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| **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** Megan Taylor |
| April 27, 2017 | 202-224-6244 |

**Heller on Secretary Perry’s Support for Yucca: Nevada Will Not Serve as Nation’s Nuclear Waste Dump****Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) reaffirmed his staunch opposition to relicensing the Yucca Mountain nuclear repository to Department of Energy Secretary Rick Perry in response to his [letter](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/83827855-2262-4301-ac3d-94bf4cc0265d/EXEC-2017-001961.pdf) of support for the project, which was submitted to the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment. Secretary Perry’s letter can be found [here](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/83827855-2262-4301-ac3d-94bf4cc0265d/EXEC-2017-001961.pdf). Yesterday, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment held a [hearing](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos) on legislation to revive Yucca Mountain and Heller served as the subcommittee’s first witness. [Heller testified](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos) that the project has already wasted billions of taxpayer dollars and lacks support from Nevadans, the Nevada delegation, and Governor Brian Sandoval. He encouraged the consideration of his bipartisan legislation, the [Nuclear Waste Informed Consent Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=5D20600D-88C2-4BBE-9E9D-4A23006D0264). Ahead of the hearing, Heller [urged Chairman John Shimkus (IL-15) to work with him toward a viable solution for nuclear waste](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=664F98E6-39D8-4F97-B5AE-F778DFAE6E3F), and made it clear to Energy Secretary Rick Perry that a nuclear waste repository in Nevada is not the solution.   Heller’s testimony before the subcommittee can be viewed [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rB6lY3zgC7Y&feature=youtu.be), and his letter to Secretary Perry is below.  **The letter to Secretary Perry reads in full**: The Honorable James Richard “Rick” PerrySecretary of EnergyU.S. Department of Energy1000 Independence Avenue, S.W.Washington D.C. 20585 Dear Secretary Perry:   I write to express my deep concern and disappointment with your April 25, 2017, letter to Chairman Shimkus of the House of Representatives’ Energy and Commerce Committee Environment Subcommittee regarding nuclear waste management.  In your letter, you explicitly express support for resuming the licensing process for a Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository despite previously assuring me that you would look at all viable options. While we agree that it is the best interest of our nation that we develop a program to dispose of and store spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste, Yucca Mountain is not the solution.  This is something that we discussed in your confirmation meeting with me, and I stand by my words that our nation cannot move toward finding a real solution without moving past this failed proposal.  In the effort of restating my position on this issue, let me reiterate that Yucca Mountain is dead. I respectfully encourage you to move past failed efforts of past Administrations to license Yucca Mountain and partner with me on identifying viable alternatives for the long-term storage of nuclear waste in areas that are willing to house it.  In fact, this is an approach previously supported by your agency.  As you know, in 2005, the Department of Energy began a consent-based siting initiative to site nuclear waste storage and disposal facilities. This initiative was the result of the Blue Ribbon Commission on America’s Nuclear Future, a 15-member, bipartisan group tasked with studying waste disposal.  This open process ensures all Americans have a meaningful voice in the process if their community is being considered for a future nuclear waste repository.  Rather than attempting to force the failed Yucca Mountain proposal on Nevadans, U.S. taxpayers’ dollars would be better spent on further implementing your agency’s past efforts on consent-based siting.  This worthwhile initiative will ensure that no state will be forced to accept nuclear waste against its own will.  In your letter, you specifically mention that you owe the American people a long-term solution.  Well I owe Nevadans the assurance that the Silver State will not serve as our nation’s nuclear waste dump.  I stand with the State of Nevada on its staunch opposition to any attempt to restart the repository licensing process, and I strongly urge you to reconsider your position on this issue. Thank you for your attention to this important request.   Sincerely,  DEAN HELLERU.S. Senator ###cid:image002.png@01D2A958.8799B760cid:image003.png@01D2A958.8799B760cid:image004.png@01D2A958.8799B760 |