

Appropriations Member Day Testimony
Rep. Dina Titus (NV-01)
June 23, 2020

Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

Before I get to the main reason I'm addressing you this morning, I want to thank the Chairwoman and the members of the committee for your continued opposition to providing additional funding for the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository. In part due to your principled stance, the Administration's Budget for Fiscal Year 2021 requests no further funding for this dangerous project. I look forward to continuing to work with you in support of consent-based efforts to address the nation's nuclear waste.

I'm joining you today from Las Vegas to discuss an issue of paramount importance to U.S. national security interests and the health of Nevadans.

Prior to serving in Congress, I spent much of my career in the classroom, where I was a professor of political science. A major focus of my academic work was on the history and politics of atomic testing.

I taught at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, where locals could have once stood outside and seen mushroom clouds rising over the desert from one of the over 900 explosive nuclear tests conducted at the Nevada Test Site.

Decades of Cold War Patriots risked their lives to protect our freedom and defend democracy around the world. We later learned that the federal government's efforts contributed to cancers and premature deaths of tens of thousands of Americans and our tribal brothers and sisters across the West and into the Plains States. The NNSA itself admitted in 2013 that underground testing in Nevada led to the "release of radioactivity into the environment, particularly the groundwater."

Now, the Trump Administration is considering asking Nevadans to put themselves in harm's way once again for an unjustified experiment that would make our country less secure.

Each year, over the last two decades, the Department of Energy has certified that our nuclear stockpile is safe and secure. The U.S. already maintains a technological advantage over our adversaries due to our advances in subcritical testing under the Stockpile Stewardship Program.

Being tough on Russia and China means ensuring that the global moratorium on explosive nuclear testing remains in place; not giving them a license to detonate.

We must continue to ensure the safety and reliability of our nuclear stockpile without encouraging other nations to obtain or test nuclear weapons.

Earlier this month I introduced the PLANET Act to prohibit the use of funds to prepare for or to conduct an explosive nuclear test that produces any yield.

I ask that you work with me to mandate that no federal funds may be used for this dangerous experiment that would needlessly put Nevadans and all Americans in danger.

Thank you for your time and consideration.