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Office of the Governor

September 15, 2015

Cindy Bladey, Chief
Rules, Announcements, and Directives Branch (RADB)
Division of Administrative Services
Office of Administration
Mail Stop: OWFN-12-H08
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

RE: Comments regarding NUREG-2184, Docket ID NRC-2015-0051

Dear Chief Bladey:

I appreciate the efforts of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff to conduct public hearings and seek public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement Supplement for the proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository. But as Governor of Nevada, and as someone who has been closely involved with the federal nuclear waste program for many years, I am concerned that Nevadans – and the nation – are still being forced to deal with an unsafe repository site and an unworkable waste management plan.

The time and resources being spent on the NRC Yucca Mountain licensing proceeding could be much better utilized by focusing on workable, forward-looking solutions to the country's nuclear waste problems, as recommended by the bipartisan Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future. Even the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has given up on Yucca Mountain, has terminated the DOE program, and has sought to withdraw the license application.

I recognize that the decision to go forward with the Yucca Mountain proceeding was not made by NRC, but rather was the result of an order by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Yet that same court acknowledged that NRC had inadequate funds to complete the proceeding, with the chief judge writing in dissent that it was "a useless thing" to resume the proceeding.

This dilemma is reflected in the task confronting NRC staff in the Draft EIS Supplement. As you will hear today and in written comments from Nevada representatives and others, the site is unsuitable and unfeasible due to changes in storage and transportation requirements. And as

NRC staff has already pointed out in its Safety Evaluation Report, DOE does not possess the land and water rights necessary to receive a construction authorization.

Moving beyond the failed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository is essential if our country is ever going to safely solve the problem of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. Continuation of the NRC Yucca Mountain licensing process actually impedes progress towards finding workable and expedient solutions by diverting our focus.

Sincere regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sandoval", is written over the typed name.

Brian Sandoval
Governor