

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

FROM: DUE: 06/11/02

EDO CONTROL: G20020320
DOC DT: 05/23/02
FINAL REPLY:

Dario Herrera
Clark County Commission

TO:

Chairman Meserve

FOR SIGNATURE OF : ** PRI **

CRC NO: 02-0382

Chairman Meserve

DESC:

ROUTING:

Public Meetings - Yucca Mountain

Travers
Paperiello
Kane
Norry
Craig
Burns/Cyr
Merschhoff, RIV
Lohaus, STP

DATE: 05/30/02

ASSIGNED TO: CONTACT:
NMSS Virgilio

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Ref. G20020189.



DARIO HERRERA
Chairman

Board of County Commissioners

CLARK COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
500 S GRAND CENTRAL PKY
PO BOX 551601
LAS VEGAS NV 89155-1601
(702) 455-3500 FAX: (702) 383-6041

May 23, 2002

Richard A. Meserve
Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Chairman
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Chairman Meserve:

I was encouraged this week to receive your letter in response to my request for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to immediately schedule a series of public meetings in Clark County to discuss the effects of shipping all the nation's nuclear waste 90 miles from the fastest growing metropolitan area in the country. As Chairman of the Clark County Commission and attendee at yesterday's Las Vegas NRC public meeting, I am compelled to ask the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to reevaluate the format, content and public notification process of these public meetings.

The two scheduled meetings in the Las Vegas Valley were designed for the public to provide comment on the NRC's proposed guidelines for the review of the Department of Energy's application to operate a nuclear waste storage facility at Yucca Mountain. I applaud studying these licensing guidelines and welcome a thorough discussion of these matters. However, after hearing the discussion at yesterday's meetings and listening to the countless questions regarding the transportation of high-level nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain, I think more public meetings in Clark County and communities along the transportation routes regarding the transportation dangers would be useful and productive for both the NRC and concerned residents living near the proposed Yucca Mountain shipping routes.

From the documents included in your letter, I see that the last public meeting to discuss the transportation of "HLW" (high-level waste) to Yucca Mountain was on May 24, 2001. Given the many serious Yucca Mountain issues that have developed and questions that have arisen since May 24, 2001, I urge you to quickly schedule more public forums – here in Clark County and also in transportation route communities – to address HLW transportation dangers.

Last month I testified before the House Transportation Subcommittees on Highways and Transit and Railroads, and raised several issues about the long-term effects of transporting nuclear waste across 43 states to Nevada. Potential property value decreases, the DOE's own accident record

analysis, preparation costs and the unanswered scientific questions identified by the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board are all issues that need to be discussed with the general public.

At yesterday's hearing, I raised the question with the NRC officials making the presentations that although Clark County residents are allowed to comment on the Yucca Mountain Review Plan and their concerns are noted for the record, those comments are merely catalogued in with countless other public remarks. The NRC officials could not deny that no results and no decisions would be made based on these public meetings. The message to all attendees was: "thank you for your comments, but we're going to make our own decisions."

Also given the lack of information distributed to the general public about this week's meetings, I am obligated to question the public notification process for these public forums. Because the NRC has held so few public meetings in Clark County to discuss Yucca Mountain, I would assume the NRC would have a broad outreach plan to inform the general public about these meetings. As an attendee at yesterday's meeting and witness to the sparse turnout, I think a review of the NRC's process of notifying the public as to the date, time, location and topics of these meetings is greatly needed.

Given the recent vote in the House of Representatives and upcoming Senate vote, the time-window for fruitful public comment that may have an impact on the approval of Yucca Mountain is rapidly closing. I urge you to quickly schedule more public meetings in Clark County, improve the public notification process, and take into consideration Clark County's comments when making important policy recommendations about Yucca Mountain. It is an unproductive and wasteful use of NRC and Clark County time to hold these meetings if our concerns are merely catalogued and ignored. I look forward to further, more productive NRC public meetings soon in Clark County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dario Herrera", written in a cursive style.

Dario Herrera
Chairman, Clark County Commission
Las Vegas, Nevada