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Department of Energy Reschedules Yucca Mountain Hearings

Abraham Outlines Changes in Letter To Senators Reid And Ensign

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham has rescheduled the public hearings on Yucca Mountain issues from Monday, September 24 to Wednesday, October 10 for Amargosa Valley and Friday, October 12 for Pahrump, Nevada.

Following is the text of the Secretary's letter sent to Senators Ensign and Reid:

Dear Senator:

As you know, on September 11, the U.S. Department of Energy postponed public hearings on issues involving Yucca Mountain, Nevada, and on other issues around the country due to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. However, as President Bush made clear, our Government does not intend to allow the terrorists to keep us from conducting the business of the American people.

Thus, after determining that public authorities in Nevada were conducting public business and that other events - such as large sporting events - were going to take place during the week of September 24, and consistent with the Department's decision to conduct public hearings on other issues around the country during that week, we determined that it was appropriate to reschedule the postponed hearings for the same week.

However, in light of your strong recommendation to postpone these hearings to a later date, I have directed the Department to reschedule the hearings for Wednesday, October 10, 2001, at the Longstreet Inn & Casino in Amargosa Valley from 3 to 9 PM; and on Friday, October 12, 2001, at the Bob Ruud Community Center in Pahrump from 3 to 9 PM. Poster sessions will begin at each location at 2 PM.

As I recently noted, I have announced a public review and comment process for Yucca Mountain that goes well beyond both that which is required by law and that which had been planned prior to this Administration's taking office. I intend to continue to take steps

that will ensure fair and impartial judgment and allow the public reasonable opportunities to comment.

Finally, I should note that I recently extended the comment period an additional 15 days. As the Pahrump and Amargosa Valley hearings are now scheduled to be held beyond the closure date of the extended comment period, I believe it will be necessary to extend the comment period again to ensure that those wishing to provide comments at the hearings are accommodated. Once the Department has addressed that issue, I will forward that information to you and to the citizens of Nevada.

*Sincerely,
Spencer Abraham*

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