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AIChE

The Honorable Spencer Abraham
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

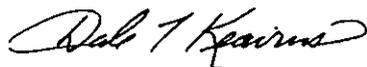
Dear Mr. Secretary:

The American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) has long recognized the benefits of nuclear energy. Recently, we released a white paper discussing the role of nuclear power as a tool in addressing global climate issues. As a proponent of the use of nuclear as a clean-burning energy source, we commend the Department for its release of the preliminary site suitability evaluation (PSSE) on Yucca Mountain on August 21, 2001.

The development of a disposal facility is essential to the industry, and the task has been undertaken prudently, with the counsel of many qualified scientists and engineers. The project at Yucca Mountain has been the subject of intense analysis and scrutiny for nearly 20 years, spending over \$15 billion to date.

In short, without a disposal facility, we are missing an opportunity to contribute a virtually emission-free source of energy as a method of addressing the climate change debate. In order for nuclear power to make a significant contribution to both national and worldwide energy/environment problems, a disposal facility must be agreed upon. The release of the PSSE is one step toward reaching that agreement.

Sincerely,



Dale L. Keairns, Ph.D.
Chairman, Government Relations



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