



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD
2300 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300
Arlington, VA 22201

December 17, 2001

The Honorable John Ensign
364 SROB
Washington, DC 20510-2805

Dear Senator Ensign:

Thank you very much for the letter sent by you and Senator Harry Reid dated November 26, 2001. Your letter raises several important questions related to the Department of Energy's (DOE) Yucca Mountain site investigation.

As part of its ongoing review of the DOE's site-characterization activities, the Board is evaluating the technical and scientific validity of work that will form the technical basis for a decision by the Secretary of Energy on whether to recommend the Yucca Mountain site for repository development. I have enclosed a copy of a letter sent to Secretary Spencer Abraham indicating that the Board anticipates conveying to him and to Congress the results of the Board's review in the next few weeks. To ensure that all pertinent information is considered in our response, we would like to respond to your letter at the same time.

The Board very much appreciates your continued interest in its ongoing independent technical and scientific review of the Yucca Mountain program. If you have questions, please contact me or have your staff contact William Barnard, the Board's Executive Director.

Sincerely,

{Signed by}

Jared L. Cohon
Chairman

Enclosure