

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 9, 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, United States Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, United States Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker and Minority Leader:

We strongly request you to prioritize the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 request of \$150 million for nuclear waste disposal during bicameral negotiations on final FY 2018 appropriations legislation. This includes \$120 million for the Department of Energy (DOE) to reconstitute its nuclear waste management program and \$30 million for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to resume its review of DOE's license application to construct a high-level waste repository. The House of Representatives has consistently provided funding from the Nuclear Waste Fund in the annual Energy & Water Appropriations bill in recent years and request you steadfastly fight to retain the funding this year during bicameral negotiations.

As a result of the Federal government's inability to fulfill its legal obligation to permanently dispose of spent nuclear fuel, American taxpayers are liable for nearly \$30 billion in payments to manage the spent nuclear fuel in 121 communities across 39 states. Recently, the Federal government has been paying over \$800 million a year for these legal damages, which is not subject to annual appropriations bills or statutorily-established budget caps.

Appropriating funding to restart the program is the first step towards reducing, and ultimately eliminating, these escalating costs and will help the Government's long-term fiscal outlook. The initial funding in this process will allow DOE, NRC, and the intervening parties to fully adjudicate DOE's pending license application. This essential process will resolve the scientific and technical contentions associated with the repository.

Ratepayers have paid the Federal government over \$40 billion over the last 35 years to manage and permanently dispose of spent nuclear fuel pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. Additionally, national defense budget accounts have paid over three billion dollars to fulfill our obligation to the communities that host our nation's defense waste. Congress has an obligation to provide a return to the ratepayers who have paid scores of billions of dollars to the Nuclear Waste Fund.

The recent budget deal provided for additional discretionary spending, for both defense and non-defense purposes, some of which should be prioritized to address our nation's legal and moral obligation to permanently dispose of used fuel and defense nuclear waste. An investment in this year's appropriations bill to help solving this problem will result in billions of dollars in savings down the road and improve our future budget posture.

Congress in a bipartisan fashion funded the Yucca Mountain project for a generation. It is time for this project to resume. We look forward to working with you to advance a solution to our nation's nuclear waste management challenges.

Sincerely,

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Jeff Duncan SC-3

Leonard Lance NJ7

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~~Al~~ ~~PA-3~~

~~Al~~ ~~MI-07~~

~~Dana~~ ~~CA-48~~

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~~Bill~~ ~~FL-8~~

~~John~~ ~~TX-31~~

~~Gregg~~ ~~Harper~~

~~Frank~~ ~~Black~~

~~Silly~~ ~~Song~~

~~Pet~~ ~~TX-22~~

~~Paul~~ ~~LA-18~~

~~Sen~~ ~~John~~

~~Brian~~ ~~Cramer~~

~~Jim~~ ~~TX-22~~

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