

**STATEMENT OF
THE HONORABLE DINA TITUS (NV-01)**

**MEMBER DAY TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES**

MARCH 28, 2023

Chairman Fleischmann and Ranking Member Kaptur,

As you continue your work on the Energy and Water Development appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2024, I strongly urge you to include my language request to effectively terminate the proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository in Nevada.

For over three decades, the Department of Energy has left open the possibility of Nevada's becoming the dumping ground for the nation's high-level nuclear waste, a proposal I have fought since the Nuclear Waste Policy Act was signed into law in 1982. My State does not produce nuclear waste and should not be forced to store it.

What's more, the recent derailment and spill of hazardous chemicals in East Palestine, Ohio, reminds us how dangerous it would be to ship high level nuclear waste across the country to Yucca Mountain. Just transporting nuclear waste to Nevada, including through rail corridors, would threaten the safety of over 260 million citizens in 344 Congressional Districts, as well as surrounding ecosystems. After seeing the horrific pictures and listening to the unimaginable experiences on the ground of folks with severe headaches and having trouble breathing, as well as thousands of fish dying hundreds of miles downstream, there is understandable

fear in my State for what might happen if a similar accident were to occur involving nuclear waste.

Transporting this hazardous material through our freight system would make it what some have called a “mobile Chernobyl” waiting to happen. Not to mention, we are already experiencing a water crisis in the West. Can you imagine what would happen if radioactive waste spilled into any of the bodies of water connected to the Colorado River?

There is a solution. I am pleased that, unlike the previous Administration, President Biden and Secretary Granholm are supportive of a consent-based approach, modeled after my *Nuclear Waste Informed Consent Act* and based on the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on America’s Nuclear Future. This approach would only send nuclear waste to communities where state, local, and Tribal governments agree to its transportation and storage which is consistent with policies from around the globe, except for countries like Russia.

Terminating the proposed repository would also save taxpayers significant money. In 2008, the DOE estimated that without major interruptions, it would still take \$1.66 billion to complete the multi-year process for receiving construction authorization. If that were to happen, the State of Nevada estimates that construction to complete Yucca Mountain would cost \$96 billion dollars. That figure does not account for the estimated 100,000 trucks needed to transport the waste which would amount to an average of 4-6 trucks per day, every day, for 50 years. Congress has already wasted \$15 billion dollars on this doomed project and we should not waste a penny more.

I know you have a difficult task ahead of you as you make these critical decisions,
and I want to thank you for your consideration.