



Sustainable Fuel Cycle

TASK FORCE

www.sustainablefuelcycle.com

Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force Science Panel

February 12, 2010

The Honorable Dr. Steven Chu, Ph.D.
Secretary
United States Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Chu:

We are writing to you to as concerned scientists about the potential loss of significant scientific information being caused by the rapid and unplanned termination of the Yucca Mountain program.

Although we do not believe the program should be terminated, we recognize the reality of the Administration's actions and are appealing to you, as a fellow scientist, to prevent the destruction of valuable scientific knowledge that has been gained with billions of dollars of U.S. taxpayer and ratepayer expenditures over the last 30 years.

We understand that as Yucca Mountain staff is now being terminated or reassigned and Yucca Mountain facilities are being shutdown, important scientific libraries, experiments, and samples are being abandoned and likely to be thrown away as trash in the near future. Although some may not consider these materials as "federal records", which are required to be maintained, such materials do have considerable relevance to the scientific community and are important national and international resources. Examples of such information are the library of references at the DOE Las Vegas Yucca Mountain facility and the thousands of physical scientific samples that are stored in the Yucca Mountain Sample Management Facility or National Laboratories. The long-term corrosion samples, for example, contain decades of information that is essentially irreplaceable. While many of the library materials are copies of items that can, with diligent search, be found elsewhere, having this collection available at a central library would be of great value, particularly to the Blue Ribbon Commission.

Preservation of this knowledge and associated physical records are extremely important for future waste management activities, whatever they may be. All of the more than 30 countries currently dealing with the issue of high level nuclear waste have opted for geologic isolation. Scientific information developed at considerable cost in the Yucca Mountain program should be preserved to assist in future repository development, wherever that may be.



Sustainable Fuel Cycle

TASK FORCE

www.sustainablefuelcycle.com

The Honorable Dr. Steven Chu, Ph.D.
Secretary of Energy
February 12, 2010
Page Two

We believe that it would be prudent to transfer assets such as the Yucca Mountain working library to another DOE Office (e.g. the Office of Science or Nuclear Energy), the Blue Ribbon Commission or the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board.

It would be most unfortunate for the Administration to give the appearance of being complicit in destroying a library and other important scientific information, contrary to the principles of the President's March 9, 2009, memorandum on scientific integrity because of apparent political expediency. We urge your prompt action on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Fairhurst, Ph.D.

D. Warner North Ph.D.

Ruth Weiner, Ph.D.

Isaac Winograd, Ph.D.

Wendell Weart, Ph.D.

Eugene H. Roseboom Jr., Ph.D.

For the
Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force Science Panel

Cc: Dr. John P. Holdren, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Science and Technology, The White House

The Honorable Daniel B. Poneman
Deputy Secretary of Energy, U.S. Department of Energy

The Honorable Dr. Kristina M. Johnson, Ph.D.
Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy

The Honorable, Dr. Steven E. Koonin, Ph.D.
Under Secretary of Science, U.S. Department of Energy

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee



Sustainable Fuel Cycle

TASK FORCE

www.sustainablefuelcycle.com

The Honorable Dr. Steven Chu, Ph.D.
Secretary of Energy
February 12, 2010
Page Three

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Joe Barton
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Chairman, U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Dr. B. John Garrick, Ph.D.
Chairman, Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board

Dr. Richard A. Meserve, Ph.D.
Chairman, Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board, National Academy of Sciences
&
President, Carnegie Institution for Science

Lee H. Hamilton
Co-Chairman, Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future

General Brent Scowcroft
Co-Chair, Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future

Neile L. Miller
Director, Office of Budget, U.S. Department of Energy

David K. Zabransky
Chief Operating Officer, U.S. Department of Energy