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Sent: Friday, 18 November 2005 12:57 PM
To: EET, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Inquiry into Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005

The Chair - Senator Judith Troeth
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee Inquiry into
Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005

I am writing to voice my concern about the lack of real respectful consultation with Australian citizens related to the location and development of a low level nuclear waste storage facility.

There is a distinct disrespect for deliberative democracy in the action of the Federal Government in passing legislation to ensure the rights of NT citizens to engage in debate are stifled, this legislation has been criticised by the Senate Scrutiny of Bills Committee for its adverse impacts 'on personal rights and liberties'.

To date all political parties in the NT are opposed to the imposition of the dump.

Like may I note the federal government has failed to make any compelling case for the urgency of this legislation. Also that there has been no consultation with the NT government or community, traditional Aboriginal landowners or those on the proposed transport routes and the overriding of existing provisions of federal and territory law that could hinder or delay the dump plan is a disturbing precedent that greatly undermines community confidence in the Commonwealth's actions on this issue - and its future intentions. We remember that 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 most affected community. Importantly the claims about the need for the dump in order to maintain access to high quality nuclear medicine are wrong and are contradicted by senior medical professionals including the former head of medical research at the Lucas Heights nuclear facility - Professor Barry Allen and the sites chosen for the NT dump were not selected through any scientific assessment.

We call for real engagement widely across Australia in relation to this issue.

Bonita Moss