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From: Rebecca Ramsay <rebecca.ramsay2@gmail.com>
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Monday, March 06, 2017

US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC):

RE: Storage of irradiated nuclear fuel

The Report to the Secretary of Energy by the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future (January 2012) https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2013/04/f0/brc_finalreport_jan2012.pdf contains a discussion of increased risks posed by moving spent nuclear fuel twice: first, from onsite storage to an interim consolidated facility and again from there to a permanent geological facility, yet to be determined. Here is the response from page 41 of the Report:

Clearly, there are trade-offs: some risks might increase but benefits to the system as a whole (such as the ability to learn early lessons by moving spent fuel from shutdown reactors to consolidated storage, and the creation of increased capability to respond to emergency situations, for example) could more than offset these impacts so that overall risk for the waste management system as a whole could decline.

This justification suggests a trial and error approach contributing to the learning process. Those managing this endeavor might feel they could benefit from moving the hazardous nuclear waste twice, but how will the communities they are moving it through and where it will be stored feel? How will they be affected should emergencies develop?

The well-being and safety of the American people should be the top priority. If reducing risks to them means moving the high-level radioactive waste material just once, we could use our tax dollars to provide even safer, onsite dry cask storage facilities, especially where spent fuel storage pools are beyond capacity.

With onsite dry cask storage as the interim solution, the focus can become choosing and developing a permanent geological storage facility.

Sincerely,

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