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David A. Wright, Ex-Officio

President, Wright Directions



DATE: April 29, 2014
TO: Congressional Offices
FROM: Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition
RE: Call for action toward used fuel removal

The federal government should act now to meet its obligation to promptly remove used nuclear fuel from existing and decommissioned reactor sites in our states. Electric consumers have paid in excess of \$38 billion (including interest) and contribute approximately \$750 million annually into the Nuclear Waste Fund. Consumers have dutifully met their legal obligation over the last 30 years, but the federal government has not.

- *Funding & Governance Reform.* The Administration, with Congressional support, needs to fix the funding mechanism for the nuclear waste program so that money collected from consumers is used for its intended purpose. Further, Congress should establish a new federal corporation to manage the nuclear waste program.
- *Consolidated Storage with Priority for Shutdown Reactor Fuel.* Congress and the Administration should facilitate consolidated storage as a way for the federal government to begin meeting its obligations, particularly removal of used fuel stranded at sites without an operating reactor.
- *2015 Appropriations.* Congress should act now to incrementally advance the federal program. For example, Congress should fund and direct DOE to design and certify a rail car or cars for use with licensed and anticipated transportation casks; design a pilot consolidated storage facility; and engage potential host communities.
- *Yucca Mountain License Application Completion.*
 - The NRC's independent review of Yucca Mountain as a geologic disposal facility is well advanced. The Court has issued its mandamus ruling, and the NRC has scheduled release of the Safety Evaluation Report in January 2015. Therefore, Congress should fund the completion of the license application review and continue aggressive oversight.
 - Congress should act now to direct and fund the proper government entity to perform an analysis of the current state of Yucca Mountain project including the status of land withdrawals, water rights, and other necessary permits and approvals that are required before both the construction authorization is granted and construction begins.

We urge movement on legislation that addresses this pressing problem. Your leadership is needed to advance these critical nuclear waste program reforms. We welcome the opportunity for further discussion and stand ready to work with you.

The Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition is an ad hoc organization representing the collective interests of state utility regulators, consumer advocates, tribal governments, local governments, electric utilities, and associate members, on nuclear waste policy matters. NWSC's primary focus is to protect ratepayer payments into the Nuclear Waste Fund and to support the removal and ultimate disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste currently stranded at some 125 commercial, defense, research, and decommissioned sites in 39 states. For more information, please contact Katrina McMurrian, the NWSC Executive Director, at the number or email address below.