



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD  
2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300  
Arlington, VA 22201

June 26, 2009

The Honorable Nancy P. Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
President Pro Tempore  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steven Chu  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Senator Byrd, and Secretary Chu:

The Administration's announcement that it would terminate the Yucca Mountain Project while developing nuclear waste disposal alternatives prompted the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board to look at the scientific and engineering implications of the decision. Technical lessons from the Yucca Mountain Project may be of value regardless of how the nation deals with nuclear waste in the future. Much, but not all, of the record of this work and the results it has yielded are contained in the license application filed in June 2008 by the Department of Energy. The Board supports the Secretary's decision to continue the licensing process for a Yucca Mountain repository, which allows a full adjudication of the technical issues and allows all the parties to the process, including the state of Nevada, to identify and support their contentions, so that the maximum scientific and engineering benefit can be derived from the effort.

The Board, which was established in the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987, has the responsibility to evaluate the technical validity of activities undertaken by the Department of Energy related to the management of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste and to advise Congress and the Secretary of Energy of its findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The Board remains committed to this task and to helping Congress and the Administration find the best means forward for dealing with the nation's nuclear waste challenges, including short- and intermediate-term storage, recycling, and waste reduction strategies.

Please feel free to call upon us for technical assistance as the nation moves forward in this most important area of science, engineering, and technology.

Sincerely,

{Signed by}

B. John Garrick  
Chairman