10 Research & Education Foundation  
Newburyport, MA

Marilyn Strong, RN  
Solar Design Associates  
Harvard, MA
David Agnew  
Cape Downwinders  
Harwich, MA

Hattie Nestel  
Nuclear Free Future Coalition of Western Massachusetts  
Athol, MA

Keith Gunter  
Citizens Resistance at Fermi Two  
Monroe, MI

Lea Foushee  
North American Water Office  
Lake Elmo, MN

Jesse P. Van Gerven  
Missourians for Safe Energy  
Columbia, MO

Chris Daum  
Oasis Montana Inc.,  
Stevensville, MT

Judy Treichel  
Nevada Nuclear Waste Task Force  
Las Vegas, NV

Doug Bogen  
Seacoast Anti-Pollution League  
Exeter, NH

Paula Gotsch  
GRAMMEES  
Normandy Beach, NJ

Joni Arends  
Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety  
Santa Fe, NM

Marian Naranjo  
Honor Our Pueblo Existence (H.O.P.E.)  
Espanola, NM
Tim Judson  
Central New York-Citizens Awareness Network  
Syracuse, NY

Gail Payne  
RadiationTruth.org  
Centerport, NY

Jessica Azulay  
Alliance for a Green Economy  
Syracuse, NY

Paul Connett, PhD  
Fluoride Action Network  
Canton, NY

Wells Eddleman  
NC Citizens Research Group  
Durham, NC

Mali Lightfoot  
Helen Caldicott Foundation/NuclearFreePlanet.org  
Asheville, NC

Robert F. Howarth, Board Member  
Western North Carolina Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Asheville, NC

Patricia Marida  
Ohio Sierra Club Nuclear Issues Committee  
Columbus, Ohio

Connie Kline  
Ohio CARE - Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment  
Cleveland, OH

Marilyn McCulloch  
The Carrie Dickerson Foundation  
Tulsa, OK

Maye Thompson, RN, PhD  
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Portland, OR
Paige Knight
Hanford Watch
Portland, OR

Maureen Mulligan
Sustainable Futures Communications, LLC
Shermans Dale, PA

Erica Frank, MD, MPH
President, Next Generation University
Newtown, PA

Beth Pirollo
Families United for a Safe Environment
Tullytown, PA

Molly Rush on behalf of
Board of Directors
The Thomas Merton Center
Pittsburgh, PA

Finian Taylor
Hilton Head for Peace
Hilton Head, SC

Sandra Kurtz
Bellefonte Efficiency & Sustainability Team
Chattanooga, TN

Karen Hadden
Executive Director - SEED Coalition
Austin, TX

Tom "Smitty" Smith
Director, Public Citizen's Texas Office
Austin, TX

Cynthia Weehler
Energia Mia
San Antonio, TX.

Matt Pacenza
HEAL Utah
Salt Lake City, UT
Steve Erickson
Citizens Education Project
Salt Lake City, UT

Leslie Sachs
Safe and Green Campaign
Brattleboro, VT

Debra Stoleroff
Vermont Yankee Decommissioning Alliance
Montpelier, VT

Jennifer Olaranna Viereck, Ex. Director
HOME: Healing Ourselves & Mother Earth
N. Bennington, VT

Marianne Edain
Whidbey Environmental Action Network
Langley, WA

Chris Herman
Winter Sun Design
Edmonds, WA

Al Gedicks
Wisconsin Resources Protection Council
Tomahawk, WI

Marcia Halligan
Kickapoo Peace Circle
Viroqua, WI

**International**

Mary Madigan
Friends of Westernport
Victoria Australia

Matthias Reichl
Center for Encounter and Active Non-Violence
Bad Ischl, Austria

Karen Weingeist
Coalition for a Clean Green Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Canada