

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 2, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
The Capitol, S-128
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Energy and Water Development
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

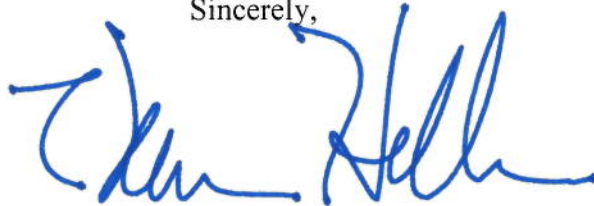
Dear Chairmen Shelby and Alexander:

I write today to thank you for not including funding to restart licensing activities at the proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository in the Senate version of H.R.5895, the Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2019, and I respectfully request you retain the Senate position of no funding for Yucca Mountain in the final conference report. As you know, despite the Senate's continuous refusal to fund this fiscally reckless and ill-considered proposal, the House of Representatives included in its version of H.R.5895 nearly \$268 million in funding for Yucca Mountain, which is \$100 million over the Administration's fiscal year 2019 budget request. Thankfully, however, under your leadership, Yucca Mountain has not been funded, and I would ask that you please maintain your consistent record in opposition to Yucca throughout the conference negotiations.

As I have previously stated to you both, I firmly believe that together we can find a path forward on addressing our nation's long-term nuclear waste problem. To me, safe and responsible storage of high-level nuclear waste remains one of our nation's most critically important issues – not only in terms of diversifying our energy portfolio but also with respect to honoring the will of Nevada, and respecting the rights of all states to have the ability to object to storing high-level nuclear waste. However, although we can all recognize that nuclear power is a necessary part of a stable and secure all-of-the-above energy strategy, we must also acknowledge our nation cannot progress toward achieving viable and sustainable solutions for storing the byproducts of this power generation without first moving past Yucca Mountain. Our nuclear waste storage needs do not outweigh the rights of states to have a say in the matter, and that is why I am ready to work with you to implement consent-based siting. Consent-based siting provides a viable means of addressing our nation's nuclear waste problem while respecting the sovereignty of states to object to becoming a nuclear waste dump. In addition to these sovereignty concerns, Yucca Mountain poses significant health and safety risks and potentially catastrophic financial risks that must be addressed before – and not after – the proposal moves forward should it move forward at all.

For these reasons, I continue to stand with the State of Nevada in its strong opposition to restarting licensing activities at the Yucca Mountain repository. I strongly urge you to retain the Senate position of not funding Yucca Mountain in the final conference report, and I once again call on you to dedicate resources to the Department of Energy's consent-based siting initiative for the storage and disposal of nuclear waste. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dean Heller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dean" and the last name "Heller" clearly distinguishable.

DEAN HELLER
U.S. Senator