

RAS 9591



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USNRC

March 21, 2005 (3:35pm)

March 14, 2005

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Hon. David G. Leitch
Deputy Counsel to the President
The White House
Washington, DC 20006

Re: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
In the Matter of Private Fuel Storage
Docket No. 72-22-ISFSI

Dear Mr. Leitch:

We represent a group of distinguished scientists, Scientists for Secure Waste Storage, who have submitted comments to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) urging that body to affirm the decision of the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) of the NRC to approve licensing of a spent nuclear fuel storage facility on the Skull Valley Reservation, on sovereign trust lands of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians, located within the State of Utah.

We write to you because we have been led to understand that last week one or both United States Senators from the State of Utah met with officials at the White House to urge the President to override the decision of the ASLB and, if necessary, of the Commission itself.

For the reasons set forth in the enclosed comments, filed today with the Commission, the scientists who constitute Scientists for Secure Waste Storage believe that the design and location of the proposed storage site is safe, that it serves the national interest in reducing our dependence on imported oil, and that it comports with the respect due to a Native American nation to whom the United States has treaty obligations and who in any event have the right to determine the use of their property so long as that use does not endanger the health or safety of its neighbors. We note that after more than seven years of proceedings, including extensive hearings and written submissions, the ASLB has thoroughly examined all of the safety and environmental concerns put forward by the State of Utah, and has determined that a license for the storage facility should be issued.

We urge that the administration not cave in to this political pressure, and allow the regulatory process to take its course. We note that the State of Utah has been an active and vigorous participant in that process, and should not now try to circumvent it.

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If you are not the appropriate person in the White House to whom this letter should be directed, I request that you forward it to the appropriate individual or office, and advise us to whom any further communications should be sent.

Respectfully,



Martin S. Kaufman
Senior Vice President
and General Counsel

MSK:mbs

cc: Prof. Richard Wilson
All Parties