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General Comment

Why No More Nuclear Waste? Let Me Count the Reasons.

Actually my reasons are too numerous to discuss here, so Ill just name a few and elaborate: radiation pollution, transportation risks, misplaced use of land and resources, and long-term cost to community.

Weve been told that the amount of radiation emitted from a canister is minuscule, but all of the countrys waste in one location has never happened so the cumulative amount is unknown. We know high amounts of radiation are devastating to health. And what if there were leakage (it wasnt supposed to happen at WIPP either)? We already live daily with many other pollutants (waste from various industries, pesticides, chemicals in products) which many think are contributing to our high cancer rate and other increasingly serious health issues. Why would we deliberately add one more thats potentially so dangerous?

The waste would be transported from all over the country, through 45 states, posing a risk to millions. Were told there would be no radiation leakage even if there were an accident and that the government would be responsible for cleanup. But theres no guarantee of either, and past experience tells us to be skeptical. And what would the cost be and how long would cleanup take (3 years at the WIPP site)? We have chemical dump sites all over the country that have been waiting for years for the government to clean them up. And why wouldnt the nuclear companies be responsible if the whole process is so safe? And why wouldnt we expect

accidents--considering the rail system is in bad repair, there are already a lot of rail accidents resulting in oil spills, and the railroad and rail cars werent built to accommodate the weight of the nuclear canisters (nor were our highways that would transport them from the rails to the disposal site)?

Why would we use our land and resources to bury waste when this area is so perfect for promoting and developing wind and solar and other renewable, cleaner, and less dangerous energy sources. I applauded when we became the EnergyPlex thinking that would mean promoting innovation and developing all kinds of new energy technologies. What a disappointment to learn that it primarily meant promoting and expanding oil and gas and bringing in more and more nuclear facilities.

Were told having the nuclear waste buried here would be a boom to our economy. That seems questionable on its face since some of the industries we already have employ many more people than the nuclear project would. And some of them, such as dairy, are concerned that their product could be tainted by radiation and thus unmarketable. Even if there were an initial boom, what would the long-term cost be? We simply dont know, but weve suffered and are suffering the consequences of too many guarantees that have been shown over and over again to be false the guarantee that something is safe (until declining health, a catastrophic accident, and/or pollution of our air, soil, and water prove otherwise) and the guarantee that if something unexpected should happen, the government will take care of it. And what about the enormous cost of building a facility, transporting the canisters, repairing damaged rails and highways, burying the waste, and providing security--to name just the up-front costs?

But, were told, it would be temporary, and besides its our Christian duty! Really, really??? I dont consider 120 years temporary, and Im sure no one but the people who lived here (if any still did) would see any reason to move it at that point. I well remember that we were PROMISED that WIPP would never have anything but low level waste; it only took a few years for that promise to be forgotten and broken. And its our Christian duty? Im sorry, but I think its our Christian duty to be responsible for our own messes and not be enablers by cleaning up others messes, especially when they continue to make them. Doesnt it make more sense to increase the safety of the waste where it is and quit creating such dangerous waste when we dont know what to do with it?

Thank you for consideration of my comments.