

Alliance for Nuclear Accountability

*A national network of organizations working to address issues of
nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup*

September 28, 2012

Ms. Swati S. Patel
Chief Legal Counsel
Office of Governor Nikki Haley
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Re: FOIA Response on Radioactive Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage in South Carolina

Dear Ms. Patel,

Thank you for your response dated September 24, 2012 to my request for documents for the governor's office concerning communication about the "consolidated storage" of highly radioactive spent fuel in South Carolina.

I appreciate that you conducted a second search for pertinent documents and that you sent me what was found.

As I notice that some documents are missing, I request that you conduct an additional search to make sure that all responsive documents have been provided.

In particular, I request that I be provided with documents on this matter in the possession of Josh Baker, including a draft document sent to Karen Patterson, chair of the Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council, which was mentioned in the April 4, 2012 email that you provided. (See email attached.)

Additionally, I request a copy of any "position on interim storage" developed by Governor Haley's office. I also request that I be provided an email from Rob Godfrey provided to The State on this matter. (See article attached where this email was mentioned.)

Thanks very much for your handling of this request.

Sincerely,



Tom Clements
Nonproliferation Policy Director
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two items requested by Tom Clements - see *s

Baker, Josh

From: Patterson, Karen <Karen.Patterson@tetrattech.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 04, 2012 9:08 AM
To: Baker, Josh
Subject: 1 Draft letter and request re Gov position on interim storage

Josh -- Got the draft letter, will provide my thoughts in a day or; and craft a letter the council could send to Chu as well.. 2

Got an email last night from Carolina Nuclear Cluster leadership, asking what the Governor's position on interim storage is. I will tell them the staff is collecting information preparatory to a position decision. While Aiken is focused on DOE hosting a facility on the SRS, and those implications, I think industry in the state is considering the possibility of a private storage facility that charges either the utility or DOE (depending on how the fuel title is managed) for storage and maintenance. Could be quite lucrative, and if I made storage casks, would consider it the perfect side business – low overhead, high return.

Thanks for your time yesterday. KP

Karen Patterson | Project Manager | Environmental Science Group Manager

4401 Highway 101, Suite 200, Raleigh, NC 27605

Phone:

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Hot waste at SRS opposed

By SAMMY FRETWELL
sfretwell@thestate.com

Environmentalists spoke out Thursday against sending high-level waste

from utilities that would send radioactive spent fuel there. Utilities, which relied on ratepayers' money, now want to be reimbursed.

At Thursday's Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council meeting in Columbia, representatives of four conservation groups said South Carolina should resist any federal plan to use SRS for disposal, even if the plan is considered interim.

"For too long, South Carolina has shouldered a disproportionate share of our country's nuclear waste," said Debbie Parker, a representative of the Conservation Voters of South Carolina. "We cannot endorse any negotiations that imply consent ... for SRS to serve as an interim site for consolidation of commercial nuclear waste storage or for reprocessing."

Representatives from the state Sierra Club, the S.C. Coastal Conservation League and the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability also spoke out.

The alliance's Tom Clements said behind-the-scenes discussions now are occurring

among state leaders to allow the disposal in exchange for some type of jobs initiative. He did not name anyone, but said "it's time for those in on these discussions to reveal what they are up to" and tell the public.

Gov. Nikki Haley's spokesman said the final resting place for spent fuel should be Yucca Mountain. Republicans have been trying to reverse Obama's decision and open Yucca Mountain. The president canceled the Yucca Mountain project after years of complaints from Sen. Harry Reid, a Nevada Democrat, who said dumping waste in his state would hurt the environment.

Haley is "dedicated to keeping South Carolina from becoming a permanent home for this nation's unprocessed nuclear waste," spokesman Rob Godfrey said in an email to The State newspaper. "The solution to the waste problem we face is a mountain in Nevada. The experts at the Savannah River site can process and stabilize this waste, but its final home should be Yucca Mountain."

editorial against spent fuel storage in South Carolina →

posal could too easily become permanent. At the very least, it could take decades before a replacement facility would open, they say. Planning for Yucca Mountain dates to the mid-80s. More than \$10 billion was spent on the project, much of the money coming

S.C. League of Women Voters also

spoke against spent fuel storage and reprocessing at SRS.

→ * email from Gov. Haley's office to The State

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(3)

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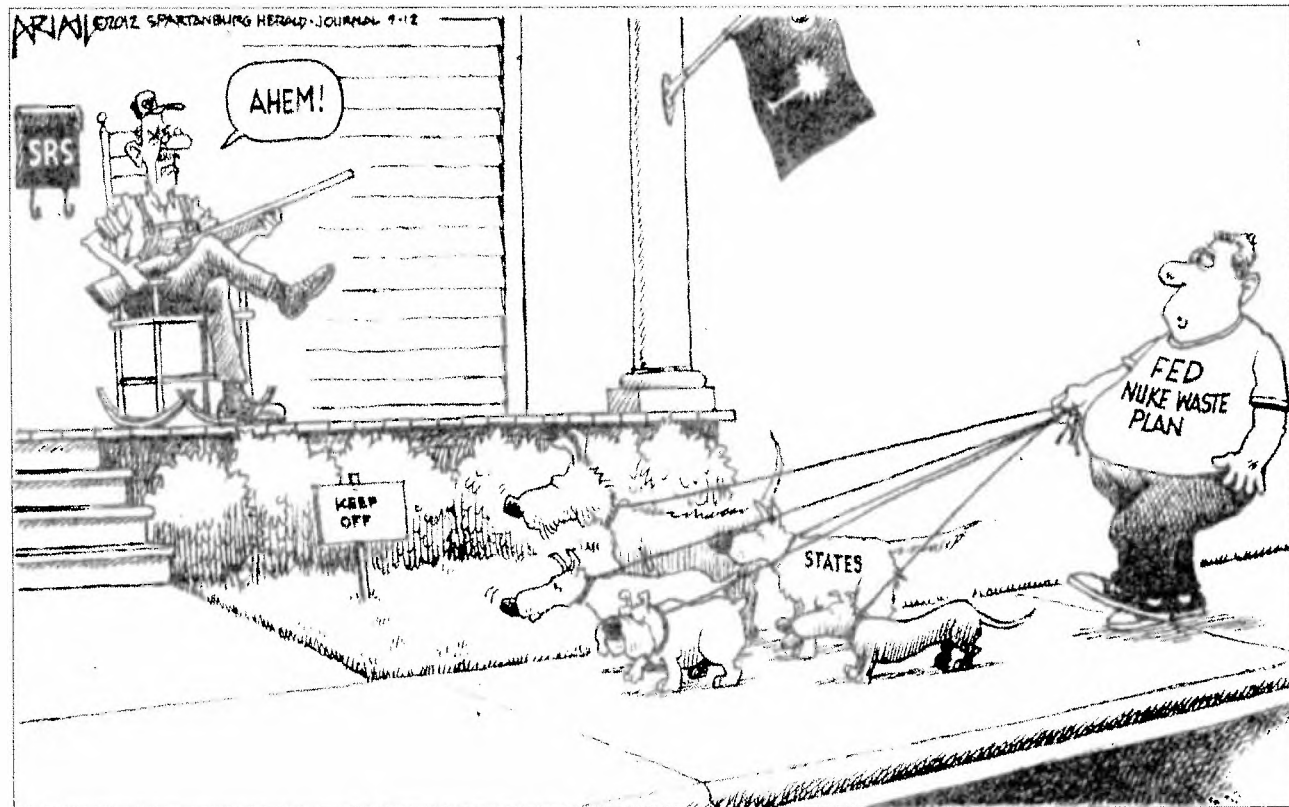
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SRS is not suitable for high-level radioactive waste

No more nuclear waste

Published: Sunday, September 9, 2012 at 3:15 a.m.

A coalition of environmental groups is correct in asking the state to resist any federal effort to send spent fuel from nuclear reactors to the Savannah River Site.

The federal government has no idea about what to do with high-level nuclear waste. It used to have a plan. In fact, it spent about \$10 billion of your money on that plan and then abandoned it. Now, it has no plan.

And when officials in Washington run out of ideas for where to put dangerous nuclear material, they usually fall back to the idea of storing it "temporarily" at the Savannah River Site. Much of the nation's plutonium from decommissioned nuclear weapons is stored at the site.

The fact that the site is located in a sensitive environment and near major population centers did not deter Washington. The fact that the facilities were not designed for long-term storage of this waste did not deter federal officials. They sent the dangerous material there, anyway.

They insisted it wouldn't stay long. They had two plans for permanent disposal of the waste. One of those plans was abandoned. The other is years behind schedule. Meanwhile, the waste sits there, posing an environmental hazard and a threat to the health of the people of this state.

And now, the federal government may want to ship spent fuel from nuclear power plants to the Savannah River Site. The state must object and do so strongly.

The truth is that there is no reason to send this waste to South Carolina. The nation has a perfect site for the disposal of this waste. It is ideally located, designed and built for the purpose. U.S. taxpayers have spent billions on its construction. It is the Yucca Mountain facility in Nevada.

But Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid doesn't want the site used. He'd rather the waste stay stored along the Savannah River. And President Barack Obama is his political ally, so Obama canceled plans to use the site.

The bottom line is that instead of using a site that is located, designed and built specifically for the purpose of storing this material, Washington may instead send it to the Savannah River Site, which is neither located, designed nor built for that purpose.

This is stupidity on a scale that only the federal government can achieve.

Gov. Nikki Haley and lawmakers must work with the state's congressional delegation to make sure that more dangerous nuclear material isn't sent to South Carolina. U.S. Rep James Clyburn should show that he is as important to the president as Reid. They must protect this state from Washington's willingness to sacrifice the health and safety of South Carolinians for petty political concerns.

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The State
Columbia, SC
Sept. 16, 2012

COMMENTARY

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High-level waste

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Don't bribe the states to drill for oil

OUR VIEW

Don't bring high-level nuclear waste to SRS in South Carolina

Published: September 15, 2012

S.C. must insist that high-level nuclear waste not be stored at SRS near Aiken.

If highly radioactive waste from the nation's nuclear power plants is sent to South Carolina, the probability is high that it will stay here, perhaps forever. That's why the state's residents and lawmakers need to insist that the federal government find somewhere else to store the waste.

Recently, a coalition of state environmental groups spoke out against a proposal to send spent fuel from the nation's 104 nuclear power plants to the Savannah River Site near Aiken. While the plan calls for using SRS as an "interim" storage site, past experience has shown how difficult it is to remove nuclear waste from the site once it is there.

Although SRS was not designed for long-term storage of nuclear waste, that didn't stop the federal government from sending weapons-grade nuclear materials there. In that case, the plan also was to use the facility only temporarily to house the waste, but it remains there after plans to reuse the nuclear material fell years behind schedule.

Fortunately, the U.S. has an ideal place to store the waste being kept on-site at many power plants nationwide. The nation has invested more than \$10 billion in developing a permanent storage site at Yucca Mountain, Nev.

Planning for the storage site there dates to the mid-80s. The project had been progressing on schedule when, for purely partisan political reasons, President Barack Obama chose in 2009 to abandon the site.

Obama was pressured by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada, who was facing a tough re-election campaign. Reid said dumping waste in his state would hurt the environment; more likely, it would have hurt his political fortune.

Politics aside, the site is ideal for the purpose. It sits in a barren part of the state north of Las Vegas where the government once conducted above-ground testing of nuclear bombs.

Rob Godfrey, spokesman for South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, issued a statement last week saying that Haley is "dedicated to keeping South Carolina from becoming a permanent home for this nation's processed nuclear waste."

He added that Haley believes Yucca Mountain should be the final resting place for the spent fuel.

That statement leaves wiggle room for making SRS a "temporary" storage site for the fuel with Yucca Mountain the preferred "final" resting place. But we hope the governor's office isn't playing word games and that she will oppose any plan to bring more nuclear waste to the state.

Opponents in the environmental community need to enlist state lawmakers as well as members of the state's congressional delegation to lobby against this plan.