

Wednesday, November 16, 2005

John Carter

Committee Secretary
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Committee Members,

I write to protest at the proposed radioactive waste dump at Fishers Ridge in Katherine Northern Territory.

I am concerned at the process of which this proposed site has been considered and would like my objections noted as per below reasons.

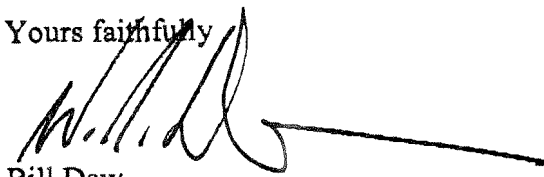
- The federal government earlier gave an "absolute categorical assurance" to the NT that there would be no nuclear dump imposed. This legislation is in complete conflict with this earlier promise
- The Inquiry period is far too short to deal with the complexity of the issues involved and it is insulting that the committee has not bothered to travel to the NT to hear directly from the affected communities
- The claims about the need for the dump in order to maintain access to high quality nuclear medicine are highly contested and not responsible
- There is no clear siting (site) criteria proposed for potential dump sites
- All political parties in the NT are opposed to the imposition of the dump
- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) maintains that such facilities require community consent and a reasonable degree of social license. This legislation is inconsistent with this expectation
- There has been no consultation with the NT government or community, traditional Aboriginal landowners or the many people on the proposed transport routes
- The federal government has failed to make any compelling case for the urgency of this legislation
- This legislation has been criticised by the Senate scrutiny of Bills Committee for its adverse impacts 'on personal rights and liberties'
- The legislation is heavy handed and onerous. It removes the ability of local, territory and state governments to adequately reflect the aspirations of the wider community
- Good public policy is developed through negotiation and inclusion - not imposed by highly contested and restrictive legal and political processes

- The overriding of existing provisions of federal law that could hinder or delay the dump plan is a disturbing precedent that greatly undermines and future community confidence in the Commonwealth's actions on this issue.

As decent Australians we have supported the "War on Terror" and especially the plight of the Iraqi People to have a free and democratic society. The proposed siting of these radioactive waste dumps in the Northern Territory is in direct conflict of our goal for the Iraqi people. Where have our democratic rights gone?

There is a fine line between strong leadership and arrogance, and it would seem that this line is about to be crossed on this issue by a mile.

Yours faithfully



Bill Daw
Alderman - Katherine Town Council