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APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEES
Executive Appropriations
Transportation & Environmental Quality
STANDING COMMITTEE
State & Local Affairs

September 19, 2000

Mr. David L. Meyer, Chief
Rules Review and Directives Branch
Division of Freedom of Information
and Publications Services
Office of Administration
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop T-6D-59
Washington, DC 20555-0001

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Rules and Directives
Branch
USNRC

Dear Mr. Meyer:

I oppose the storage of high-level nuclear waste on the Reservation of the Skull Valley Band of the Goshute Indians because of the influence of money in this decision, because nuclear plants outside of our state generate this waste, and because the NRC has not thoroughly considered the alternatives.

The heart of this matter is dollars. Money should never dictate good public policy. Why does the NRC choose the Skull Valley Reservation, surrounded by other hazardous sites, for the potentially largest high-level nuclear waste dump in the nation? I think money has made the decision. The state of Utah has a current budget surplus of approximately \$114 million. If the state of Utah were to offer the Goshutes a portion of the budget surplus, they would take the money and cease negotiations with the NRC and Private Fuel Storage. Economic viability can be achieved through safer means.

The states that generate this waste should be responsible for its disposal. The other day an engineer called me touting the safety of nuclear storage, claiming the public has unjustified fears. I posed this question to him, which I now ask you: "If nuclear storage is so safe, then why are these states trying to get rid of it?" Nuclear waste should be stored in the states that produce it rather than converting Utah into the nation's dumping ground.

Finally, the NRC must examine its own alternatives. It seems that viable alternatives proposed in the Environmental Impact Study are not being considered by the NRC (Section 2.2.5, No-Action Alternative; and Section 2.2.1.3, Alternatives That, in Effect, Eliminate the Need for the Proposed PFSF). Section 2.2.1.3 discusses the Secretary of Energy's proposal that would eliminate the need

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Add Scott Klandene
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for the Skull Valley storage site, but the NRC dismisses this alternative as "not ripe for evaluation" because "critical issues" would have to be considered. Isn't the purpose of the EIS to consider critical issues?

The alternatives discussed in the Environmental Impact Study make sense, and I believe they demand the NRC's full attention.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Howell", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Senator Scott N. Howell
Senate Democratic Leader

jm

cc: Governor Michael O. Leavitt
James McConkie, Esq.
Brent Ward, Esq.
Senate President Lyle Hillyard
Senate Democrats