

The Chair  
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts  
Committee

Dear Sir/Madam

**Response into the Inquiry into the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste  
Management Bill (Repeal and Consequential Amendment) Bill**

I understand the Federal Government is considering the repeal of the existing Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill and I wish to make the following comments.

I believe Australia needs a National Radioactive Waste Repository. Radioactive waste can be stored and transported safely and is something that happens all over the world.

Australia needs a National Waste Repository – not a dump which is a term deliberately used by the ‘anti-nuke anything’ brigade including parts of the media to discredit the proposal.

All the states unfortunately suffer from the NIMBY disease and are not prepared to withstand the political ramifications of supporting a repository instead of doing something for the benefit of Australia.

The Federal Government had no other option but to look at the Territory as a possible site.

The NT Labor Government opposed the idea of a waste depository and introduced its own legislation to try and stop the Federal Government. This was another case of NIMBY not based on science but political expediency.

I don't particularly like the Federal Government overriding NT legislation but if something is being done which will benefit our nation then I will support it. I have visited the Lucas Heights Research Station twice and have seen the importance of this facility to Australia from a medical, industrial, environmental, and research point of view.

The Territory Government Legislation showed that the NT Government was only thinking of itself not the Territory and certainly not the nation.

I have visited Muckaty Station which is a site that the real traditional owners gave permission as a possible site for the waste. It seems now that the anti-nuke lobby have tried to manipulate other aboriginal groups to oppose this but they will do anything to make sure the repository doesn't happen – science is irrelevant – the national interest is irrelevant.

I would urge the committee to visit the Muckaty Site and see how far away it is from any major population centre.

I would urge the committee to recommend that the present Federal legislation be retained until the NT Government can agree to introduce similar legislation.

The need for a National Radioactive Waste Facility is paramount. Someone has to take some leadership and do something. It would be better that all Governments grew up and decided on an agreed site. Until that happens it seems that the only place for the site is in the Territory and that means upsetting the NT Government and a few anti-nuke fanatics so be it.

As I said before, I don't like the NT Government overriding our legislation but sometimes Australia comes first.

Gerry Wood MLA  
31/10/08