

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

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**ACTION OFFICE:** OGC

**AUTHOR:** SHELLY BERKLY  
**AFFILIATION:** REP  
**ADDRESSEE:** RICHARD MESERVE  
**SUBJECT:** YUCCA MOUNTAIN

**ACTION:** Signature of Chairman  
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**LETTER DATE:** 08/31/2000  
**ACKNOWLEDGED:** No  
**SPECIAL HANDLING:** COMMISSION CORRES

**NOTES:**

**FILE LOCATION:** ADAMS

**DATE DUE:** 09/22/2000 **DATE SIGNED:**

SHELLEY BERKLEY  
1ST DISTRICT, NEVADA

1505 LONGWORTH BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
202-225-5965

2340 PASEO DEL PRADO  
SUITE D106  
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89102  
702-220-9823

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-2801  
August 31, 2000

Mr. Richard A. Meserve  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
One White Flint North  
11555 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, Maryland 20852-2738

Dear Chairman Meserve,

I am writing this letter to urge your serious consideration of a research development that may hold serious ramifications for the site characterization project at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, and I request your support for further research. I believe that the site characterization project has already discovered disqualifying features in the geology and hydrology of Yucca Mountain, but I am also concerned about another risk factor that has come to my attention.

While the site characterization project has been conducted under the *Nuclear Waste Policy Act*, the provisions regarding hazardous waste sites in the *Resource Conservation Recovery Act* and the *Comprehensive Environmental, Response, Conservation, and Liability Act* must also be considered. I am particularly concerned about the potential consequences of mixing toxic heavy metals and nuclear waste, as would be required for the transportation and storage of high level nuclear waste. Evidence exists that the mixture of toxic heavy metals and nuclear waste could produce a hazardous and lethal reaction during transportation and storage of waste at Yucca Mountain. Therefore, we must provide comprehensive research that will fairly examine this question.

In order for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) relating to Yucca Mountain to accurately assess the risks the project would create for the environment and people living in southern Nevada, it is essential that all possible direct and indirect effects of the combination of nuclear radiation and toxic heavy metals be included in the EIS. At the present time, this research does not exist. It is evident that we cannot ignore this issue.

Again, I urge your serious consideration to support this research. I believe that the people of southern Nevada and across America deserve the most extensive research on all aspects of the nuclear waste issue.

I look forward to your response. Should you have questions, please contact me or my Chief of Staff, Richard Urey, at 202-225-5965.

Sincerely,



SHELLEY BERKLEY  
Member of Congress

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