

August 26, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate

Dear Majority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force (SFCTF) Science Panel, we request your support to move forward our Nation's currently stalled nuclear waste program. In accordance with the law and societal need, we urge you to do all that is possible to obtain the necessary funding to resume the critical Nuclear Regulatory Commission's licensing of Yucca Mountain.

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 national and international peer reviews, and is sound.

The continuation the Yucca Mountain licensing process is also the law as this has been confirmed clearly in multiple legal proceedings over the past years.

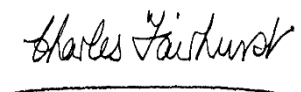
One of our members was Chairman of the 2001 National Academies of Sciences report entitled Disposition of High-Level Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel (<https://www.nap.edu/download/10119#>) which recommended that actions are needed and national programs should proceed. Unfortunately, due to funding restrictions, virtually no progress has been made in our country for the past decade.

The NRC licensing process is almost complete, and it is now imperative that the NRC and DOE finish 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. It makes no sense for the State of Nevada to express concerns and then oppose letting an impartial scientific panel of judges consider those concerns.

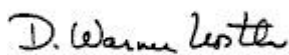
It is the collective view of our Panel that it is essential that we move forward with implementing our national repository program and leave our country a better place for future generations. Saddling our children and grandchildren with spent nuclear fuel in dozens of temporary storage locations across 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 in advance for your support in this important and critical area.

Yours sincerely for the Science Panel,



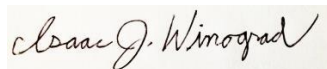
Charles Fairhurst, Ph.D.



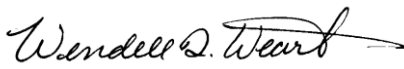
D. Warner North Ph.D.



Ruth Weiner, Ph.D.



Isaac Winograd, Ph.D.



Wendell Weart, Ph.D.



John Kessler, Ph.D.

Cc: Mick Mulvaney, White House
Rick Perry, Secretary of Energy

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