

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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63

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USNRC

October 17, 2005 (8:00am)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

The Honorable Nils J. Diaz
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Chairman Diaz:

We are writing to request an extension of the comment period for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) proposed "Implementation of a Dose Standard After 10,000 Years" (70 Fed. Reg. 53313, September 9, 2005), which is designed to implement the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) revised radiation standard for Yucca Mountain.

It is important that those members of the public potentially most affected by the radiation standard be given the opportunity to meaningfully participate in the decision-making process. Adequate time to review and comment upon both the NRC and EPA rules is critical to ensuring full participation and that Nevadans' concerns are given careful consideration and adequate response.

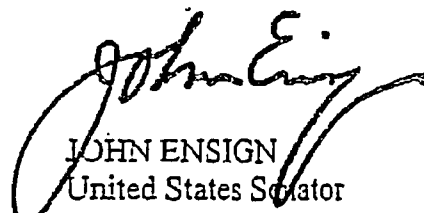
Thus, the comment period for this proposal must be no less than 180 days. This will provide sufficient time to review and provide comments on the proposal. This is particularly important as comments on NRC's implementation of EPA's proposal are due before comments on EPA's proposal. However, Nevadans may not be in a position to respond fully to the NRC rule until they have fully assessed EPA's rule. Accordingly, extending NRC's comment period is critical. At the very least, NRC must extend its comment period past the date the comment period on the EPA rule closes.

Given the magnitude of human health and safety implications of the proposed Yucca Mountain project, we hope that you will act to fully implement this recommendation. Should you have any questions, please contact Sandra Schubert (Senator Reid, 202.224.6996) or Pam Thiessen (Senator Ensign, 202.224.6244). We appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



HARRY REID
United States Senator



JOHN ENSIGN
United States Senator

Template = SECY-067

SECY-02

Cc: Kenny C. Guinn, Governor of Nevada,
Bob Loux, Executive Director, Nevada Agency for Nuclear Projects
Brian Sandoval, Attorney General, State of Nevada
Samuel Bodman, Secretary, Department of Energy
B. John Garrick, Chairman, Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board
G. Paul Bollwerk III, Chairman, Atomic Safety and Licensing Board