



The Secretary of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

October 23, 2019

The Honorable Deb Haaland
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Haaland:

Thank you for your June 19 letter expressing your opposition to the proposed consolidated interim storage facility for spent nuclear fuel (SNF) that Holtec International (Holtec) seeks to construct in New Mexico. As you noted in your letter, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is evaluating Holtec's license application to construct and operate that facility.

I want to reaffirm the Department of Energy's (DOE) commitment to breaking the gridlock that has left SNF stranded at temporary sites across the country. Yet, DOE does not play a role in the licensing of private SNF storage sites. Such licensing is solely in the hands of the NRC. Moreover, even if NRC were to license a private SNF interim storage facility, DOE has no authority to contract for SNF storage services with Holtec or any other private storage provider. This restriction was recently recognized by the NRC's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board in a May 7, 2019, Memorandum and Order issued in the Holtec proceeding. Therefore, I encourage you to continue sharing your concerns with the NRC through participation in the NRC licensing process.

I hope that once progress is made towards developing a permanent repository, states will consider providing their consent to hosting consolidated interim storage.

Sincerely,

RICK PERRY

Rick Perry

cc:
The Honorable Kristine Svinicki, NRC



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