



December 30, 2003

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

With this letter, I am informing you of my decision to resign from the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, effective January 12, 2004.

I take this action reluctantly, since it has been my honor to serve as a member of the Board. However, I no longer find it possible to continue and be of service to you, to the Congress and to the Board's mission of scientific and technical review and oversight of the Yucca Mountain project, given the continued distractions that are not germane to my role. Ever since I took on this position in June of 2002, the Board staff and members have been required to respond to inquiries about perceived conflicts of interest and these distractions have created a huge burden on the Board members and staff and diverted us from our proper oversight role. Personally, an enormous amount of my time and effort has been devoted to answering questions and claims and this has minimized my ability to be focused on our mission. Finally, I have become concerned about the potential effect that those perceptions may have on the public's trust in the Board's oversight and review process.

It is my view that I do not have a conflict of interest nor are my professional activities as a university professor and researcher in nuclear reactor safety a source of potential conflicts of interest. First, since my academic research is in nuclear power safety, I felt it was important to openly acknowledge my professional activities in nuclear power safety, and explain how I intended to manage them to avoid conflicts and perceptions of conflict of interest. I felt this was important even though none of my previous professional activities ever involved nuclear waste issues. This management plan was developed soon after my appointment and publicly released. Second, I worked closely with the Board members and staff to eliminate the perception of conflict of interest for the Board. Early in my tenure, as a group, we dedicated countless hours in meetings to develop a consistent policy to handle non-NWTRB activities to avoid perceptions of conflict of interest.

The integrity of the engineering and supporting scientific bases for the proposed repository at Yucca Mountain is of utmost importance. Since 1987, the Board has provided a continuous technical review of the Department of Energy's civilian high-level radioactive waste management program, and it should continue to be part of this process. For the Board to function in this role after the determination of site suitability and during the licensing process, the Board should represent the broadest spectrum of technical expertise and backgrounds, to insure that the Yucca Mountain project is thoroughly reviewed during its design, licensing, construction and operation. I believe that my presence brought an important nuclear engineering perspective to the Board's work and that will be absent with my resignation.

It was an honor to be selected and serve on the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board. My hope is that the Board can provide an important component to the technical oversight of the Yucca Mountain Project and the associated activities in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Corradini".

Michael Corradini, Chair
Wisconsin Distinguished Professor