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13 OCT 26 1999 MR. SCHATZ: Good afternoon. My name is Tom
14 Schatz, President of the Council for Citizens Against
15 Government Waste. We have 600,000 members nationwide. And
16 since 1984, CCHW have been proposing the enactment of
17 legislation of public policies to promote efficient
18 accountability of the federal government. I appreciate the
1... 19 opportunity to come before you today [to support the
20 Department of Energy's efforts to move forward with
21 assessment of the construction of permanent nuclear waste
22 repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

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1 Construction and monitoring of a permanent
2 nuclear waste repository will be a feat of monumental
3 engineering, drawing upon the best and brightest scientific
4 minds in the nation. The process will set new technological
5 standards and yield ground breaking scientific advancements.

1 cont.

6 So [DOE's July 1999 Environment Impact Study
7 is excellent news. Coming on the heels of the December 1998
8 favorable viability assessment of Yucca Mountain, this latest
9 review of the site suitability as the permanent containment
10 of the nation's spent nuclear fuel is further evidence that
11 the DOE can and must move ahead as quickly as possible and
12 with full confidence.]

13 The EIS reported that DOE's preferred course
14 of action is to construct and eventually close a geologic
15 repository for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and
3... 16 high-level nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain. [It could be
17 concluded that the cost of inaction and maintaining the
18 status quo is unacceptable. DOE estimates costs at Yucca
19 Mountain, which includes construction, transportation and
20 monitoring of the site for 100 years, 28.8 billion dollars.

21 In contrast, DOE's cost estimates for
22 leaving spent fuel where it is now in temporary storage

3 cont. 1 facility at 72 commercial sites and five DOE sites nearly
2 doubled to between 15.5 and 36.7 billion dollars over 100
3 years. But these estimates are only the tip of the iceberg.
4 They do not include costs incurred by the utilities to build
5 and maintain temporary storage facilities now, tentatively
6 scheduled to start in 2010. Taxpayers will bear these costs
7 one way or another.

8 For example, should any of the utilities be
9 forced to decommission their power plants before DOE takes
10 the spent fuel, they will have to replace that power. The
11 courts could slap the department with damages for these kinds
12 of costs. The utilities estimate that such costs for
13 temporary storage could reach 8 billion dollars. That's
14 above and beyond the 16 billion dollars already collected for
15 the Nuclear Waste Trust Fund.

2... 16 DOE scientists have performed rigorous
17 scientific testing to determine Yucca Mountain suitability.
18 They have strongly made the case that this is the best place
19 to place and store the nation's spent nuclear fuel and
20 high-level radioactive waste. But the process has been
21 marred by political procrastination. The delays are not
22 affordable and will only lead to massive monetary damages,

2 cont. 1 increased infrastructure costs and skyrocketing legal costs,
2 all of which will be passed onto ratepayers and taxpayers.
3 The federal government in 1982 made a legally binding promise
4 to the ratepayers, taxpayers, utilities companies and state
5 commissions to remove spent nuclear fuel and place it in a
6 permanent location.

7 The DOE accepted tens of billions of dollars
8 from ratepayers to pay for those activities and has already
9 spent six billion dollars. But the January 1998 deadline has
10 long come and gone, and none of the actual has been moved to
11 any permanent place. In the meantime, Congress has raided the
12 nuclear waste trust fund to pay for all sorts of unrelated
13 spending programs. This fiscal makes a mockery of the whole
14 notion of trust and threatens to cost taxpayers between 50
15 and 80 million dollars.

16 CCHW particularly supports provisions that
17 safeguards the monies in the trust fund by guaranteeing that
18 they be only used for trust fund purposes and for the
19 completion of the permanent waste repository.] President
20 Clinton stated after the DOE's viability study in December
21 1998 that he would afford his secretary with the full
22 authority to move forward with the dispatch on Yucca

1 Mountain. Yet, he's threatening to veto S1287. We encourage
2 him to sign the bill and minimize the monetary burden to
2 cont. 3 ratepayers and taxpayers. [CCHW's interest in moving ahead
4 with the site of Yucca Mountain addresses our longstanding
5 concern for taxpayers and making sure that the federal
6 government is accountable for its spending.]

7 MR. LAWSON: 30 seconds.

2 cont. 8 MR. SCHATZ: [CCHW encourages DOE to keep the
9 Yucca Mountain program appropriately funded and on schedule.]
10 Thank you.

11 MR. LAWSON: Thank you. Again, I apologize
12 for the name.

13 MR. SCHATZ: I have heard it worse.

14 MR. LAWSON: Our next speaker and the last
15 one before our break is Steven Kraft.

16 MR. KRAFT: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. I
17 arise in anticipation of taking a break, and I congratulate
18 you for being five minutes ahead of schedule.

19 MR. LAWSON: I don't believe it.