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Abraham Praises House of Representatives' Overwhelming Bipartisan Support of Yucca Mountain

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham praised the House of Representatives today for its overwhelming statement of bipartisan support for the development of Yucca Mountain as the nation's permanent nuclear waste repository.

"By approving this resolution, the House of Representatives has overridden the state of Nevada's disapproval of the development of the nation's nuclear waste repository at the Yucca Mountain site," Abraham said. "This vote indicates that the House overwhelmingly agrees that the final determination on whether the site meets established and stringent regulatory requirements should be made by the independent experts at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). I believe that it does, and I believe the NRC will ultimately approve Yucca Mountain."

"America's national, energy and homeland security, as well as environmental protection is well served by siting a single nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, rather than having nuclear waste stranded in temporary storage locations at 131 sites in 39 states," Abraham said.

"It is now up to the Senate to reject Nevada's veto and certainly the Senate will take note of the overwhelming bipartisan support the Yucca Mountain project has received in the House."

"Nothing that the opponents of Yucca Mountain have presented, including baseless allegations regarding the transportation of nuclear waste, rises to the burden of proof that requires Congress to stop the process before a thorough review of the site is conducted by the independent experts at the NRC," he said.

The federal government has safely transported nuclear waste for more than 30 years and more than 1.6 million miles without ever having a harmful release of radiation. Currently, more than 161 million people live within 75 miles of a nuclear waste storage site.

"I urge the Senate to quickly approve our recommendation so that the NRC can make the final determination on the site's suitability to serve as a repository," Abraham concluded.

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