



**Southeast Compact Commission**  
for Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management

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December 21, 2001

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USNRC

March 5, 2002 (2:44PM)

Secretary  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

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Executive Director

**Attention:** Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

Dear Mr. Secretary:

**Subject:** Comments in Support of Entombment Options for Power Reactors

The Southeast Interstate Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Compact (Compact) is an interstate compact commission that was consented to by the United States Congress on January 15, 1986 as part of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985.

The Southeast Interstate Low-level Radioactive Waste Management Commission (Commission) was created by statute to provide the instrument and framework for a cooperative effort by the member states to provide sufficient facilities for the proper management of low-level radioactive waste generated in the region. The current member states are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

The Commission is providing comments in support of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) efforts to establish an additional safe and effective decommissioning option for power reactors (Rulemaking Option Number 2).

The entombment option described in the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published in the *Federal Register* (66 *Federal Register* 52,551) could provide a regulatory structure that ensures that power reactors can safely be decommissioned when there is no access to low-level radioactive waste disposal facilities. Because the entombment option could provide for long-term "decay in storage" at power reactors, it may assist States and compacts in meeting their obligation to provide for disposal under the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985.

However, the Commission is concerned that the use of the entombment option by the operator of a power reactor in a compact region with an existing or developing low-level radioactive waste disposal facility could have an adverse economic and/or political impact on the development and/or operation of that facility. This, in turn, could limit the ability of the compact to provide safe, permanent disposal for the low-level radioactive waste generated by other licensees in the region such as hospitals and universities.

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We urge the NRC to further evaluate this option and craft an appropriate regulatory approach through rulemaking.

Please contact me at 919/821-0500 or at [khaynes@secompact.org](mailto:khaynes@secompact.org) if you have questions on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn Haynes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Kathryn Haynes  
Executive Director