

Reid, Heller introduce bill creating more Yucca hurdles

By [Kyle Roerink \(contact\)](#)

Thursday, July 23, 2015 | 11:59 a.m.

In his final months in office, Senate Democrat Minority Leader Harry Reid is doubling down on his opposition to a nuclear waste dump at Yucca Mountain — and he's reaching across the aisle to enlist the support of Nevada's Republican senator to do it.



Reid and Heller have introduced a bill, [S. 1825](#), that would prevent the federal Department of Energy from making payments for transporting nuclear waste through Nevada without receiving the consent of the governor, local officials and tribal leaders. It's a companion to [another recent bill](#) the two are working on that would require similar sign-offs for the construction of a nuclear repository at the long-controversial site.

Reid recently scored another victory over plans to build a nuclear waste facility at Yucca when President Barack Obama designated 700,000 acres of public land for protection as [the Basin and Range national monument](#) at Reid's urging. That decision, which was opposed by Nevada Republicans, may have cut off a rail access route to the proposed facility, which sits 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

The new bill is a sign that Reid, the influential Democrat retiring next year, is moving to foreclose on Yucca even after he leaves office.

In March, Nevada Republican Reps. Crescent Hardy and Mark Amodei floated trial balloons regarding the [reopening of a conversation](#) about the site.

Republican presidential candidates, mindful of Nevada's early caucus and swing status in the general election, have staked out [various positions on the issue](#). Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, and Ben Carson have come out in support, and Jeb Bush and Mike Huckabee have tried to strike a middle position.

As a candidate in the 2008 election, Democrat Hillary Clinton was opposed.

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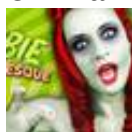
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