

An aerial photograph of a desert landscape, likely the Mojave Desert, showing a winding road through a valley with rolling hills and mountains in the distance. The text is overlaid on this image.

Impact of Nuclear Waste Policy on the Prospects for Building New Nuclear Plants

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**House Committee on Energy &
Commerce**

Yucca Mountain

- **Repository redesign**
- **Radiation standard**
- **License application**
- **Commencement of operations**
- **Capacity limit**
- **Need for a second repository**



GNEP

- **Reduce volume, heat load, long-lived radioactivity**
- **No need for a second repository?**
- **Time to deployment?**
- **Cost?**



Waste Confidence Rule

“...to assess generically the degree of assurance now available that radioactive waste can be safely disposed of, to determine when such disposal or off-site storage will be available, and to determine whether radioactive wastes can be safely stored on-site past expiration of existing facility licenses until off-site disposal or storage is available.”

– Original rulemaking October 25, 1979



Waste Confidence Rule

- **Safe repository feasible**
- **At least one repository by 2025**
- **Sufficient capacity expected within 30 years of plant closure**

Standard Contracts

“The Commission shall not issue or renew a license...unless...such person has entered into a contract with the Secretary under this section; or the Secretary affirms in writing that such person is actively and in good faith negotiating with the Secretary...”

– Nuclear Waste Policy Act, Section 302 (b):

Standard Contract Litigation

- **DOE obligation to begin accepting spent fuel: January 31, 1998**
- **DOE paid out over \$141M for last 2 years**
- **Over 60 lawsuits ongoing**
- **DOE estimates liability of \$500M/year for commercial spent fuel**