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**ICYMI: Heller Again Keeps Funding for Yucca Mountain Out of Bipartisan Appropriations Signed Into Law**

**WASHINGTON** – On Friday, President Donald J. Trump signed into law the conference agreement on the Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs appropriations bill, legislation that excluded funding to revive Yucca Mountain thanks to the work of U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV). While the original version of the bill approved by the U.S. House of Representatives included nearly $268 million in funding for Yucca Mountain, $100 million more than what was requested in the DOE’s budget, [Heller worked closely with the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee to keep that funding out of the U.S. Senate’s version of the bill](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/6/u-s-senate-passes-heller-measures-to-help-nevada-s-veterans-strengthen-nevada-s-water-security). Heller has consistently prevented the inclusion of funding for Yucca Mountain in several pieces of legislation in the U.S. Senate, and successfully kept funding out of the recent U.S Senate- and U.S. House of Representatives-passed conference agreement on the appropriations package that the President signed last week.

During negotiations of the final conference report, Heller urged U.S. Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby (R-AL) and U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) to maintain the [U.S. Senate’s position in the reconciled version of the spending bill](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2018/6/u-s-senate-passes-heller-measures-to-help-nevada-s-veterans-strengthen-nevada-s-water-security). That letter is available [HERE](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/30db6296-34b6-4fa6-b337-89892cdf290c/Heller%20Letter%20to%20Shelby%20and%20Alexander%20Re%20Yucca%20in%20Conference.pdf). Heller also stopped the U.S. House of Representatives efforts to advance funding that would restart the licensing process at Yucca Mountain [last year](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=691E36A0-8C66-4C9F-B730-01AACAEA879A).

“Time and time again, the U.S. House of Representatives has attempted to toss Nevada a nuclear football,” **said Heller**. “And once again, I intercepted their efforts and made sure that not a single dollar was authorized or appropriated for the failed Yucca Mountain project. Nevada continues to reject Yucca Mountain, and that is why I will not allow the U.S. House of Representatives to turn a state that does not even produce nuclear waste into the nation’s nuclear waste dump. Congress should pursue a consent-based siting solution because it’s the only viable path forward.”

Heller is the author of [the Nuclear Waste Informed Consent Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=5D20600D-88C2-4BBE-9E9D-4A23006D0264), bipartisan legislation that 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.

**Additional Background on Heller’s work to stop Yucca Mountain**:

* On July 6, 2018, [Heller contacted U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain (R-AZ) about maintaining the position of not authorizing funding for Yucca Mountain in the final conference report for the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/b837388d-a75b-4334-8cdd-59434e0ac769/Heller%20Letter%20Re%202019%20NDAA%20Conference%20Report.pdf)
* On July 2, 2018, Heller [wrote U.S. Senate Appropriations Chairman Richard Shelby (R-AL) and U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) thanking them for not funding Yucca Mountain in the minibus and urging them not to fund any activities related to Yucca Mountain in the conference report](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/30db6296-34b6-4fa6-b337-89892cdf290c/Heller%20Letter%20to%20Shelby%20and%20Alexander%20Re%20Yucca%20in%20Conference.pdf).
* On April 13, 2018, Heller contacted U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain (R-AZ) and [urged him to exclude any language that authorizes funding for Yucca Mountain from the National Defense Authorization Act](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/d09bdc40-7457-44a1-9828-179b360443a6/04132018%20Heller%20Letter%20Re%202019%20NDAA.pdf).
* On April 13, 2018, Heller urged U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) [not to fund the DOE budget request for $120 million to revive Yucca Mountain](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/92c27acf-2dd3-40a5-827c-9c899f508110/Heller%20Letter%20Re%202019%20Yucca%20Approps.pdf).
* On April 24, 2018, in a [letter submitted to Subcommittee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/61a84717-94bb-4a58-8bd9-b33220938991/04242018%20Heller%20Letter%20Re%202019%20NRC%20Approps.pdf), Heller expressed his strong opposition to funding the NRC and [said he remains staunchly opposed](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=CAD35955-75F3-4D06-BBCF-129FF2831987) to any federal efforts to revive Yucca Mountain.
* On March 21, 2018, [during a U.S. Senate Banking Committee hearing with Office of Management](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLIy7xCdfFY&feature=youtu.be) and Budget (OMB) Director Mick Mulvaney, U.S. Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) highlighted the Administration’s reckless and fiscally irresponsible pursuit of Yucca Mountain, stating that the federal government has already wasted billions of dollars on the project. When asked about alternative solutions to the country’s nuclear waste problem, Director Mulvaney told Heller that he is open-minded to other resolutions and suggested they work together to find one.
* On March 20, 2018, [in a letter](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/e7c73b11-9000-4ebb-9382-8426815ce4ea/03202018%20Heller%20Letter%20to%20Murkowski%20Re%20Yucca%20Budget%20Request%20%28updated%29.pdf)submitted to Chairman Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Heller argued that Yucca Mountain poses numerous health and safety risks to the people of southern Nevada and potentially catastrophic financial risks to the state’s tourism economy. [He urged them not to fund the $120 million to restart the repository licensing process for Yucca Mountain](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=60E8E3B3-90E7-4D35-88F4-F36223C58009).
* On March 20, 2018, Heller discussed DOE’s budget request with Secretary Perry at a U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation hearing. [Heller noted that the $120 million requested to fund licensing activities at Yucca Mountain was denied last year and that it will be denied again this year](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=6098717A-768B-43D4-BE9F-2E467AF68B71).
* On September 26, 2017, Heller [argued that Yucca Mountain is not the solution to our country’s nuclear waste problem in written testimony submitted to the U.S. House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy, and Environment](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=76FF9B6A-5410-4035-BB6B-0D7B300A013F).
* On July 20, 2017, the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee advanced the Senate’s Energy and Water Appropriations bill and [unlike the version that passed the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee, the Senate bill did not include funding for Yucca Mountain](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=691E36A0-8C66-4C9F-B730-01AACAEA879A).
* On July 28, 2017, [the Senate’s Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee advanced a bill that did not include the $120 million requested by the Department of Energy (DOE) to revive Yucca Mountain](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/7/key-senate-panel-excludes-yucca-mountain-from-appropriations-bill).
* On June 21, 2017, [Heller submitted testimony to the U.S. Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=6E1CC11F-3413-4DCE-9E13-632E509919A7)expressing his vehement opposition to the Yucca Mountain proposal.
* On June 20, 2017, Heller [reacted to Secretary Perry’s comments at a U.S. Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee hearing](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=BDB21D33-D4F5-4071-9F0B-BEF1E725D3DC), characterizing them as a “blatant disregard for the state of Nevada.”
* On June 6, 2017, Heller [expressed concern after the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources voted to advance Dan Brouillette’s nomination](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=A13C6633-DE62-4EB3-AC3E-05B360E709EA) for the deputy secretary position at the Department of Energy (DOE), the federal agency that has jurisdiction over the licensing activities at Yucca Mountain.
* On May 26, 2017, Heller [reacted to the Government Accountability Office’s (GAO) report detailing the lengthy and costly Yucca Mountain](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=26BB0F72-082D-4F72-90E9-71F5D1268D01) licensing process.
* On May 25, 2017, Heller [spoke on the U.S. Senate floor and reiterated his concern with the President’s 2018 Fiscal Year budget request that included $120 million to restart the licensing activities for Yucca Mountain](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=05305C55-2A3F-4DD6-8C6B-B5A16A72540F).
* On May 18, 2017, [Heller spoke on the U.S. Senate floor to highlight the threat that Yucca Mountain poses not only to Nevada, but the entire country](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=AF7361C6-9C4E-4573-A18C-D63A21893090).
* On May 12, 2017, [Heller spoke on the U.S. Senate floor to highlight Yucca Mountain’s threat to the Las Vegas economy](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=8029B54A-CD1C-48D3-BABE-7200C312E9AC).
* On April 27, 2017, [Heller reaffirmed his staunch opposition to relicensing the Yucca Mountain nuclear repository to Department of Energy Secretary Rick Perry](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=8A6B346E-5B6A-4442-B1F0-3DC17A960C85).
* On April 26, 2017, [Heller testified before a U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment hearing](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=B6E5E92F-B192-4670-8DC8-44B025E09B84) on legislation to revive Yucca Mountain.
* On March 29, 2017, [Heller urged the Administration to drop its Yucca Mountain proposal](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=F00C6518-78A4-475B-9548-0D89EA5370E6), included in its FY2018 budget request.
* On March 16, 2017, [Heller released a statement on the Administration’s FY2018 budget request](https://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=0133E3F8-7845-46DA-889B-0E8ACC7A094F), which included a proposal to revive Yucca Mountain.

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