



NEWS RELEASE

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Nuclear Energy Stakeholders Welcome Blue Ribbon Commission Report to DOE

WASHINGTON, D.C., Jan. 26, 2012—The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition (NWSC), the American Public Power Association (APPA), the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and Edison Electric Institute (EEI) welcome the final report of the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future (BRC) to the Secretary of Energy. After two years of fact-finding and intense study, the commission has officially endorsed a number of strategic used-fuel management initiatives that our members and other experts have long supported and that will reform and re-energize the country's high-level radioactive waste program. The six groups collectively represent state public utility commissions, nuclear energy producers and suppliers, and other public and private organizations interested in used nuclear fuel management.

NARUC, NEI, NWSC, APPA, NRECA and EEI are committed to establishing a sustainable, integrated program to manage used nuclear fuel from commercial reactors that produce carbon-free electricity for one in five American homes and businesses. The commission acknowledges that this program must include safe and secure consolidated storage, transportation, and geologic disposal. We agree with the commission's eight key recommendations, and we believe that three recommendations, in particular, should be given high priority:

- assured access by the nuclear waste management program to the revenues generated by consumers' continuing fee payments and to the balance in the Nuclear Waste Fund
- prompt efforts to develop one or more consolidated interim storage facilities
- a new, congressionally chartered federal corporation dedicated solely to implementing the waste management program and empowered with the authority and resources to succeed.

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If implemented in the near term, they would create a solid foundation on which to build a sustainable used fuel management program while development of a repository is pursued.

The commission recognized that the one-tenth of a cent fee paid by consumers of electricity from nuclear power plants, which totals about \$750 million each year, is effectively unavailable for its intended purpose—to cover the cost of used fuel management and disposal. To resolve this situation and ensure that the consumers' fee payments are used as intended, the commission has outlined near-term actions that we urge the Obama administration to take.

We believe actions can be taken to encourage and achieve consolidated interim storage in a willing host community within the next 10 years, well before a repository could be opened. This facility would permit the federal government to begin meeting its contractual and statutory obligations under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act to remove used reactor fuel from decommissioned and operating nuclear power plants while reducing the taxpayer liabilities associated with the government's delay in accepting used fuel. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) was required to begin accepting used fuel by 1998. We understand that site selection for storage and disposal facilities was not within the scope of the BRC's work. However, we continue to believe that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's review of the DOE's license application for the proposed Yucca Mountain, Nev., repository should be completed to determine whether it is a suitable site.

Creating a new management organization is a priority. It will provide strong and effective leadership for a focused mission of managing used nuclear fuel while better insulating the program from political interference. In addition to safeguarding consumer payments, fixing the funding issues will help ensure that the new organization, when enacted by Congress, will have a sustainable revenue stream to discharge its mission and cover its operating costs.

Nuclear energy is a key component of America's energy mix. The BRC recognizes this with its recommendation for stable, long-term support for advanced reactor and fuel cycle technology development that can help address the energy challenges facing future generations.

Although many of the key BRC recommendations require congressional action to be fully implemented, the Energy Department, under existing authority, can and should take action immediately to advance the recommendations. Our six organizations stand ready to work with the DOE, the administration and Congress to implement the BRC recommendations to advance the nation's economic, energy, environmental and national security imperatives by creating a sustainable integrated used nuclear fuel management program.

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The [National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners](#) is the national association representing the State Public Service Commissioners who regulate essential utility services, including energy, telecommunications, and water. NARUC members are responsible for assuring reliable utility service at fair, just, and reasonable rates.

The [Nuclear Energy Institute](#) is the policy organization for the nuclear technologies industry. NEI's members include all utilities licensed to operate commercial nuclear power plants in the United States, nuclear plant designers, major architect/engineering firms, fuel

fabrication facilities, nuclear material licensees, and other organizations and individuals involved in the nuclear energy industry. For more information on [integrated used nuclear fuel management](#) visit our website.

The [Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition](#) is an ad hoc organization representing the collective interests of state utility regulators, state attorneys general, consumer advocates, electric utilities, and associate members, on nuclear waste policy matters. NWSC's primary focus is to protect ratepayer payments into the Nuclear Waste Fund and to support the removal and ultimate disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste currently stranded at numerous commercial, defense, research, and decommissioned sites in 39 states.

Based in Washington, D.C., [American Public Power Association](#) is the national service organization for the nation's more than 2,000 community- and state-owned not-for-profit electric utilities serving 46 million customers.

The [National Rural Electric Cooperative Association](#) is the national service organization that represents the nation's more than 900 private, not-for-profit, consumer-owned electric cooperatives, which provide service to 42 million people in 47 states.

The [Edison Electric Institute](#) is the association of U.S. Shareholder-Owned Electric Companies. EEI's members serve 95 percent of the ultimate customers in the shareholder-owned segment of the industry, and represent approximately 70 percent of the U.S. electric power industry.