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AMERICA'S NUCLEAR SOLUTION

BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON AMERICA'S NUCLEAR FUTURE

The Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future (the Commission) was established in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and directed by the President's Memorandum to the Secretary of Energy dated January 29, 2010. The Commission was charged with examining used nuclear fuel management policies and recommending a plan. The Commission's complete report was submitted in January 2012.

The Commission's deliberations resulted in eight recommendations. Chief among those are the recommendations to develop one or more interim consolidated used fuel storage facilities located at consent-based sites.

The Commission's report also clearly states that the success of a revitalized nuclear waste management program would depend on making the revenue in the Nuclear Waste Fund available when needed and in the amounts needed to implement an interim consolidated used nuclear program.

The Commission concluded that an interim consolidated used nuclear fuel plan is a critical element of an integrated national waste management system.

Such consolidated storage is beneficial, according to the Commission, because it provides benefits such as allowing the fuel to cool and it keeps options open for the staged development of the longer term disposal facility. A consolidated storage facility would allow the government to immediately centralize fuel that is currently stored at many shutdown nuclear power plants.

WHAT IS CONSENT-BASED SITING?

By this, the Commission meant facilities should be sited where all affected units of government, including the host state or tribe, regional and local authorities, and the host community, are willing to accept a facility. The Commission emphasized that a consultative process would work only when transparency, flexibility, patience, responsiveness, and a heavy emphasis on consultation and cooperation are applied not just to siting, but also to every aspect of program implementation.

WHAT IS THE NUCLEAR WASTE FUND?

Congress established the Nuclear Waste Fund in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. Collections began the following year. The goal was to ensure consumers of nuclear power contributed funds during the active lives of the reactors to cover long-term liabilities that would at least in part occur after the operating lives of the reactors were over. In return for a 0.1 cent fee on each kWh of nuclear-generated electricity, the federal government would take care of building, siting, and managing a permanent repository for used nuclear fuel.

Since efforts to build a permanent repository have stalled, the Commission is recommending these funds be used to implement an interim consolidated used fuel management plan. This would require amending the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

To read the complete Blue Ribbon Commission Report on Nuclear Waste go to www.WCSstorage.com

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