



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

July 9, 2002
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

(THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN COORDINATED BY OMB WITH THE CONCERNED AGENCIES.)

S.J.Res. 34 -Yucca Mountain, Nevada Nuclear Waste Repository

(Sen. Bingaman (D) NM)

The Administration strongly supports enactment of S.J.Res. 34, which approves the Yucca Mountain, Nevada, site for development as the Nation's permanent repository for high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. Sound science supports this designation and warrants moving forward with enactment of this resolution. Moreover, the development of a permanent nuclear waste repository is important to a number of critical national interests including national security, energy security, homeland security, and protection of the environment. Right now nuclear materials are accumulating at 131 sites in 39 States, and many of these temporary storage facilities are running out of room. It was never the intent that these temporary storage arrangements become permanent nuclear waste repositories. The Administration commends the committee for their prompt, bipartisan action on this legislation and urges Senate approval of this resolution.

The suitability of the Yucca Mountain site is based on a vast body of scientific evidence developed over the past 24 years at a cost of over \$4 billion; and the enactment of S.J.Res. 34 will allow the required licensing process to move forward. Under that process, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will grant a license for the construction of the repository only if the Department of Energy demonstrates that, in compliance with NRC regulations, the material can be received, possessed, and disposed of safely. The NRC regulations include stringent public health and environmental standards developed by the Environmental Protection Agency. It is the Administration's expectation that the Yucca Mountain site will meet the NRC's stringent criteria and be licensed as the Nation's permanent nuclear waste repository. Such action will ensure a permanent, safe, and secure site for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel, which will allow the Nation to continue to receive the benefits of nuclear power -- an energy source that currently provides 20 percent of the Nation's electricity and emits no greenhouse gases.

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