

## Hearing Docket

From: TomClements329@cs.com  
 Sent: Friday, June 13, 2008 8:38 AM  
 To: Hearing Docket  
 Subject: Italian Waste Import, Docket Numbers 11005710 and 11005711

Thanks for considering these two items in the Italian waste import license application, Docket Numbers 11005710 and 11005711

The Tennessean

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<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080613/OPINION01/806130392>

June 16, 2008 (3:45pm)

Dangerous waste plan must be stopped

OFFICE OF SECRETARY  
RULEMAKINGS AND  
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

By DON SAFER • June 13, 2008

EnergySolutions has proposed bringing 20,000 tons (1 million cubic feet) of waste from decommissioned nuclear power plants in Italy to Oak Ridge, Tenn.

These plants were shut down after the Chernobyl disaster in the 1980s. The U.S. government classifies this waste as "low level." In Europe, it is called low- and intermediate-level waste. This distortion is consistent with the pattern in the U.S. to minimize perceived risk by bureaucratic fiat. As the waste makes its journey over our roads, rails or waterways, many Americans will have the possible misfortune of being in close proximity to the radioactive shipments.

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If brought to Tennessee, the waste will be burned, melted, physically and chemically processed. Roughly 30 percent of the waste is radioactive metal that is planned to be turned into shielding at nuclear facilities. How can we be sure that no waste will be diverted to uncontaminated metal recycling facilities?

The remaining 13,000 tons will be processed down to 1,600 tons. Incineration and the other procedures are dangerous and dirty, and many sites where this has been done are now hopelessly contaminated federal Superfund sites. If the scheme goes as planned, all the original radiation will be concentrated into the residue that EnergySolutions wants to ship to Utah for disposal despite the objections of Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman and the state.

Hazards of radiation exposure

This is a bad idea that would move much of Italy's long-festering nuclear waste problem to us. EnergySolutions, a global corporation, will make a profit at Tennessee's risk. Transportation and processing of nuclear waste are inherently dangerous. There is no safe dose of radiation exposure, and low doses are undetectable to human senses. The radiation accumulates in our bodies over time. Children and the unborn are the most vulnerable. Genetic tissue is particularly susceptible to mutation-inducing damage.

Why us? What makes Tennessee a magnet for domestic and foreign nuclear waste? So far, we have been lucky — no serious accidents (though we have had several close calls). Familiarity has bred complacency. Thus the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has allowed nuclear materials to be processed and landfilled in ways most other states and countries prohibit.

Many other areas have suffered far greater public health problems at the hands of the nuclear industry and are refusing to accept any more risk. This EnergySolutions proposal follows the revelation that five landfills across

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our state have been accepting so-called low-level nuclear waste without the knowledge of local authorities or citizens.

Tennessee should have a fully transparent and comprehensive radiological monitoring program in place around every nuclear facility in the state before we consider any further expansion of our nuclear industries. Real-time data should be available to all Tennesseans at the TDEC Web site. We shouldn't be left to glow in the dark like the people in the path of the fallout from the catastrophic Chernobyl meltdown.

If you are alarmed, please learn all you can about the nuclear fuel cycle. Contact Gov. Phil Bredesen's office at 615-741-2001 and ask him to oppose this plan. Support U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon's bill to prohibit the importation of this waste. Contact the Nuclear Regulatory Commission at [hearingdocket@nrc.gov](mailto:hearingdocket@nrc.gov) to object.

Don Safer is chairman of the board of the Tennessee Environmental Council.

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The Tennessean, June 13, 2008

<http://www.tennessean.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080613/OPINION01/806130396/1008>

State must not become dump for unsafe foreign material Today's Topic: State may get radioactive waste

#### Our View

America is a big country, but is it big enough to safely store radioactive waste from abroad?

While the federal government still wrestles over what to do with its domestic atomic waste, a private disposal company is hoping to bring in 20,000 tons of low-level radioactive waste from Italy, process it at its facility in Oak Ridge, Tenn., and then store the residue at its site in Utah, The Tennessean reported last month. The Italian nuclear facility is being decommissioned, and there are no provisions for storing the waste in that country.

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Rather than moving to stop it, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has left open the door for the company, EnergySolutions Inc., to receive a license to import the waste. Fortunately, some officials and environmentalists in Tennessee and Utah are standing in the way.

U.S. Reps. Bart Gordon of Tennessee and Jim Matheson of Utah have introduced legislation that would ban such imports unless the waste is being brought from an overseas U.S. military facility. As the Murfreesboro Democrat noted, imported waste could take up space needed for storage of domestic atomic waste, and the attached obligation may outlive the private companies that bring in the waste, saddling others with a heavy public-safety burden.

EnergySolutions says it has ample space at its Utah site, the nation's largest and only privately owned radioactive waste dump. However, the last word on atomic waste cannot and should not be left to the private sector. The public-safety consequences are simply too great.

Aside from the serious concerns over the residue's final storage, it is alarming to consider that radioactive waste could be passing through U.S. ports, which already have serious security concerns. A post-9/11 program requiring special ID cards for all workers with access to U.S. seaports has been repeatedly delayed by privacy and technical concerns.

EnergySolutions wants to move the atomic waste either through the port of Charleston, S.C., or New Orleans on its way to Oak Ridge for processing; of that material, 1,600 tons of residue would be destined for Clive,

Utah. That is only for this one contract. EnergySolutions has signaled that it is actively pursuing more foreign business.

Their plans have gotten attention. In addition to the Gordon-Matheson bill, The Associated Press reported on Tuesday that EnergySolutions' bid for a license has drawn nearly 4,000 public comments from environmental groups, state lawmakers and the governor of Utah.

Gov. Jon Huntsman has invoked an interstate compact to block the waste from coming to Utah, but EnergySolutions is challenging the state's authority in federal court, AP reported.

The federal government's handling of this situation so far has been worrisome. Not only has the NRC refused to stop importation, it does not even have a clear figure on how much radioactive waste is already in the United States. Meanwhile, the Bush administration has been aggressively promoting the licensing and building of new nuclear power plants, without a clear and acceptable solution for storage of radioactive waste.

If only the government's openness to private contracts and increased power production were matched by its concern for the safety of its citizens, there could perhaps be a workable arrangement. But this nation must not, under any circumstances, become a dump for dangerous waste from around the world. The people of those nations would not stand for it, and neither should Americans.

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