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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** Megan Taylor |
| April 13, 2017 | 202-224-6244 |

**Heller to Colleagues: Abandon Yucca, Focus on Long-Term Strategy to Nuclear Waste** *Nevada Will Not Be The Nation’s Nuclear Waste Dump***Washington, D.C.** – Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) is asking key members of the Senate Appropriations Committee to abandon any efforts to revive Yucca Mountain, and instead focus on programs that would provide sustainable long-term strategies to address the country’s nuclear waste problem. The Senate Appropriations Committee will play a pivotal role in allocating federal funding for federal agencies for the remainder of this fiscal year and future fiscal years. Heller is continuing to fight any renewed efforts by this Administration to bring nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain. ***The letter reads in full***:Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Subcommittee Chairman Alexander, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Feinstein:As you finalize legislation to continue funding for the Fiscal Year 2017, I respectfully request that you honor the wishes of the State of Nevada and exclude any funding focused on licensing a nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain from that proposal.  Instead, I urge the committee to prioritize funding for this fiscal year and future fiscal years for the Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) efforts to advance alternative long-term storage options for our nation’s spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste.  As you know, Yucca Mountain is located 80 miles northwest of the Las Vegas Valley.  Nevada has been navigating through the bureaucratic red tape of this mismanaged project for decades.  This project was ill-conceived from the beginning and has already flushed billions of taxpayer dollars down the drain.  I have consistently opposed making Nevada our nation’s nuclear waste dump and encourage you to listen to and respect the rights of Nevadans on this issue.   I appreciate the need to address the problem of spent nuclear fuel and am committed to working with my colleagues on this issue, but believe it must be solved through careful consideration of all alternatives.  To this end, I support consent-based siting to site nuclear waste storage and disposal facilities.  Identifying communities willing to host a long-term repository, rather than forcing it upon states that have outright opposed such a site, is the only viable long-term solution to our nation’s nuclear waste problem.  At a time when Congress should be looking to prioritize federal funding for the rest of the fiscal year, I respectfully request that no funds be appropriated for this failed project.  I stand ready to work with you and the committee on efforts related to consent-based siting and finding a viable, fiscally responsible solution to this issue.  Sincerely,DEAN HELLERUnited States Senator ###cid:image002.png@01D2A958.8799B760cid:image003.png@01D2A958.8799B760cid:image004.png@01D2A958.8799B760 |