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BUD CRANOR

MR. CRANOR: Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen. My name is Bud Cranor. I am the director for the Governor Kenny C. Guinn's Las Vegas office. I have a written statement that I would like to read from the governor at this time.

1 "When I took office as governor in January 1999, I already knew quite a bit about the Yucca Mountain Project and the Federal Government's attempts to bring spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste to Nevada. I was aware of the unfair and unscientific process that has been unfolding at Yucca Mountain since 1983, a highly politicized process that has kept an otherwise bankrupt project alive in spite of mounting evidence of major flaws and technical shortcomings. But it's one thing to observe a program like this from a distance, and quite another to experience it firsthand.

"I came to elective politics relatively late in my career. For most of my life, I worked as an educator and a businessman. I've been fortunate to have served in a variety of occupational settings and have been involved with many challenging and even controversial endeavors. I can say honestly and unequivocally, however, that I have never witnessed a program public or private, State or Federal, that is so inherently flawed as this Yucca Mountain Project.

2 "Just prior to assuming office, I joined with outgoing Governor Miller in a letter to the Secretary of Energy presenting evidence of serious problems at Yucca Mountain and asking that the site be disqualified as unsuitable for long- term disposal of spent nuclear fuel and highly radioactive materials. Instead of moving to disqualify Yucca Mountain, the DOE has now proposed that the rules by which the site is to be evaluated for suitability as a repository be changed. The very notion that a Federal agency charged with managing and disposing of some of the most dangerous and long-lived substances known to mankind would seek to make an unsound site acceptable by changing the criteria by which it's being judged is appalling.

"This pattern of changing the rules when unfavorable information surfaces -- surfaces is not new within the Yucca Mountain program. It occurred in 1992 when DOE convinced Congress to exempt Yucca Mountain from health and safety regulations governing emissions of radioactive carbon 14 gas when it became obvious that the site could not meet those recommendations. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Yucca Mountain program embodies this pattern of changing the rules and obscuring problematic elements within the program.

"For example, the description of the repository project contained in the Draft EIS is not the project DOE is now proposing to implement. In fact, the currently described facility design is not a geologic repository at all; rather, it is a facility where engineering fixes like titanium drip shields, concrete and steel tunnel linings, absorbent material on tunnel floors and the like account for almost all of the waste isolation capability of the facility. The geological formation at Yucca Mountain is given almost no credit for isolating the waste. Such a design is directly contrary to the intent of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 that the geologic setting be the principal barrier to waste reaching the environment with engineered barriers providing only redundancy. This draft EIS and DOE's current repository design turns that concept on its head.

3 "The National Environmental Policy Act requires Federal agencies to actively involve the public in programs and decisions that have the potential to significantly impact them, but to do this in the case of the Draft Yucca Mountain EIS would require DOE to identify highway and rail routes to be used for tens of thousands of shipments of dangerous spent nuclear fuel and highly radioactive waste from generator sites around the nation to the proposed Yucca Mountain facility. Such disclosure would be making sure people in cities and communities around the country would become aware of the potential risks and what impacts the Yucca Mountain program means to them. Instead of clearly specifying what routes that have been identified

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3 continued for waste shipments around the country, DOE has purposely deleted this information from the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS provides no information on impacts to transportation corridor states, cities and communities.

4 "And EPA also requires DOE to evaluate the impacts of not implementing the proposed Yucca Mountain Project, the so-called no action alternative, and compare them to the impacts of the proposed action. Instead of evaluating a reasonable and realistic no action alternative, the Draft EIS uses a set of circumstances that are so extreme and so implausible as to be meaningless. The use of no action scenarios in which spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste are simply left at reactor sites for 10,000 years is completely unrealistic and serves only the political purpose of making the proposed action, the Yucca Mountain repository alternative, appear reasonable by comparison.

5 "This Draft EIS is more than just inadequate and deficient. It is the embodiment of everything that is wrong with this Federal program. The only action DOE can and should take is to declare Yucca Mountain unsuitable for development as a repository and begin work on a credible and workable solution to the nation's high-level nuclear waste problem. As all of us observed more than a generation ago, facts do not cease to exist simply because they are ignored. It would be difficult to find a better example of the consequences of systemically ignoring facts in what should be a scientific endeavor than the experience of a Federal high-level radioactive waste program over the last sixteen years.

"In closing, I will say that the current Secretary of Energy, Bill Richardson, has given Nevada hope that many of these political initiatives that have driven the high-level radioactive waste debate over the years will no longer be tolerated. It is my hope that with the help of our Congressional delegation, President Clinton and Secretary Richardson, Yucca Mountain will be ruled unsuitable based on science and not politics." Thank you.