



H.R. 3053, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2018

WHY THIS BILL MATTERS:

- Spent nuclear fuel currently sits idle in 121 communities across 39 states because the country lacks a permanent geologic repository.
- To date, electricity ratepayers have paid over \$40 billion to the Department of Energy to site, study, construct, and operate a permanent repository, yet the material remains scattered across the country.
- This inaction has left all American taxpayers liable for more than \$34 billion in payments to nuclear utilities.

BACKGROUND: In 1982 Congress enacted the *Nuclear Waste Policy Act* (NWPA), which formally established a comprehensive nuclear waste management strategy. The NWPA provided the statutory framework that still governs the siting, construction, and operation of a permanent geologic repository to dispose of spent nuclear fuel and nuclear waste today.

The act assigned the Department of Energy (DOE) the responsibility to permanently dispose of used fuel and established a “fee-for-service” funding model in which ratepayers who benefitted from nuclear energy paid the federal government to finance a disposal program. To date, **ratepayers have paid more than \$40 billion** to the Department of Energy, yet the material remains scattered throughout the country.

The NWPA also established a 1998 deadline for the federal government to take title to the spent nuclear fuel for disposal. Because DOE missed this deadline, **American taxpayers are currently liable for over \$34 billion in payments to nuclear utilities**, which continues to escalate every year. These payments come from an unlimited Department of Justice account that is not subject to annual appropriations or budget caps.

On June 28, 2017 the **Energy and Commerce Committee approved the legislation with an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 49-4.**

WHAT THIS BILL WILL DO:

- Assists in the resolution of the pending Yucca Mountain license, which will allow the formal licensing process to determine if the repository can be licensed and constructed;
- Reforms a broken financing mechanism to protect ratepayers and assure DOE has adequate funding to construct and operate a multi-generational infrastructure project;
- Directs DOE move forward with a temporary storage program to consolidate SNF from sites with a decommissioned reactor while work on the Yucca Mountain repository progresses, including the authority to enter into a contract with a non-Federal entity;
- Provides the State of Nevada and local stakeholders the opportunity to beneficially engage with the Federal government as the host State for the repository;
- Protects our nation’s national security priorities by providing the most expeditious pathway to remove “defense-waste” from DOE sites; and,
- Strengthens DOE program management and organization to more effectively implement its nuclear waste program.

For more information visit: energycommerce.house.gov/nwpaa