

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4402

February 21, 2001

The Honorable Richard A. Meserve
Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1 White Flint North Building
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Dr. Meserve:

I am writing to you concerning a matter of great importance to me, my constituents, and the people of Utah. On Tuesday, February 20, the Surface Transportation Board gave preliminary approval to Private Fuel Storage LLC to build a rail line to transport nuclear waste to a temporary facility at the Skull Valley Goshute Indian Reservation.

This matter is now waiting for licensing approval by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. I am concerned that within a matter of months, the State of Utah will become the largest depository of spent nuclear fuel in the world. The risks of this project extend far beyond the Skull Valley Storage Facility, and immediately affect the well being of communities along the waste's transport routes.

It is my opinion that the site under consideration will not be a temporary facility. The storage site covers more than 820 acres of Reservation land, and the lease negotiated between the tribe and Private Fuel Storage is to be for 25 years, with an option to renew for an additional 25 years. The size of this facility would allow it to hold the United States' entire supply of spent fuel rods for the next 15 years. Yet, by the Department of Energy's own estimates, sufficient storage capacity already exists at the power plants which generate the waste.

My office manager and scheduler, Wendy Ware, will contact you to make an appointment. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



JIM MATHESON
Member of Congress