

## **Key U.S. Nuclear Groups Urge Strong, Bipartisan Support for Waste Policy Act Amendments Legislation**

Four leading nuclear energy organizations led by the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition have urged U.S. House of Representatives leadership to ensure that H.R. 3053, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2018, receives strong, bipartisan support in upcoming floor consideration. Letter cosignatories include the American Nuclear Society, Decommissioning Plant Coalition and the U.S. Nuclear Industry Council.

"We commend the House Energy & Commerce Committee and H.R. 3053 sponsors for their work to build an extensive record and reach out to colleagues to find compromise on more contentious issues. As a result, House Members are now well-prepared to take action on H.R. 3053, a bill that not only recognizes the federal government's obligation to remove and dispose of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and high-level radioactive waste (HLW) currently stored at operating and shutdown reactor sites and Department of Energy (DOE) sites in our states and communities, but also provides additional tools and guidance to help the federal government fulfill that obligation."

The Groups cited H.R.3053's provisions addressing key nuclear waste management policy priorities including:

- Completion of the Yucca Mountain Repository License Application Review;
- Implementation of Pilot Consolidated Interim Storage (CIS) with Priority for Stranded Reactor Fuel;
- Funding Reform;
- Governance Reform; and
- Preparation for Transportation

"With a showing of strong, bipartisan support by the House, we hope that H.R. 3053 will serve as a vehicle for Senate consideration and lead to a bipartisan product in this Congress."

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A copy of the letter follows.



May 8, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives  
1233 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives  
233 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Minority Leader Pelosi, and all U.S. Representatives:

The undersigned organizations<sup>1</sup> seek your leadership to ensure that **H.R. 3053, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2018**, receives the strong, bipartisan support of the U.S. House of Representatives upon upcoming floor consideration.

We commend the House Energy & Commerce Committee and H.R. 3053 sponsors for their work to build an extensive record and reach out to colleagues to find compromise on more contentious issues. As a result, House Members are now well-prepared to take action on H.R. 3053, a bill that not only recognizes the federal government's obligation to remove and dispose of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and high-level radioactive waste (HLW) currently stored at operating and shutdown reactor sites and Department of Energy (DOE) sites in our states and communities, but also provides additional tools and guidance to help the federal government fulfill that obligation.

With a showing of strong, bipartisan support by the House, we hope that H.R. 3053 will serve as a vehicle for Senate consideration and lead to a bipartisan product of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress to strengthen the Nuclear Waste Policy Act (NWPA), resolve the nation's nuclear waste management challenges, and protect electric customers and U.S. taxpayers.

Specifically, H.R.3053 addresses many nuclear waste management policy priorities, including:

- **Completion of the Yucca Mountain Repository License Application Review**

H.R. 3053 recognizes that a repository is a critical feature of a responsible, integrated waste management program and importantly reaffirms the commitment of the federal government to proceed with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) review of the DOE license application for the proposed repository at Yucca Mountain.

- **Implementation of Pilot Consolidated Interim Storage (CIS) with Priority for Stranded Reactor Fuel**

Likewise, H.R. 3053 recognizes the important role of consolidated interim storage (referred to as Monitored Retrievable Storage in the bill) in an integrated waste management program. The bill authorizes DOE to either develop its own CIS facility or contract with private entities for such development. It authorizes the development and \$150 million in funding for one pilot CIS facility that is not linked to the NRC decision on the Yucca Mountain license application and provides priority for nuclear waste stranded at sites without an operating reactor. This enables the government to begin meeting its obligations sooner as well as to gain valuable experience.

- **Funding Reform**

Recognizing the significant complexities involved with the federal government budgeting and appropriations processes, H.R. 3053 contains thoughtful and creative approaches to provide access to the Nuclear Waste Fund (NWF) for nuclear waste management program needs and to prevent restarting collection of fees from electric customers at least until the NRC issues its decision on the Yucca Mountain license application and DOE conducts a new fee-adequacy assessment. We would like to see additional steps taken in the future to ensure mandatory, sustained access to the NWF, including both contributions and interest, to carry out the NWF's intended purpose under the NWPA.

- **Governance Reform**

H.R. 3053 correctly emphasizes the importance of re-establishing the NWPA-required Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM) and proposes two key changes: (i) an extension of the tenure of the OCRWM Director

for up to two five-year terms, appropriately recognizing that consistency beyond any one Administration is necessary for a program of this duration, magnitude, and importance; and (ii) a clarification that all nuclear waste management activities at DOE are to be carried out by OCRWM. Over the longer term, we support movement of these critical activities to an independent waste management organization.

- **Preparation for Transportation**

H.R. 3053 authorizes increased financial, technical, and other appropriate assistance to states and tribes for transportation safety activities. These preparatory measures will help enhance public confidence that the nation's extensive and exemplary record of safely transporting radioactive materials will continue.

Our organizations support legislation that addresses these important issues and respectfully seek your support of H.R. 3053. Passage will send a clear message that the U.S. House of Representatives is committed to ensuring that the federal government carries out its statutory responsibility to manage and dispose of SNF and HLW and will encourage similar action by the U.S. Senate. We additionally urge Congress to appropriate sufficient funds for waste management activities in FY 2019 and future years consistent with H.R. 3053 and to hold DOE and NRC accountable for following the law.

Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact Katrina McMurrian, NWSC Executive Director, at [katrina@theNWSC.org](mailto:katrina@theNWSC.org) or 615.905.1375, for more information.

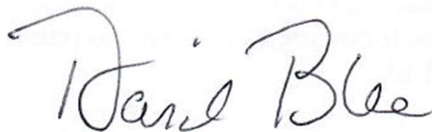
Sincerely,



Robert Coward  
President, American Nuclear Society (ANS), and Principal  
Officer, MPR Associates, Inc.



Wayne Norton  
Chair, DPC Steering Committee, and  
President & CEO, Yankee Atomic Electric Co.



David Blee  
President & CEO  
U.S. Nuclear Industry Council (NIC)



Sarah Hofmann  
Chair, Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition (NWSC), and  
Commissioner, Vermont Public Utility Commission

cc: The Honorable Rick Perry, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy

<sup>i</sup> A brief description of each signing organization follows:

The **American Nuclear Society (ANS)** is a not-for-profit scientific and educational organization, dedicated to promoting awareness and understanding of nuclear science and technology. The Society is composed of approximately 11,000 professional engineers, scientists, administrators, and educators working in government, the private sector, and universities. ANS provides opportunities for professional development and operates as a forum for continued learning, the sharing of technological advancements, and engagement of policymakers and the public.

The **Decommissioning Plant Coalition (DPC)** was established in 2001 to highlight issues unique to decommissioning nuclear power plants. DPC focuses on addressing the needs of reactor sites where all operating units have permanently shutdown and are undergoing or have completed decommissioning activities.

The **U.S. Nuclear Industry Council (USNIC)** is the leading American business consortium advocate for new nuclear energy and U.S. nuclear energy exports. Composed of nearly 100 companies, the Council represents the Who's Who of the American nuclear energy supply chain including key movers, technology developers, construction engineers, manufacturers and services companies.

The **Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition (NWSC)** is an ad hoc organization representing the collective interests of member state utility regulators, state consumer advocates, state energy and radiation control officials, tribal governments, local governments, electric utilities with operating and shutdown nuclear reactors, and other public and private sector experts on nuclear waste policy matters.