

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
Department of the Senate P O Box 6100 Parliament House Canberra ACT
2600

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Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to support Senator Ludlam's Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management (Repeal and Consequential Amendment) Bill.

My main objections to the current legislation are:

1. The selection of sites for consideration for storage of radioactive waste should be based on safety. The geology and water tables are of prime importance. Transport should be kept to a minimum.

Hence the nomination of sites in the Northern Territory which were not previously recommended as suitable sites, and whose remoteness would entail long transport distances is bad policy. The current legislation puts politics before safety.

2. Respect for Aboriginal Land Rights is greatly diminished. The negotiation process has been shown to be problematic. It seems that the opportunity for remuneration or compensation for land may appeal to some, but definitely not to all, and very long term risks to country need to be considered.

Assurances have been given by ANSTO that the waste would be ³only² low level or intermediate level radioactivity and there is no risk to the environment.

The question remains - if this is the case, why the need for a remote facility?

I am also very concerned that a nuclear waste dump for waste originating in Australia will open the door to acceptance of waste originating in other countries.

My fear is that commercial interests will then override the safety issues, and indeed that the dump could and/or would be used to store high level waste. Given the possible temptation to future governments to make a lot of money from accepting high level waste from overseas nuclear power stations, the safety aspect of any site selected becomes even more critical.

Yours sincerely
Mandy Webb