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**Heller on President’s Budget: It’s Anti-Nevada**

***Budget Includes Funding for Yucca Mountain, Cuts To Public Lands Programs***

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) today criticized the President’s budget request to Congress as “anti-Nevada” for its inclusion of $120 million in funding for the Department of Energy (DOE) to restart licensing activities for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository as well as its proposed cuts to important public land programs in Nevada, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program and the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act’s (SNPLMA) program. Additionally, Heller is concerned about the budget’s $800 billion in cuts to Medicaid and its impact on Nevada’s budget and the more than 200,000 Nevadans who now have health care because of Nevada’s decision to expand Medicaid.

“From slashing funding for important public lands programs to its renewed effort to revive the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository, the President’s budget request contains several anti-Nevada provisions,” **said Heller.** “While Congress ultimately has the power of the purse, I will continue to stand up for Nevada’s priorities by defending our important public lands programs and fighting any effort to turn Nevada into the nation’s nuclear waste dump. Yucca Mountain is dead; it’s a failed proposal that has already wasted billions of taxpayer dollars and is overwhelmingly rejected by Nevadans. It’s time the Administration move on from the Yucca debate and turn its focus to a viable solution to the country’s nuclear waste problem.”

Over the past decade, Heller has successfully led the charge against efforts to revive Yucca Mountain. After the Administration released its “skinny budget” which signaled it would prioritize funding to restart the licensing activities at Yucca Mountain, Heller [consistently urged the Administration to drop its failed Yucca proposal](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=F00C6518-78A4-475B-9548-0D89EA5370E6). In addition to his discussions with the Administration, Heller [testified](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=B6E5E92F-B192-4670-8DC8-44B025E09B84) before the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and encouraged the committee to move beyond the failed Yucca Mountain project, citing that it has already wasted billions of taxpayer dollars and lacks support from Nevadans, the Nevada delegation, and Governor Brian Sandoval. In speeches, Heller highlighted [the dangers of transporting nuclear waste from nuclear power plants around the country to Yucca Mountain](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=AF7361C6-9C4E-4573-A18C-D63A21893090) and the [crippling effect Yucca Mountain could have on Nevada’s economy](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=04606523-8B61-47B1-B9DB-F9F0B21A77FA). Heller also continues to advocate for a viable solution to the nuclear waste problem, including his bipartisan legislation, the [Nuclear Waste Informed Consent Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=0a660176-afb7-427d-a988-62918b702c6a). This legislation permits the construction of a nuclear waste repository only if the Secretary of Energy receives written consent from the governor of the host state, affected local officials, and affected Indian tribes. Under Heller’s legislation, state’s like Nevada that do not want to store spent nuclear waste will not be forced to do so by the federal government.

In addition to pushing back against the Yucca Mountain proposal, Heller has pressed the Administration to provide funding for critical Nevada programs. Earlier in May, Heller [urged the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to permanently authorize and fully fund the PILT program](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ContentRecord_id=A3BD38B7-3B18-440A-BD3E-A7B242BB304F) and discussed the benefits it provides to each of Nevada’s 17 counties. Last month, Heller contacted Department of the Interior Secretary (DOI) Ryan Zinke and Senate Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Lisa Murkowski and Ranking Member Tom Udall to [express his strong concern that there would be an effort to gut the SNPLMA program](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=99ED6415-4D50-4234-B12C-444467119C8E). Enacted in 1998, SNPLMA is a program that allows the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to sell public land within a specific boundary around Las Vegas, Nevada, and the revenue generated by those sales are invested in important projects that range from wildlife restoration to infrastructure development in Nevada.

**Heller added**, “The President’s budget request is just one component of the budget process, and Nevadans can rest assured that I’m committed to fighting for our local priorities as the budget debate continues.”

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