



# Sustainable Fuel Cycle

## TASK FORCE

www.sustainablefuelcycle.com

### Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force Science Panel

September 16, 2010

Dear Secretary Chu:

On behalf of the Sustainable Fuel Cycle Task Force (SFCTF) Science Panel, we are writing to express our disappointment and frustration at the apparently careless handling recently of the scientific records accumulated during the 25 years of investigation at Yucca Mountain.

These records, developed at public expense, have enormous value to future scientific research in the field of nuclear waste disposal and transportation. It is imperative that these records be kept available in some systematic fashion to researchers in this scientific field.

The abrupt discontinuance of the web site portals and ready electronic access to the information in these scientific reports to researchers, both internal and external to the Department of Energy and its contractors, violates the principles of scientific openness and transparency that President Obama and you have espoused in the past.

While there may be policy reasons for DOE's decision to terminate the Yucca Mountain program, it is clear that the nation must still seek a viable program to manage spent fuel and nuclear waste for many years to come. Whatever this program, free and open access for all to the scientific documents that have been developed over the last 25 years is an essential part of the scientific enquiry essential to development of a viable solution. The public deserves nothing less. Placing the records in boxes in a warehouse somewhere is not sufficient. The abrupt and total discontinuance of the previous electronic access systems has essentially destroyed the information by making it virtually inaccessible.

We respectfully request that this system be re-established without delay to allow full and ready electronic access to these records. This is not an expensive step and would facilitate future research by our national laboratories and academic institutions.

We firmly believe that free, open and transparent access to this scientific information by anyone interested in it is essential to development of an effective waste disposal program for the future.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Charles Fairhurst, Ph.D.

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