



The Under Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

March 13, 1997

The Honorable Richard H. Bryan
United States Senate
364 Russell Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2804

Dear Senator Bryan:

This responds further to your letter of February 3, 1997, to the Acting Secretary, stating your opposition to the Department's proposed rule to amend its "General Guidelines for the Recommendation of Sites for Nuclear Waste Repositories" published in the Federal Register on December 16, 1997. You requested that the Department extend the comment period for an additional 120 days and arrange for a comprehensive series of hearings on the subject at the earliest possible date.

To accommodate interested parties, the Department had already extended the original 60-day comment period by 31 days. We believe that an additional 120 days is not needed to give interested persons an opportunity for meaningful comment. But recognizing the importance of this program, especially to the citizens of the State of Nevada, we have decided to provide a second extension of an additional 30 days, until April 16, 1997, thus providing a combined comment period of 120 days. We are considering your request for additional hearings and will inform you of our decision before the comment period closes.

Your letter opposing the rulemaking will be made part of the record and will be carefully considered before a final response to comments on the rulemaking is published in the Federal Register.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas P. Grumbly".

Thomas P. Grumbly