



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
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June 18, 2015

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
Chair, Environment and Public Works Committee
205 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510 -3603

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Ranking Member, Environment and Public Works Committee
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair, Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety
513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: *Support for Several Bills to Increase Safety at Nuclear Plants and
Decommissioned Sites***

Dear Senators Inhofe, Boxer, Capito, and Carper:

I write to express my strong support for ongoing efforts, led by Senator Edward Markey, to improve the security and safety of spent nuclear fuel storage through the reintroduction of three pieces of legislation: the Safe and Secure Decommissioning Act of 2015 (S. 944), the Nuclear Plant Decommissioning Act of 2015 (S. 964), and the Dry Cask Storage Act of 2015 (S. 945).

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has long had an obligation to develop meaningful long-term solutions to the current on-site storage of nuclear waste in facilities across the country, yet it has failed to do so. Its failure to act poses risks to public safety and the

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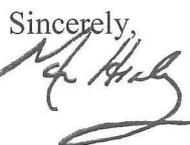
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environment. Since 2006, the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office has urged the NRC to address these risks. Most recently, in *New York v. NRC*, D.C. Cir. No. 14-1210, the Commonwealth intends to challenge the NRC's deficient analysis of the potential environmental impacts of its indefinite spent-nuclear fuel storage scenario.

More than 40 years after the federal government licensed the Pilgrim nuclear power plant in Plymouth, MA and the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon, VT (located less than ten miles from the Massachusetts border), a permanent nuclear waste repository remains out of reach. It is unacceptable.

While we are hopeful that the federal government will fulfill its obligations to provide a long-term storage solution, the absence of a long-term solution has created issues for states and their residents that need to be addressed now. In particular, we must ensure that proper security is in place at decommissioned plants where spent fuel is stored, that all spent fuel rods are transferred from wet pools to safer dry cask storage, and that we improve transparency and enhance opportunities for public participation in the decommissioning and planning process for retiring plants. Senate bills 994, 964 and 945 effectively address all three of these critical issues.

My office stands ready to support efforts in advancing these important public policy goals. We also will continue to urge the federal government to live up to its obligation to develop the long-term storage solution to spent nuclear waste at the Pilgrim facility, as it should have done years ago.

Sincerely,


Maura Healey

cc: The Honorable Edward Markey