

Young

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My name is Jim Young. I am a resident of the City of St. Louis.

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I want to direct my comments to the two "No Action" scenarios that are presented in the DEIS. The first scenario given is to store all waste on site for 10,000 years with full institutional control for the entire period. The second is to store on site for 10,000 years but with institutional control for only the first 100 years. Both of these options I believe were designed to be unacceptable, making Yucca Mountain seem to be the only acceptable choice.

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The real "No Action" scenario and the one which should have been presented and which should be chosen is to store on site for 50 or 100 or 200 years, however long it takes, till the fuel rods and the then decommissioned reactors have cooled down, and a fail safe way to deal with them devised, hopefully with more advanced technology and more enlightened options.

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There is no reason to rush in and begin shipping millions of atomic bomb's worth of radioactivity around the countryside and through neighborhoods and cities like ours to a controversial and questionably safe central site in Nevada. The real reason for the air of crisis is that utilities' temporary storage pools are filling up, and the utilities want additional storage space to fill with still more waste. Only about half of the nuclear waste that the DEIS is attempting to deal with has as yet been generated. So we have the absurd situation of the nuclear power industry requesting off site storage now, so it can commence to double the scale of the problem.

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And now we learn 3 X cost "decided" 10 year extension of reactor life
a system wide solution which avoids further waste generation while still producing adequate electric power.

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Albert Einstein said that problems cannot be solved within the mindset that created them. For the Yucca Mountain plan to make any sense at all, one must be of the mindset that nuclear power even with its unprecedented risks is necessary. I believe that this is not now the case and it really never has been.

Smart utilities need to swiftly embrace the rapidly emerging, benign, decentralized technologies that are about to make nuclear power plants as well as fossil fuel plants obsolete. These technologies will prevail not just because they are non-polluting and safer and more reliable, but because they are cheaper. They include hydrogen fuel cell generators, photovoltaic solar generation, and wind generation. A nationwide fleet of hydrogen fuel cell cars alone, the first of which will be commercially produced and available within two years, will ultimately be able to provide five to ten times the electrical generating capacity of the entire present national grid. When one's car is not in use one will be able to simply plug ones house in to it and run one's home from the fuel cells efficient and inexpensive electricity. Developments like these, combined with radically increased industrial and domestic energy efficiencies will soon price centralized power generation out of the market. One quickly concludes that further subsidization of an obsolete nuclear power industry at this time in history is not only unnecessary but would be counter-productive.

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In summary: Continue to store nuclear waste on site until more acceptable options become evident.

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Begin accelerated decommissioning of nuclear power plants. Save the 40 or 60 or 80 billion dollars that Yucca Mountain would consume. Then allow the same billions to be used instead to jump start the emerging benign, non-polluting technologies where America's energy future really lies.