



Mr John Carter,
Secretary Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee.
Suite SG52
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
17 November 2005

Re: Proposal for Nuclear Waste dumping near Katherine, Northern Territory

Dear Mr Carter,

I am writing this letter to strongly question the Senate Government's decision to consider the Katherine Region for a Nuclear Waste Dump. Surely you are aware of the health hazards regarding the possible contamination of the chosen dumping site? How can you consider dumping such dangerous waste in an area prone to flooding and extreme heat, which is above 40°C for most of the year and rising? How can you do this without even consulting the Katherine population or visiting the area? I then bring to question what your department has to do with the passing of this bill as this proposition should surely be handled by someone with environmental qualifications. I can see where you stand with the increase of jobs and population, although I would tend to see the health of everyone concerned first.

The result of putting this reactor in the Katherine region could be the same as in the past with meltdowns that caused contamination across thousands of kilometres. Take for example the Chernobyl disaster in Russia. The Chernobyl disaster, which began with a test being carried out of the reactor's emergency equipment and cooling system, resulted in the spread of radioactive debris across hundreds of kilometres. How can you be positive that an incident like this will not occur in the Katherine Region?

If something did occur then the damages incurred would be horrendous. Thousands of families would be ruined. Millions of dollars would have to be paid for negligence and health care. Would you really want to spend the money to put a reactor in such an unstable place, and risk having to spend more money fixing up what you caused? Wouldn't it be better to get it right the first time. I would like to appeal to you to choose a better site to store the extremely dangerous nuclear waste proposed for the Katherine Region.

Regards,

Rachel Dixon.
Year 11 student, Katherine High School.