

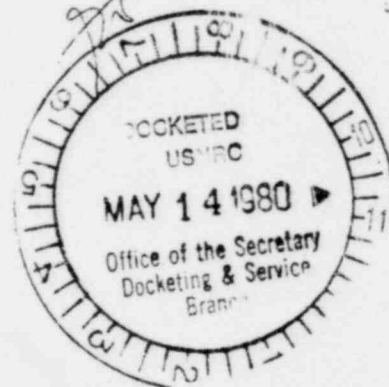


Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20545

APR 13 1980

DOCKET NUMBER
PROPOSED RULE **PR-60** (5)
(45 FR 31393)

Honorable Trent Lott
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515



*Roberts
Comella*

Dear Mr. Lott:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Mr. Peter J. Walley's letter of March 3, 1980 to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on their proposed procedures for licensing repositories for the disposal of high-level radioactive wastes. Many of his concerns were addressed by DOE and set forth in DOE's comments to NRC on the NRC proposed procedures. A copy of DOE's comments on the NRC proposed procedures is enclosed for your use in responding to Mr. Walley.

Some clarification of DOE's position may be useful with respect to the second and third itemized points of Mr. Walley's letter. On the second point, we certainly agree that the information presently being developed in site characterization studies underway should be included in reports filed with the NRC and fully intend to do so. An NRC opinion on the completeness of the characterization program would be welcomed and would be included in the planning of any additional tests.

On Mr. Walley's third point, the site characterization report might best, we believe, keep to technical issues related to public health and safety, in line with current recommendations that NRC emphasize those aspects of its oversight of nuclear matters. The socioeconomic and other community impacts mentioned by Mr. Walley would be analyzed in the documents required in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and would also be reviewed by the NRC and by State authorities.

Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
R. G. Romatowski

Sheldon Meyers
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Nuclear Waste Management

Enclosure

cc: w/o enclosure
J. Martin, Dir., Division of Waste
Management, NRC
R. Minogue, Dir., Office of Standards
Development, NRC

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