



# Sustainable Fuel Cycle

## TASK FORCE

www.sustainablefuelcycle.com

### Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force Science Panel

October 14, 2010

Dear Chairman Jaczko,

On behalf of the Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force Science Panel, we are writing to you and your fellow Commissioners to express our strong objection to the NRC staff being directed to stop work on the nearly completed Volume III Yucca Mountain Safety Evaluation Report. We urge that the NRC staff be allowed to complete their work in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

The NRC has spent over \$500 million dollars during the last 25 years examining the public health and safety aspects of Yucca Mountain and is now just weeks away from reaching very important scientific conclusions regarding the long term performance of the site. The public and scientific community has a right to know the NRC staff conclusions regarding their comprehensive analyses of the performance of the site relative to the stringent NRC and EPA regulations.

We understand the Administration would like to withdraw the Yucca Mountain license application, but it has not been withdrawn. Furthermore, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board has determined that the Nuclear Waste Policy Act dictates that the application may not be withdrawn and that licensing continue unless Congress changes the statute. There has been no Congressional action to justify halting the ongoing staff review, thus the staff scientific work to complete their Safety Evaluation Report sections should be allowed to continue.

The global scientific community has great respect for the technical competence of the NRC staff and deserves to see the results of the staff's regulatory performance findings. The NRC staff and the Commission have a long-standing tradition of independence from considerations of cost, schedule, and political influence when rendering its decisions and in providing complete and accurate information to the public.

We respectfully request that the Commission reverse the "stop work" direction and allow the staff to finish their work and release their findings to the public. Free, open and transparent access to all scientific information is a critical foundation for the establishment of an effective waste disposal program for the future.

Sincerely,  
Science Panel

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CC: Commissioner Kristine L. Svinicki, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
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