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## Money Down a Hole: Yucca Mountain Appropriations

*“DOE currently does not have a reliable estimate of when, and at what cost, a license application can be submitted or a repository can be opened...”*

*-General Accounting Office, May 23, 2002<sup>1</sup>*

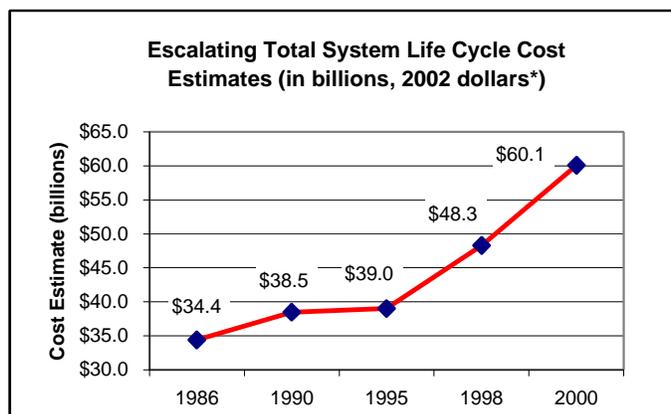
The Yucca Mountain Project faces an uncertain future as the Department of Energy scrambles to resolve numerous technical issues in order to apply for a license to construct and operate the proposed nuclear waste repository. Given the DOE’s continuing history of disastrous cost overruns and project mismanagement, the oversized budget for this program is a waste of taxpayer and ratepayer money.

### FY 2003 Appropriations

The House Appropriations Committee is recommending **\$524.7 million** for the Yucca Mountain Project in FY 2003 – up 40% from FY 2002 – as part of a bloated Department of Energy budget that is \$147 million over the President’s request and up \$806 million from FY 2002.

### \$\$\$piraling Out of Control

The DOE has spent more than \$8.6 billion (2002 dollars) on the repository program since its inception in 1982. The total cost of the Yucca Mountain Project is currently projected to reach \$60 billion (2002 dollars), up 26% from the previous estimate.<sup>2</sup> Actual costs will almost certainly exceed this projection. **Congress should restrict funding to this program and exercise vigorous oversight in order to reign in this radioactive boondoggle.**



<sup>1</sup> Testimony of Gary Jones before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

<sup>2</sup> Nuclear Waste Fund Fee Adequacy: An Assessment. May 2001. Washington, D.C.: Department of Energy

\* Adjusted using CPI “inflation calculator;” [www.bls.gov/cpi/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cpi/home.htm). Values for 1986, 1990, 1995 based on adjusted (for changes in inventory and dollar value through 1996) DOE estimates cited by Nevada in *Independent Cost Assessment of the Nation’s High-level Nuclear Waste Program* Feb. 1998. 1998 and 2000 values adjusted (for inflation only) from DOE TSLCC reports.

**Ralph Nader, Founder**

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