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Gov. Sisolak and members of Nevada’s federal delegation send letter to U.S. Dept. of Energy requesting they reexamine the seismic hazards at the Yucca Mountain site

Las Vegas, NV – Today, Governor Sisolak joined all six members of Nevada’s congressional delegation in a letter to Energy Secretary Rick Perry requesting a full reexamination of the seismic hazards at the Yucca Mountain site. The letter explains that the recent California earthquakes underscore concerns first raised by the State of Nevada in 2008.

The letter explains the need for a thorough reassessment of seismic hazards before any further consideration of Yucca Mountain for a nuclear waste repository by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The attached letter from the Nevada State Geologist and the Nevada State Seismologist explain the emerging new understanding in the geotechnical community about the probable relationship between the recent California earthquakes and Yucca Mountain.

The second Ridgecrest earthquake occurred on Friday, July 5, 2019. Governor Sisolak convened a meeting of his top staff and team of state nuclear experts on Monday morning, July 8, to develop a plan for re-evaluating Yucca Mountain earthquake risks. Today’s letter to Secretary Perry grew out of that meeting. The Governor directed his team to include input from Nevada’s earthquake experts at UNR and UNLV and from the congressional delegation.

After reviewing details of the recent earthquakes near Yucca Mountain, Governor Sisolak made the following statement:

“These significant recent earthquakes so near to Yucca Mountain show one of the many geologic problems with the site as a nuclear waste repository and only strengthen my resolve to fight any continued federal effort to use Nevada as the nation’s nuclear dumping ground. I’m proud to join our bipartisan group of federal representatives in once again sending the loud and clear message that Yucca has never been, and will never be, good for Nevada.”
Nevada previously challenged DOE's Yucca Mountain seismic hazards assessment in contentions filed in the NRC licensing proceeding in 2008. Nevada contends that DOE improperly minimized seismic hazards in its license application to the NRC.

The Agency for Nuclear Projects can provide additional information. Please call 775.687.3744 with questions.