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 Subject: media release
 Date: Jan 9, 2007 4:57 PM
 For Release: Tuesday January 9, 2007
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DOCKETED
 USNRC

February 7, 2007 (8:30am)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
 RULEMAKINGS AND
 ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Docket No. 70-7004-HL

100+ Groups Call on Congress to Oppose

High-Level Radioactive Waste Dumping Plan in Ohio

Washington DC □ In a letter delivered to congressional leaders, 106 national and grassroots organizations expressed opposition to any temporary centralization of irradiated fuel from commercial nuclear power operations in the United States, specifically focusing concern on the Piketon, Ohio site where apparently preparations are already underway for an □interim□ dump.

The letter summarizes concerns that preparations for storage of high-level nuclear waste in the Southern Ohio Scioto Valley are proceeding under the guise of the Administration's Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, but are running ahead of that program's official timeline. The letter also states the signers' opposition to the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership in entirety □ a program that would attempt to revive the failed technology of reprocessing.

Many organizations signing the letter have been active in opposing centralized interim storage of commercial high-level waste in both Nevada and Utah. A key issue for many groups is the potential impact of the transportation of the waste. □Security of high-level radioactive waste should be the number one priority□ said Kevin Kamps, nuclear waste specialist at Nuclear Information and Resource Service. □We do not think the irradiated fuel is secure today at the reactor sites, but it is more secure there than it will ever be on a truck or a train traveling through our inner cities and prime farm lands.□

□Once again folks are being told the lie that nuclear waste is economic development,□ said Mary Olson, Director of the NIRS Southeast Office. □The Piketon area has lost a lot of jobs so they are interested in new ideas. People don't realize that becoming the nation's high-level nuclear waste dump creates only a handful of jobs. The US Department of Interior stated that a similar facility □ the Private Fuel Storage initiative -- was not appropriate economic development for the small Skull Valley Goshute reservation in Utah, and denied a lease to that plan. That is why they need a new site, and also why many Piketon folks are saying no!□ Olson concluded.

TEMPLATE = SELCY-038

SELCY-02

Many other groups signed this letter specifically out of concern for the sacred Native American earthworks and archaeological resources integral to the area of the Piketon site. It seems that once again, the US Department of Energy and the commercial nuclear industry are targeting an area of vital Native American legacy for this most deadly of radioactive wastes. The 106 signers call on Congress to investigate this situation and oppose any change to current law that would enable this site to go forward. The 107 organizations signing the letter to Congress effectively endorse the position taken by 900 local residents who have signed a petition opposing any importation of spent nuclear fuel to southern Ohio. The petition drive is organized by the Southern Ohio Neighbors Group, based in Piketon.□

The letter can be accessed at:

<http://www.nirs.org/nukerelapse/congactions/01-08piketonsign-onlettersignatures.pdf>

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