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JAMIE RASKIN
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
8TH DISTRICT, MARYLAND

July 3, 2020

The Honorable Kristine L. Svinicki
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop O-16 B33
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Svinicki:

In light of the escalating national public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic, I urge the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to further extend the public comment periods for two proposals: the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Holtec's proposed consolidated interim storage facility (CISF) for spent nuclear fuel in Southeast New Mexico (NRC-2018-0052) and Interim Storage Partners LLC's proposed CISF for spent nuclear fuel in Andrews County, Texas (NRC-2016-0231).

The American people face unprecedented challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses and nonprofit organizations have closed down, 45 million people have filed for unemployment, 2.7 million people have tested positive for the virus, and 123,000 people in our country have died from the virus. Despite the enormous disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, the Commission has only taken small steps to protect the public's legal right to participate in the NRC's administrative process.

As you know the two proposed CISFs referenced above would store 173,600 metric tons, and 40,000 metric tons, respectively, of irradiated nuclear fuel and other high-level radioactive waste. While any proposal to store and transport spent nuclear fuel raises serious public health, safety, and environmental issues, the magnitude and associated risks of these two projects requires that the Commission go to extraordinary lengths to ensure that a robust public participation process takes place.

Accordingly, I strongly urge the Commission to extend both public comment periods throughout the duration of the pandemic, and close them no sooner than six months after this FEMA-declared emergency has passed.

During this difficult time, the health and well-being of the American people must come first. The Commission must ensure it protects the public's right to participate in the operations of their government while it continues to comply with statutory and judicial requirements during this national emergency. I urge you to take the actions stated in this letter to maintain public faith that

the proposed consolidated interim storage facilities in New Mexico and Texas are being thoroughly considered.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jamie Raskin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of "Jamie" being a large, stylized "J".

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress