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To: "Carol Hanlon (U.S. Dept. of Energy)" <ymp\_sr@ymp.gov>  
cc:

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Subject: Letter on DOE Yucca Mountain Recommendation

Part of Records Package / Supplement / Correction

October 19, 2001

Ms. Carol Hanlon  
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U. S. Department of Energy  
Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office  
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Dear Ms. Hanlon:

I have never written a letter to my congressmen, a letter to an editor or petitioned a government agency in my life but I feel strongly enough about the issue of establishing a safe, permanent repository for high-level radioactive waste storage to do so now.

I am writing to urge the Department of Energy to recommend to President George W. Bush that the site at Yucca Mountain, Nevada be approved and designated as the national repository for high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel.

The nuclear power industry is reaching the physical and technical bursting point in its capability to safely store high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel on-site or at any of the currently available approved sites. Lack of progress on a final decision regarding a single, suitable site for the storage of this material threatens not just an industry, but our nation's level of energy self-sufficiency and increases our vulnerability to outside interests.

Many years of effort have been spent on identifying a safe process and secure site for the disposal of this type of waste from our nations nuclear power plants. The Department of Energy has identified Yucca Mountain as being a suitable location for this purpose. Storing high-level radioactive waste at one location is a better option than continuing to accumulate spent nuclear fuel at more than 70 sites throughout the nation. The designation and use of this site will improve our nation's security. Our nation faces a higher level of threat from international terrorism than ever before. Continuing to accumulate high level waste at multiple sites stretches our capability to protect them from this threat. Placing high-level radioactive waste in one location where our resources and capabilities for protecting them can be focused will minimize this risk.

The National Academy of Sciences recently affirmed that geologic storage is the only scientifically and technically credible solution for the storage of high-level radioactive waste. The scientific evidence concludes that Yucca Mountain meets or exceeds the criteria for this purpose and would be a suitable location for this type of facility.

Through years of experience the nuclear community, both governmental and industrial, has proven that spent nuclear fuel can be safely handled, stored and transported. The processes and containers for doing so have been

designed and built to specifications that can withstand extreme conditions. They have been proven through exhaustive testing and have an outstanding performance and safety record. Our nation's high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel can be safely moved to the Yucca Mountain site.

I have worked in nuclear power for 35 years. Yes, that means I have a special interest in this issue. But I am first a citizen of this country. Far from tainting my thinking, I believe my experience has provided me with the knowledge and ability to sift through this issue and see that the proposed solution is best choice for solving it.

For these reasons, I urge the Department of Energy to recommend the Yucca Mountain site to the President for his approval and designation as the nation's repository for high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel..

Sincerely,

Wm. W. Hicks

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