

28 October, 2008

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
Department of the Senate
P Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACTA 2600

VIA FACSIMILE: 02 62775818

Dear Sir or Madam

Senate Inquiry into Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management (Repeal and Consequential Amendment) Bill 2008

This law was introduced by the Howard Government to force a radioactive waste dump on the Northern Territory. Amendments to the law in 2006 allowed the Northern Land Council to nominate Muckaty as an additional site for assessment, even though the majority of Traditional Owners and affected people vehemently are opposed.

The Government must repeal the Bill because:

1. The CRWMA allows the dump to be imposed on the Northern Territory without consultation or consent from Traditional Owners, affected communities or the Northern Territory Government.
2. The CRWMA overrides Northern Territory laws that prohibit transport and storage of these radioactive materials in the Northern Territory.
3. The CRWMA prevents the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Inland Heritage Protection Act 1984 from having effect during investigation of potential dump sites and excludes the Native Title Act 1993 from operating at all.
4. The CRWMA explicitly removes all rights to "procedural fairness" and remove rights of appeal under the Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act.
5. None of the sites currently under assessment for the dump were shortlisted in the national study to find a national radioactive dump site (completed in 1997). The sites in the Northern Territory were clearly chosen for political and not scientific reasons.
6. Labour should not just continue to roll out the Howard government plan to impose a dump on the Northern Territory. Prior to the election, Labour Party politicians called this very legislation "sordid", "shameful" and "arrogant". The Government current stance is similarly "sordid", "shameful and arrogant".

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-2-

7. It is National Labour Party Platform to repeal the CRWMA. Eleven months since the election there has been no indication that this will occur.
8. Senators Kim Carr and Trish Crossin gave clear statements before the election on September 27, 2008 that the ALP would repeal the CRWMA if elected. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd committed to keep all election promises, and this one must also be followed through.

Yours sincerely



LEONIE CHESTER