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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–4402

ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE
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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

February 28, 2008

The Honorable Dale Klein
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11555 Rockville Pike
One White Flint North
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Chairman Klein:

I write to express my concerns about the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) practice of permitting domestic nuclear waste storage companies to serve as repositories for nuclear waste originating from international power plants and waste streams.

I have been observing the ongoing license review process regarding an application submitted by EnergySolutions, Inc., for a license to import up to 20,000 tons of low-level nuclear waste from Italy. As you know, this waste would be processed in Tennessee with the resulting product to be disposed of at a site in Clive, Utah. This raises concerns in my mind because I have worked for many years to prevent my home state of Utah from becoming a dumping ground for nuclear waste.

I do not believe that sites in the U.S. should be repositories for foreign waste. In fact, the legislative record on storage waste storage indicates that Congress never meant to enable the NRC to openly accept foreign-generated radioactive waste. I recognize that small amounts of waste have been permitted entry into the U.S. in the past, however, encouraging other nations to actively pursue disposal options in the U.S. seems short-sighted at best.

I am particularly concerned that efforts to import waste from international sites come at a time when the U.S. is still struggling to meet its own nuclear waste storage needs and faces a carbon-constrained future that may well result in a renewed focus on new nuclear power generation. Waste repository sites in the U.S. were simply not intended to foster incentives for other nations to dump nuclear waste in the U.S.

All waste streams raise concerns about risks suffered by local communities. As you may remember, I have also been a strong opponent of efforts to site a national nuclear waste in the neighboring state of Nevada because of concerns about transportation risks, which have never

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Received SECY/C&R
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3/5..To OIP/EDO to Prepare Response for Chairman's Signature
Date due Comm: March 19..Copy to: RF, OCA to Ack, SECY/RAS
Commission Correspondence

adequately been addressed by the NRC, in my view. Adding additional streams of waste from international sites would serve only to compound the risks.

Thank you for your consideration of my views on this important matter. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

JIM MATHESON
Member of Congress