



# Sustainable Fuel Cycle TASK FORCE

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Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force Science Panel

December 1, 2017

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Member, Energy & Natural Resources Committee

Dear Senator Cantwell:

On behalf of the Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force (SFCTF) Science Panel, we request your leadership to move forward our Nation's currently stalled nuclear waste program. We urge you to do all that is possible to obtain the necessary FY 2018 funding to resume the critical path Yucca Mountain NRC licensing process.

We are scientists who have worked for decades to provide a scientifically sound approach for safely managing and disposing of used nuclear fuel and high level radioactive wastes. It is our opinion, that the science behind Yucca Mountain was conducted to the highest standards, has withstood countless peer reviews, and is sound. However, this huge investment is for naught if the final NRC licensing process remains stalled.

The NRC licensing process is almost complete and it now imperative that the NRC and DOE complete the licensing process to determine if the site is worthy of receiving a Construction Authorization. As is already provided for in our national regulatory process, the State of Nevada and other intervenors' concerns should be fairly resolved in an open and transparent manner before impartial NRC judges. This process should be allowed to resume and continue to its conclusion without political interference. Over the past eight years, politics have been used to run roughshod over science, and it is now time to put science and the interests of our nation ahead of personal political agendas.

It is the collective view of our Panel that it is essential that we move forward with implementing our national repository program and leave our country a better place for future generations. Saddling our children and grandchildren with spent nuclear fuel in dozens of temporary storage locations across the country adjacent to our rivers, lakes, and seashores along with seemingly endless financial liabilities for engineered storage is irresponsible. We need to act and the time is now.

We thank you for your leadership in this important and critical area.

Yours sincerely for the Science Panel,

Charles Fairhurst, Ph.D.

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