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October 3, 2001  
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CY-01-158

Ms. Carol Hanlon  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office (M/S #025)  
P.O. Box 30307  
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89036-0307

Subject: Comments on the Possible Site Recommendation for Yucca Mountain (66 FR 43,851 – August 21, 2001 and 66 FR 45845 – August 30, 2001)

Dear Ms. Hanlon:

Yankee Atomic Electric Company (YAEC) and Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company (CYAPCO) appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to the Department of Energy (DOE) in response to the subject notices.

We strongly support a decision to recommend Yucca Mountain for development as a repository for commercial used nuclear fuel and radioactive defense waste. We also believe that the reported scientific and engineering information constitute a technically and legally sound basis for concluding that a repository at Yucca Mountain can protect public health and worker safety in accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) radiation protection standard (40 CFR 197).

Based on both the DOE's preliminary and final suitability determination of Yucca Mountain, a favorable recommendation should be made to President Bush as soon as possible and the next steps taken to prepare and submit an application to the NRC for the necessary licenses to build and operate the repository. The following further supports this conclusion:

- the Preliminary Site Suitability Evaluation (PSSE) provides a thorough and technically credible safety analysis,
- used fuel disposal, as demonstrated by industry scientific results, can be safely accomplished at Yucca Mountain,
- comprehensive repository evaluation criteria has been developed for use in the suitability determination,
- international scientific consensus on geologic disposal supports repository development, and

- a Yucca Mountain recommendation is an integral part of an environmentally responsible energy policy.

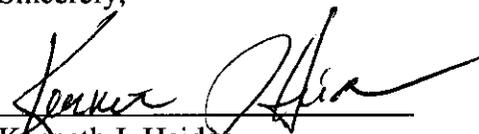
The federal government has a long-standing obligation to manage used nuclear fuel. This obligation was explicitly codified in the Waste Policy Act of 1982. While funds have already been collected from consumers to pay for the federal disposal program, the federal government has missed its 1998 deadline for beginning to remove used fuel from reactor sites (as specified in the Act and in contracts between the government and owners of nuclear plants). The federal obligation for removing used nuclear fuel from reactor sites has been consistently upheld by the courts. Based on the years of scientific investigation, the government can now meet this obligation by development of the Yucca Mountain repository. The Secretary of Energy should recommend Yucca Mountain to the President as a repository site as soon as possible.

In New England, an urgent need exists to move used nuclear fuel and Greater-than-Class-C Waste (GTCC waste) now. At three decommissioning sites in the Region, used nuclear fuel and GTCC waste will be canistered in the next several years. These sites will be unable to complete decommissioning and restore the sites for unrestricted use until the Federal government meets its obligation to remove both the used nuclear fuel and GTCC waste. Our states and communities continue to be concerned that our former plant sites will become permanent federal waste storage sites. The solution to this problem is readily available. Delay only compounds a growing national problem, impacts potential new electric capacity (and license extensions), and contributes to the mounting ratepayer cost impacts. Furthermore, with the recent events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the timely development of a repository site and the ultimate removal of the used nuclear fuel and GTCC from plant storage sites within our region, as well as across the country, provides protection from external threats. The Secretary of Energy should recommend Yucca Mountain to the President as a repository site for the storage and disposal of used fuel and GTCC waste.

Finally, we also generally endorse the detailed comments of the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) provided in their letter of September 24, 2001<sup>1</sup>.

Should you have any questions regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at (978) 568-2302.

Sincerely,



Kenneth J. Heider  
Vice President of Operations &  
Decommissioning

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<sup>1</sup> Letter, S. P. Kraft (NEI) to C. Hanlon (DOE), Nuclear Energy Institute comments on the Possible Recommendation for Yucca Mountain, dated September 24, 2001.