

Hearings - Statement

Statement of Barbara Boxer

Hearing: Full Committee hearing entitled, "Examination of the Licensing Process for the Yucca Mountain Repository."

Wednesday, October 31, 2007

Today's hearing is part of the oversight responsibility of the Environment and Public Works Committee over nuclear power and nuclear waste issues.

My serious concerns about Yucca Mountain as a nuclear waste repository date back many years because my state of California will be severely impacted if it is built and put into operation.

If the Yucca project is constructed, there will be thousands of shipments of high level nuclear waste transported through California, subjecting our citizens to potential exposure to the most dangerous contaminants known to humankind.

Many scientists predict that Yucca Mountain will leak radiation into the groundwater, which poses a real threat to drinking water in California. This leaking nuclear waste even has the potential to contaminate surface waters, creating uncontrolled exposure in my state.

My concerns extend beyond California to the whole nation and obviously to the people of Nevada.

Billions of taxpayer dollars could be wasted on a proposal that is fatally flawed because it will put millions of people at risk.

If Yucca Mountain becomes operational, radioactive waste will be transported there from across the Nation. The people of an estimated 44 states, including California, will have to guard against a serious terrorist threat as nuclear waste travels through our communities. Nuclear waste will be traveling past schools, homes, hospitals and businesses.

This oversight hearing is critically important as we seek information about this controversial proposal, and is part of what will be a continuing process.

I look forward to hearing from the bipartisan Nevada delegation, and all our other witnesses, during today's hearing.