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October 30, 2006

Mr. Edward Sproat, Director
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U. S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D. C. 20585

Dear Mr. Sproat,

The Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada is a coalition of some forty nonprofit groups whose concern is social, economic, and environmental justice, not only for Nevadans, but for all people. The proposed "Mina Corridor" rail line to the yet-to-be-approved Yucca Mountain facility creates monumental problems in all three of our interest areas. PLAN vigorously opposes the project as described, and we object to the hearing process outlined in your public notices of Friday, October 13, 2006.

The Mina Corridor plan represents grave risks to people in highly populated areas in Utah, Nevada, and California. It would endanger the ways of life of those people, putting them at risk both environmentally and economically. The damage to daily life, tourism, and general quality of life are incalculable, especially since the Mina Corridor project has been so recently developed and clearly does not have the benefit of in-depth scientific and economic research.

The objection of PLAN is not simply to moving the rail line "closer to home." We recognize the inherent dangers of shipping nuclear waste anywhere in the country. We are, of course, particularly concerned about shipping wastes by rail to Yucca Mountain, where, despite efforts to manipulate science and nuclear half lives, clear evidence of multi-millennium safe handling of materials has not and may never be established.

In the case of the Mina Corridor project, the hearings are rushed and do not give citizens and public agencies an adequate period of time to research and prepare commentary.

If the hearings take place, the period of comment must be extended. The time allowed for public commentary should be at least the equivalent of the planning period given by the DOE into preparing the Mina Corridor alternative. Moreover, scoping meetings must be held in all major cities likely to be affected by the project, directly or indirectly, including Reno, Elko, Winnemucca, Battle Mountain, Lovelock, Carson City, and Las Vegas, Nevada; Salt Lake City and St. George, Utah; Sacramento, California and its urban and suburban population centers.

The DOE has not earned the public trust in Nevada and neighboring areas, because it has succumbed to political and commercial pressures in trying to hasten approval for Yucca Mountain. With the Mina Corridor proposal there is an opportunity for the DOE to regain some credibility, to provide full and open disclosure of the routes and safety hazards, and to give the public ample opportunity to study the proposal and voice legitimate objections.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Fulkerson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bob Fulkerson
State Executive Director

copies:

President George Bush
Senator Harry Reid
Senator John Ensign
Congressman Jim Gibbons
Congresswoman Shelly Berkeley
Congressman John Porter
Governor Kenny Guinn
Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor Jon Huntsman
Nevada Media