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MS. VIERECK: Viereck. Pretty good. My name is Jennifer Viereck, V-i-e-r-e-c-k. I live in the Yucca Mountain area, although I have been welcomed in this community a number of times over the years by the Danns and others, and I'm grateful to be back.

I am going to have additional comments this evening. I'd like to keep it short. I was expecting more speakers. But there is a number of things that I'd like to address that I think the draft Environmental Impact Statement does not cover adequately.

1 One of the first that I'm concerned about is simply the term that we're using for the materials that will be transported. The term spent fuel gives the sense that it's less radioactive than it actually is. I think most of us are used to using the term spent in terms of our family budgets and that sort of thing. And when you spend your money and you look in your checkbook, you got a balance of zero; right?

Well, when you talk about spent nuclear fuel, we're talking about materials that are a million times more radioactive after its use in a reactor than before. I don't think any of us will find a million dollars at the end of our checkbook balance. I feel that is a very misleading term for normal people, and I would ask that the DOE look into using a more appropriate term such as irradiated fuel.

2 I also believe that the DEIS does not adequately address a number of legal issues. The first and most important in my view is the issue of the Ruby Valley Treaty. There is very little information in the DEIS about the Ruby Valley Treaty which acknowledged in 1863 that the Western Shoshone have sovereignty over this land. It is in litigation at this present time in international courts, the Organization of American States, and it continues to be litigated in federal courts. All I could find in the summary was one small green paragraph set aside as though it were a point of interest along the highway and not a real issue to be dealt with.

So I would ask that that be much more adequately addressed.

3 There is a proposal for withdrawing 230 square miles for the Yucca Mountain repository, additional to the lands that have already been withdrawn that are bigger than the size of the state of Rhode Island for the Nevada Test Site itself. And as Lois was pointing out earlier, there are many many issues of impacts on plants that are used for medicines and foods, animals that are hunted and used in other ways in the community, things that are used for building, such as willow and that kind of thing, and they seem extremely inadequate. So I would ask that these things be addressed.

4 There is also conflicts with state laws. State of Nevada laws specify quite clearly that the State of Nevada does not accept high level waste. So we'll be in continuous conflict and litigation over this.

5 It's also a felony to contaminate ground water in the State of Nevada. There's already proven and is even mentioned in this document serious contamination at the Nevada Test Site already, and no prosecutions are taking place for that. This is clearly something that needs to be addressed.

6 I think we need to really look at the National Environmental Policy Act which specifies clearly that it's to be used to look at whether something will protect or enhance the environment and not to justify a decision that's already in process or being made. There has been no other site looked at or no other method to isolate the waste that we're talking about. And it seems to be a political decision. I think this is illegal, and I think it needs to be addressed a lot more clearly.

7 The purpose, the mission of the Yucca Mountain repository as originally stated was to isolate nuclear waste from the environment, both human and natural, and it's quite clear from this document, as I read it, that it's already been acknowledged that that's an impossibility. So I don't even understand why we're having this discussion. Because if we cannot isolate the waste, if it is going to leak, whether we're talking a hundred or a thousand years, we're looking at materials like plutonium that have a dangerous life span of half a million years. As plutonium breaks down it creates

7 cont. other isotopes which last even longer.

8 The document states clearly there is a material called neptunium that does not even peak in its releases for 300,000 years. So if we can't isolate the material, then why are we shoving it in a hole in the ground and covering it over? Why don't we keep it above ground where scientists can monitor it. If it is safe enough to transport, isn't it safe enough to keep in one place?

Why can't we monitor it and be careful about it until we do have technology that will isolate it and not poison a planet we live on.

9 I'm also concerned about the population figures that are used in the DEIS. In my area, near Pahrump, the figures are already inadequate, and I understand that the projections only go to the year 2001, and these are already inadequate.

Pahrump is the fastest growing community in the United States right now. We have an increase in population of over a thousand people per month. Las Vegas has an increase of 4- to 5,000 people per month. If these populations continue to grow at this rate, there's going to be people living on Yucca Mountain by the time this place opens. This is not adequately addressed.

10 My questions earlier about exposure, accumulative exposure. If this panel cannot address them, then I think that's extremely important. If we have rules and regulations for transporting materials that specify they need to be moved in 48 hours, then why isn't this addressed in this book more adequately so that our questions can be answered?

We're talking about materials that are extremely deadly, and all of us are very concerned and want factual information. We want to know about cumulative effects. People who live along rail lines and have herds and growth materials, farms, who raise alfalfa and family foods, people who go out and harvest natural medicines and so forth need this kind of information.

11 There is also no cumulative figures that I could find regarding the fact that this is being built adjacent to the Nevada Nuclear Test Site. The Nevada Nuclear Test Site is already exposing

11 everyone in the area through the air, through soils that blow around in high level winds, through the water, and there's not information about how this would cumulatively affect people in terms of genetics, natural wildlife or human health. I think this is inadequate and needs to be addressed with a lot more concern.

12 There's also a concern about what water will be used in that area. The water in that area that is being discussed for use in making cement and that kind of thing, spraying down the grounds, is already potentially contaminated from testing. Testing took place above, below and actually within the water table at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site.

So my concern is that in addition to all of these things,

13 there's also the problem that the amount of materials that you are talking about moving will actually have reached its peak, we will have this 70,000 tons of material by the time you're actually trying to open the doors down there, and so we'll again be in the same problem with reactors all over the United States producing these kind of materials, stacking them up everywhere, and at the same time, we will have exposed 50 million people along the rail routes and the highways, we will have exposed 43 states, we will have exposed many so far clean areas, such as this one, and we'll have the same problem. And yet we'll have all this material shoved in the ground where there is nothing we can do to monitor it or take care of problems as they occur. Thank you.