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State of New Jersey

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Acting Governor

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Robert C. Shinn, Jr.  
Commissioner

September 18, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lawrence Schmidt, Director  
Office of Coastal Planning and Program Coordination

FROM: Jill Lipoti, Ph.D., Assistant Director  
Radiation Protection Program *Jill Lipoti*

SUBJECT: Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain

Your September 6, 2001 memorandum requested comments by October 5, 2001 on the Secretary of Energy's possible recommendation to develop Yucca Mountain as the nation's repository for spent nuclear fuel. However, the closing date for comments in the Federal Register Notice is September 20, 2001. Accordingly, we are supplying comments early so that they can be forwarded before the close of the comment period.

One of the suggested topics for public comment stated:

- *If the Secretary determines that the scientific analysis indicates that the Yucca Mountain site is likely to meet the applicable radiation protection standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, do you believe that the Secretary should proceed to recommend the site to the President at this time?*

The radiation protection standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission are consistent with the soil clean-up standards promulgated by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. Specifically, radiation exposure to the public is limited to 15 mrem per year, with an additional constraint that the groundwater meets the federal drinking water quality standards. The Department believes that these standards provide adequate protection of public health and if the Yucca Mountain

site is likely to meet the standards, the Secretary should proceed to recommend the site to the President. The standards would provide the same protection to citizens living near the Yucca Mountain site as are provided to NJ citizens.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

C: K. Tosch  
D. Zannoni  
R. Pinney