

From:
To: [Legal and Constitutional, Committee \(SEN\);](#)
Subject: Submission to Senate Inquiry
Date: Friday, 5 March 2010 10:11:21 AM

Dear Honorable Members

I am writing to express my opposition the proposal to create a nuclear waste dump at Muckaty Station at Tennant Creek. I would urge you to take the following points into consideration:

1. The Committee must travel to Muckaty

It is essential that the Senate Committee pay due respects to the Traditional Owners on the front line, by travelling to Tennant Creek to take evidence from them directly. As the persons living in closest proximity to toxic waste their views must have prime consideration.

2. The case for a remote dump has never been made

The radioactive waste management debate in Australia has never looked at options other than remote waste dumps on Aboriginal land. The industry has never made the case that a remote shed is the best place for this material. Other alternatives exist and must be seriously debated and considered in the most transparent manner possible before any final decision is reached.

3. This bill is highly coercive

In choosing a site, the proposed bill overrides all relevant state and territory legislation as well as overriding commonwealth environmental and Aboriginal heritage protections. It also overrides private property rights of affected individuals with regards the dump site or its access route. Once a site is chosen, it will be assessed under commonwealth environmental legislation which has almost no mechanisms for preventing the project from going ahead. As noted above, full and frank consultation with the Traditional Owners is necessary if this proposal is to have any real credibility with the wider Australian public.

4. All discretion in the hands of the Minister

The Bill places enormous power in the hands of the Minister to assess whether or not the Muckaty site should go ahead. No information is given to how this assessment will be carried out, and the bill makes it clear that local people have no right of appeal. Once again, this rides roughshod over the rights of the local indigenous peoples, at a time when the country as a whole should be moving in the opposite direction, towards genuine reconciliation,

rather than treating the lands of indigenous peoples as, in effect, garbage dumps.

5. We must do better than this

Nuclear waste should be moved as little as possible, and should be stored above ground close to the point of production, close to centres of nuclear expertise and infrastructure. The technology exists to do this safely and this should be the option that is pursued.

Sincerely

Nick Rose