

Sarah Herstand Myers  
page 1

RECEIVED

Nuclear Waste Hearing  
Thursday, January 20, 2000

JAN 20 2000

EIS001016

- My name is Sarah Herstand Myers, and – of the many reasons I could be here tonight – I am here because I am a mother. I feel a responsibility, indeed a moral obligation, to concern myself about the world we live in, and about the world we will leave our children and theirs.
- About one month ago, my family and I moved from Maryland to St. Louis. We live in a community called Glendale and our house is about 5 minutes from Route 44 and the railroad tracks we have been speaking of. The sound of the trains in the background is one of the reasons we bought the house that we did.
- One morning this week, I woke up to my 2 ½ year old daughter's voice calling: "Mommy! I hear a train and it woke me up and I wasn't scared!" She's very proud of the fact that she has mastered this new experience – trains – and that they don't scare her anymore. In fact, she loves them. Whenever she hears one, she stops what she's doing and starts to move. First her feet, then her legs, then her whole body dances a jig as her excited voice calls Mom! A train. I hear a train!
- And now I find out that unless I am very fortunate, unless the Department of Energy changes it's plans, I will no longer dance a jig with my daughter when we hear the train. Instead, I will worry each and every time I hear the whistle. I will have to think several times a day of the nuclear waste traveling through our new home town, of the possibility of an accident, of the possibility of contamination.
- If our community was contaminated, who would be liable? Who would protect the men and women of our police and fire department who would be called on in such an emergency? I don't know.
- I urge you to find some other way of dealing with nuclear waste. Some way besides shipping it through densely populated areas, through neighborhoods.  
Indeed, I urge you to call a halt to the industry that is generating the waste, but that is perhaps beyond the scope of today's hearing.
- Before I end my statement, I would like to switch hats and speak very briefly not as a mother, but as a former archeologist. I have experience digging through dirt to unearth and then study items that have been buried for many years. I know what kind of shape most of these items are in. And I know how the earth moves

2 continued  
on page 2

3

Sarah Herstand Myers  
page 2

and shifts - sometimes subtly and gradually, and sometimes dramatically and abruptly, over time. I also have some understanding of the various half-lives of radioactive isotopes. As such, I cannot understand how the proposed Yucca Mountain facility - where waste would be buried in metal canisters at a depth of 1,000 feet in a facility designed to last 10,000 years could possibly be considered a solution to the problem of nuclear waste. The idea that the earth beneath Yucca Mountain will remain stable enough and dry enough to protect us and our descendants from this radioactive waste for the period of even one half-life is unfathomable to me.

4

2 continued

- In conclusion, I ask you this - please do not ship highly radioactive waste through densely populated areas to a facility in Nevada that does not appear to be a viable long-term solution to the problem of nuclear waste.
- Thank you.

Sarah Herstand Myers  
707 Edwin Avenue  
Glendale, Missouri 63122  
(314) 821-6562

