

June 3, 2002

REISSUED JUNE 18, 2002

Dear Senator:

We write to urge your vote against the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository, Senate Joint Resolution 34.

Transporting 77,000 tons of deadly nuclear waste over our railways, highways, and waterways through 44 states and the District of Columbia presents the potential for a disaster of astonishing proportions. A crash or terrorist attack involving even one of these shipments through any one of our communities could be catastrophic, yet the Department of Energy's Yucca Mountain recommendation lacks a detailed plan for ensuring the safety of these shipments.

Problems at the site are equally troubling. Yucca Mountain failed to meet the standards originally required by law to qualify as a geologic repository, thus environmental and safety regulations have been downgraded to allow this dangerous project to proceed. The new regulations are tragically inadequate to ensure that radioactivity from a repository at Yucca Mountain would not contaminate the groundwater below.

We are therefore deeply concerned about the environmental justice implications of this project, which is likely to impose a disproportionate toxic burden on the Western Shoshone people as well as consumers of the water from the aquifer below. The Western Shoshone consider Yucca Mountain a sacred site and do not support the repository plan.

We also wish to draw your urgent attention to the lesser-known efforts of the "Private Fuel Storage" consortium to open a so-called "temporary storage facility" for high-level nuclear waste on the Reservation of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians in Utah. The proposal would site 4,000 casks containing 44,000 tons of waste above ground, 60 miles from Salt Lake City and dangerously near the Dugway Proving Ground. This unprecedented private sector venture, opposed by members of the Skull Valley Goshute Tribe but negotiated privately between a disputed tribal "leader" and the nuclear industry, is now being challenged before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

These proposals to dump high-level radioactive waste in Utah and Nevada are widely opposed by national environmental, public interest and Native American groups, religious communities, health professionals, transportation safety specialists, and many state and federal officials. We add our voices to theirs in urging you to initiate oversight hearings on the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Nuclear Regulatory Commission's involvement in the Private Fuel Storage project, and to reject the Department of Energy's technically unfounded Yucca Mountain site recommendation.

Thank you for your attention to these issues, which affect the health and well-being of us all.

Sincerely,

Mike Farrell

on behalf of:

F. Murray Abraham	Richard Dreyfuss	Casey Kasem
Alan Arbus	Steve Earle	Earl Katz
Edward Asner	Anthony Edwards	Joanna Kerns
René Auberjonois	Bill Fagerbakke	Carole King
Alec Baldwin	Jamie Farr	Norman Lear
Jacinda Barrett	Shelley Fabares	Gabriel Macht
Ed Begley, Jr.	Nanette Fabray	Wendy Malik
Harry Belafonte	James Frawley	Camryn Manheim
Barbara Bosson	Peter Garrett	Catherine McClenahan
Bruce Boxleitner	Larry Gelbart	Jim Moginie
Jackson Browne	Melissa Gilbert	Kate Mulgrew
Kathleen Chalafant	Danny Glover	Graham Nash
Stephen Collins	Samaria Graham	Alexandra Paul
Mariclare Costello	Tess Harper	Kate Pierson
Peter Coyote	Marilu Henner	Paula Poundstone
James Cromwell	Bones Hillman	Bonnie Raitt
David Crosby	Judd Hirsch	Amy Ray
Ted Danson	Rob Hirst	Carl Reiner
Dana Daurey	Ken Howard	Rob Reiner
Ossie Davis	Gordon Hunt	Tim Robbins
Ruby Dee	Anjelica Huston	Phil Alden Robinson
Ani DiFranco	Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.	Martin Rotsey
Gail Ann Dorsey	Jane Kaczmarek	Jeri Ryan

Emily Saliers  
Leah Schallert  
William Schallert  
Fred Schneider  
Kirt Stambler  
Marcia Strassman  
Barbra Streisand

Keith Strickland  
Skepp Sudduth  
Loretta Swit  
Victoria Tennant  
Lily Tomlin  
BJ Ward  
Dennis Weaver

Bradley Whitford  
Cindy Wilson  
Alfre Woodard  
Jessie Colin Young  
Peter Yarrow