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Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee  
Parliament House Canberra ACT

## **Submission Regarding Proposed NT Nuclear Waste Dump**

Whilst I am glad the Federal Government has finally announced that it will repeal the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act as promised, I am greatly disturbed by the proposed replacement legislation, the National Radioactive Waste Management Bill (NRWMB) because this legislation is as unjust and bullying as the bill it replaces.

### **Some of the reasons why I am strongly opposed to the proposed NRWMB include;**

1. The nomination of the Muckaty site does not comply with the Aboriginal Land Rights Act because it was not made with the full and informed consent of all Traditional Owners and affected people. Nomination of the Muckaty site has been substantially challenged so it is essential that the Senate Committee pay proper respects to the Traditional Owners by travelling to Tennant Creek to take evidence from them directly.

2. The NRWMB is clearly unjust and undemocratic because;

It overrides state or territory laws that would hinder site selection.

It eliminates Aboriginal interests and ignores the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984.

It eliminates environmental interests and ignores the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 from the process of choosing a site.

It eliminates the property rights of any individual in the path of the dump or its access corridors. And once a site is chosen, it will be assessed under commonwealth environmental legislation which has almost no mechanisms for preventing the project from going ahead.

3. The Bill places enormous power in the hands of the Minister to assess whether or not the Muckaty site should go ahead. No information is given to how this assessment will be carried out, and the bill makes it clear that local people have no right of appeal.

4. I am not convinced that we need a remote dump;

It makes sense that nuclear waste should be stored above ground close to the point of production and close to centres of nuclear expertise and infrastructure. It should also be moved as little as possible and given that the Lucas Heights nuclear agency ANSTO is by far the biggest single source of the waste and the fact that relevant organisations have acknowledged that ongoing waste storage at Lucas Heights is a viable option, why do we need a remote dump? Also if the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO) are required to store its own waste this is an excellent way of getting ANSTO to focus its attention on the importance of minimizing waste

In conclusion any site selection process should be based on scientific and environmental criteria following proper democratic processes. It seems that the NT has been chosen for purely political reasons. Again this is unjust and undemocratic

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views and I await the outcome with interest

Yours faithfully  
Dawn Jecks