TO: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

ACTION REQUESTED: APPROPRIATE ACTION

DESCRIPTION OF INCOMING:

ID: 488582

MEDIA: LETTER, DATED JUN 05, 2001

TO: PRESIDENT BUSH

FROM: THE HONORABLE OLYMPIA SNOWE
UNITED STATES SENATE
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

SUBJECT: URGES THE PRESIDENT NOT TO REPEAL THE MORATORIUM ON OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION ON THE GEORGES BANK

PROMPT ACTION IS ESSENTIAL — IF REQUIRED ACTION HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN WITHIN 9 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT, PLEASE TELEPHONE THE UNDERSIGNED AT 458-2590.

RETURN CORRESPONDENCE, WORKSHEET AND COPY OF RESPONSE (OR DRAFT) TO:
RECORDS MANAGEMENT, ROOM 72, THE WHITE HOUSE, 20500

OFFICE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT - THE WHITE HOUSE

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
DATE RECEIVED: 06/11/2001

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE OLYMPIA SNOWE

SUBJECT: URGES THE PRESIDENT NOT TO REPEAL THE MORATORIUM ON OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION ON THE GEORGES BANK

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<td>LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS</td>
<td>NICK CALIO</td>
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COMMENTS

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: 0

MEDIA: LETTER

INDIVIDUAL CODES:

REPORT CODES:

USER CODE: 4 SIGNEES

ACTION CODES:
A - APPROPRIATE ACTION
C - COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION
D - DRAFT RESPONSE
F - FURNISH FACT SHEET
I - INFO COPY/NO ACT NECESSARY
R - DIRECT REPLY W/COPY
S - FOR SIGNATURE
X - INTERNAL REPLY

DISPOSITION CODES:
A - ANSWERED
B - NON-SEP/REFERRAL
C - COMPLETED
S - SUSPENDED

OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:
TYPE RESP = INITIALS OF SIGNER
CODE = A
COMPLETED = DATE OF OUTGOING

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT (ROOM 72, OEOB) EXT-52590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTached TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT.

21219

DOE022-0100
June 18, 2001

Dear Olympia:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing your opposition to a proposal that would lift the moratorium on oil and natural gas exploration off of the Georges Bank in the North Atlantic Ocean. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President’s energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Bcc w/ copy for appropriate action: VPTF
For Information: CEQ, DoE

21220
DOE022-0101

 Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
June 18, 2001

Dear Susan:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing your opposition to a proposal that would lift the moratorium on oil and natural gas exploration off of the Georges Bank in the North Atlantic Ocean. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President’s energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Bcc w/ copy for appropriate action: VPTF
For Information: CEQ, DoE
June 18, 2001

Dear Linc:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing your opposition to a proposal that would lift the moratorium on oil and natural gas exploration off of the Georges Bank in the North Atlantic Ocean. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President's energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Lincoln Chafee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Bcc w/ copy for appropriate action: VPTF
For Information: CEQ, DoE

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
June 18, 2001

Dear Judd:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing your opposition to a proposal that would lift the moratorium on oil and natural gas exploration off of the Georges Bank in the North Atlantic Ocean. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President's energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Judd Gregg
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Bcc w/ copy for appropriate action: VPTF
For Information: CEQ, DoE

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
June 18, 2001

Dear Bob:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing your opposition to a proposal that would lift the moratorium on oil and natural gas exploration off of the Georges Bank in the North Atlantic Ocean. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President's energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Bob Smith
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Bcc w/ copy for appropriate action: VPTF
For Information: CEQ, DoE

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
June 5, 2001

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We would like you to be aware of the grave concerns we would have if a proposal were put forth by your Administration to consider lifting the current moratorium on oil and natural gas exploration off of the Georges Bank in the North Atlantic Ocean. Our concern stems from a recent recommendation from a federal advisory panel, the Natural Gas Subcommittee of the Outer Continental Shelf Policy Committee, that, if approved, would direct the Minerals Management Service to collect seismic data to determine the five best prospects for natural gas reserves. The Georges Bank is reported to be one of these prospects.

As you are aware, both the United States and Canada have moratoria on oil and gas exploration until 2012 for the ecologically sensitive Georges Bank. We heartily agree with the moratoria and strongly believe that the moratoria should not be lifted on this 185-mile-long bank that stretches from Nova Scotia to Cape Cod - five-sixths of which is owned by the U.S. This broad, shallow fishing ground is one of the world’s most productive, and current available natural gas reserves in the U.S. dwarf those which are projected to be available on the Georges Bank.

Of note, 89 percent of proven gas reserves, both on and offshore, in the United States are in areas with no restrictions on natural gas drilling. Of onshore reserves alone, 90.7 percent are completely open to drilling and 84 percent of estimated reserves on the Outer Continental Shelf are also unrestricted. We, therefore, do not believe that it is necessary to revisit the moratorium on drilling for natural gas or oil on Georges Bank.

In light of the importance of the Georges Bank fisheries to our commercial and recreational fishermen, and realizing the potentially negative environmental impacts that ocean oil and gas drilling could have on the tourist economies of our coastal communities, we strongly urge you not to repeal the moratorium on oil and gas exploration on the Georges Bank. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

OLYMPIA JASMINO
United States Senator

SUSAN M. COLLINS
United States Senator

21225
DOE022-0106

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
ENERGY TOWN HALLS
NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE
Cheney Pitches Conservation
New Emphasis in Energy Plan

By Dana Milbank
Washington Post; Tuesday, July 17, 2001; Page A01

MONROEVILLE, Pa., July 16 -- Vice President Cheney, who launched the Bush administration's energy initiative with a speech dismissing conservation as a "personal virtue," today tried a new, greener pitch for the embattled proposal.

"Conservation is a must," Cheney pronounced in a speech in Philadelphia delivered by his wife, Lynne, while the vice president, suffering from laryngitis, sat nearby. "We must become much more efficient in energy use. . . . For the country, efficiency helps us make the most of our resources, softens the impact of high prices, and reduces pollution."

As Congress considers scaling back Bush's ambitious plans to boost domestic energy production, and falling fuel prices ease the short-term energy crunch, members of the Bush Cabinet fanned out across the country today to host a series of town hall meetings in hopes of reviving the energy initiative's prospects. The vice president took to the road to sell the administration's energy policy here and in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

His words today capped a shift in emphasis -- though not a change in policy -- from the administration on the topic of energy and the environment. In April, Cheney, who led the committee that drafted the administration's energy plan, traveled to Canada to outline an energy policy dominated by expanded production, labeling conservation a "sign of personal virtue" but not the basis for a "sound, comprehensive energy policy."

Since then, however, the climate has changed dramatically. Cheney's appearances today were part of a Bush administration bid to boost its image on the topic of energy and the environment, which has been battered in recent months. According to last month's Washington Post/ABC News Poll, Americans disapproved of Bush's handling of energy issues by a margin of 58 percent to 37 percent, the president's worst showing on a major issue.

Today, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christine Todd Whitman went to Old Lyme, Conn., in her native Northeast. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham and Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta worked the Midwest, while Commerce Secretary Donald L. Evans made the case in his native South. Interior Secretary Gale A. Norton headed West to Sioux Falls, S.D., where her support for private property rights is more popular.

Bush has offered a diverse collection of proposals to stimulate energy production and encourage efficiency. These include drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, incentives for nuclear power, help for low-income households' energy costs and encouraging renewable and alternative fuels and conservation.

21229

DOE022-0110

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
But little is happening so far in Congress on these plans, and even the administration's GOP allies say the proposal to drill in the wildlife refuge is a nonstarter. The Senate has been slow to act on the energy package; Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) demanded today that the Senate consider the initiative "in a full-blown way" or he would "consider other options," such as a filibuster.

This spring, when the administration unveiled its energy proposal to approval from energy producers and criticism from environmental groups, Bush officials spoke of a nation in an energy crisis. On the horizon were $2 a gallon gas and blackouts on both coasts, they argued.

Instead, the average price of gasoline had fallen to $1.51 as of Friday from $1.76 in mid-May, according to the Lundberg Survey of 8,000 gasoline stations. Natural gas prices have fallen even more sharply. In California, a 10 percent drop in usage, new supplies and federal price controls initially opposed by Bush have prevented blackouts.

Bush today acknowledged the challenge to the proposal from the changing situation. "I think any time there's not an immediate problem that's apparent to people, it's tough to convince people to think long term," Bush told reporters. "But it's clear there are warning signs."

The green lobby was ready for Cheney's visit today. At Cheney's first stop, to address a national gathering of county administrators in Philadelphia, Brett Hulse, a county supervisor from Wisconsin, was waiting to present Cheney with a petition signed by 120 county officials objecting to the Bush energy plan. "Power plant pollution causes 30,000 deaths every year, twice as many as are killed by guns," Hulse said, passing out fliers from "Local Officials for Clean Energy." Along Cheney's motorcade route, a woman held a handmade sign proclaiming "Re-regulate now: keep prices affordable."

Still, the administration may have a chance to persuade the public. A Gallup poll conducted two weeks ago found that 38 percent of respondents support Bush's energy policy, while 32 percent oppose it — largely on grounds that it isn't environmentally friendly enough.

Today, Cheney exuded green. Though he spoke of a need to upgrade and expand the nation's power grid, this was put into a mix that included "diverse sources" of energy, a "balanced approach," and a dismissal of a "false choice between more energy and a safer environment."

After the Philadelphia speech, Cheney flew to western Pennsylvania for a town hall meeting in the Pittsburgh suburb of Monroeville to promote the energy plan before an audience selected by Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge (R).

Cheney called for construction of more refineries and said "nuclear energy makes all the sense in the world" to ease global warming. But he also made a plug for fuel-efficient, hybrid-fuel vehicles and spoke of the need to "protect and enhance the environment."

21230
DOE022-0111

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
Cheney, On The Road, Seeks Support For Energy Program

By JOSEPH KAHN
New York Times; JUL 17, 2001

MONROEVILLE, Pa., July 16 — Vice President Dick Cheney said today that falling fuel prices in no way diminished a need for more domestic energy supplies, arguing that America was becoming overly dependent on foreign oil exporters, some of whom "do not wish us well."

The vice president's comments, at a public meeting in this southwestern Pennsylvania town, were part of the administration's effort to rally support for its energy plan even as the high gasoline and natural gas prices that gave the plan its impetus a few weeks ago continue to ease.

"If we get to the point that we totally rely on foreign sources, we will periodically pay $2, maybe $2.25, for a gallon of gas," Mr. Cheney said. "With prices easing off, we've got some people saying there's no crisis now. But we're increasingly subject to prices set by others."

His comments show how the administration is scrambling to hone a new message to promote its energy priorities in Congress. Lawmakers have so far resisted calls to open new federal lands to oil and gas exploration.

When President Bush unveiled his energy plan in mid-May, gasoline prices were close to $2 a gallon, and California was in the middle of a power emergency marked by repeated blackouts and wholesale electricity prices averaging close to 20 times those that prevailed a year earlier.

The situation is now nearly reversed, with gasoline prices tumbling and California faring far better during the normally peak summer months than analysts expected.

Mr. Bush reflected today on how selling his plan had become harder without the price spikes. Speaking from the Oval Office, he told reporters that people should reflect on long-term energy security, not today's price at the pump.

"I think any time there's not an immediate problem that's apparent to people, it's tough to convince people to think long term," he said.

He said there were still "warning signs" of a crisis, even if supply shortages no longer seemed acute.

The vice president's event in this town near Pittsburgh was part of a broad effort by the administration to raise awareness of energy issues in the face of polls showing that most Americans believe that the environment should not be sacrificed for the sake of more energy supplies.
Five cabinet secretaries and 25 Congressional Republicans fanned out around the country today to promote the idea that the nation needed more energy supplies and that the quest for new oil and gas need not sully the air and water.

Mr. Cheney, hoarse from a bout of laryngitis, frequently called on several aides to speak for him tonight. Earlier in the day in Philadelphia, his wife, Lynne Cheney, delivered a speech for him.

Billed as a town hall, the session here in Monroeville was more a Republican political rally. Gov. Tom Ridge and three of the state’s Republican lawmakers in Congress praised the administration’s energy blueprint in speeches that consumed more than half the allotted hour.

On a sprawling green banner that filled the space behind the podium, the words "conservation" and "efficiency" appeared as prominently as "security" and "independence." That summed up the theme of the day: that to increase domestic energy supplies would in no way harm the environment.

In the Philadelphia appearance earlier in the day, the vice president, with Mrs. Cheney as his stand-in, referred repeatedly to energy efficiency and conservation, hardly mentioning the supply crisis he spoke of often in the spring.

Promoting the energy plan in Toronto last April, Mr. Cheney emphasized the urgency of finding new sources of oil and gas while making it easier for companies to produce electricity and gasoline.

"Conservation may be a sign of personal virtue," he said then, "but it cannot be the basis of a sound energy policy."

That comment prompted political assaults from Democrats and environmentalists, who argued that the administration had minimized the potential to save energy while stressing new supplies.

Today Mr. Cheney struck a contrasting note. "Conservation is a must," his Philadelphia speech said.

The speech exalted the "snow-capped mountains and clear skies and clean streams" of Wyoming, his home state. It described the Bush energy plan as a kind of environmental manifesto, covering "the entire range of energy concerns facing the American people — from our need for greater efficiency to better stewardship of the environment."

America can have more energy and a better environment, he said, maintaining that his opponents had presented a "false choice" between the two. Oil companies, the speech said, now use such sophisticated technology to explore for oil that they can do so "literally unnoticed," with no damage to natural habitats.

Many environmentalists say even the most advanced drilling technology can damage the environment, as does the infrastructure that accompanies oil and gas fields.
The emphasis on saving energy is in part recognition of political reality. Many Republicans in Congress never embraced the idea that the nation faced a severe energy crisis. Resolutions banning new oil, gas and coal exploration in sensitive areas have passed both houses of Congress, while the only new measures gaining broad support are those that seek to improve the energy efficiency of automobiles and appliances.
Bush Energy Team Tries Spotlighting Conservation

By Susan Page,
USA TODAY; 7/16/2001 - Updated 10:50 PM ET

MONROEVILLE, Pa. — The White House tried a new tone Monday as it tried to restart President Bush's stalled energy plan. Vice President Cheney, five Cabinet members and two dozen congressional Republicans held "town hall meetings" across the country in which they emphasized a commitment to the environment and toned down an early focus on more drilling and nuclear power plants.

"Conservation is a must," Lynne Cheney declared to the National Association of Counties' conference in Philadelphia as she delivered a speech that was prepared for her husband. She sat on stage, sidelined by laryngitis. The statement contrasted with a speech this spring in which he described conservation as "a personal virtue" that can't solve the nation's energy problems.

Critics weren't convinced that the new words represented a true change of heart. A letter to Cheney signed by more than 100 county officials in 25 states expressed concern that the energy plan would weaken clean-air protections, increase oil drilling in environmentally sensitive lands and harm renewable-energy programs. "He needs to fund more conservation in this and less polluting power plants," said Brett Hulsey, a supervisor of Dane County, Wis.

Later, Cheney appeared here at Allegheny County Community College. Half of the hourlong session was consumed by speeches by elected officials, all of whom lauded the administration's approach.

Questions from the audience, chosen by Republican Gov. Tom Ridge's office to represent a cross-section of the community, were friendly and deferential. Cheney said he was confident that Congress would pass a comprehensive energy bill this year.

But White House hope for quick passage has dimmed since a decline in energy prices brought a decline in public concern.

Cheney called for increasing domestic exploration, including in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, to reduce dependence on foreign oil. And he made a pitch for more nuclear power plants because they don't contribute to global warming.

In Washington, Bush told reporters, "It should be clear to the American people that we're dependent upon foreign sources of crude oil when every quarter we worry about whether or not OPEC is going to run the price of crude up."

The president went on, "It should be worrisome to people that the state that's had the best conservation efforts is the state that's had brownouts," a reference to California's temporary power cutoffs this year. "We're going to take a very strong effort to convince the American
people that we've got a plan that couples not only sound conservation but the need to develop new sources of energy."

The administration's new campaign comes in the wake of polls that show Bush has damaged his standing, particularly among moderate voters, with the perception that he is more concerned about oil and gas interests than the environment.

The Democratic-controlled Senate and the Republican-controlled House have passed a series of votes in recent weeks that emphasized conservation, sometimes at odds with the administration. However, Cheney's speech in Philadelphia praised Congress for "putting the final touches on legislation enacting the president's recommendations on conservation."

The rhetoric was not tempered on one topic: the proposed Kyoto accord among industrialized nations in 1997, which is intended to reduce global warming. The Bush administration opposes it. Cheney's speech said the treaty "would have produced little or no net benefit to the global environment while imposing massive job losses on the American economy."
Cheney Spearheads Push On Bush Energy Plan

By Chriss Swaney
Reuters; July 16 11:50 PM ET

With gasoline prices falling, top Bush administration officials, led by Vice President Dick Cheney, mounted an election-style campaign on Monday to promote President Bush's energy strategy amid signs of waning public support.

Cheney flew to Pennsylvania barely two weeks after undergoing heart pacemaker surgery to repeat the Bush administration's position that the United States can reduce its reliance on OPEC oil by boosting domestic production and scaling back regulation.

"The fact is that for the foreseeable future we're going to be reliant on petroleum products for our transportation needs. That means we need adequate supplies," Cheney told 250 people at a national town hall energy meeting near Pittsburgh. The meeting was organized by Pennsylvania's Republican Gov. Tom Ridge, a Bush ally.

The vice president noted that oil price fluctuations on the world market not only affect the price of gasoline for motorists, but also the cost of home heating oil and power.

Aside from Cheney, five cabinet members and dozens of members of Congress fanned out across the country to promote the Bush plan to boost production while modestly curbing consumption. Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham, Interior Secretary Gale Norton, Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta and Environmental Protection Administration chief Christine Todd Whitman made town hall appearances from Connecticut to South Dakota.

In Argonne, Illinois, south of Chicago, Abraham told an audience the administration's energy strategy looks to the future.

"We've been relying heavily on conservation and imports but over the next 20 years we can't continue in that direction," the energy secretary said. "That's why the plan President Bush presented to the American people makes sense."

Abraham also said the Bush's energy plan was balanced "with more than 60 percent of our energy needs over the next 20 years being met with conservation."

No cabinet members were dispatched to California, where Bush's response to the electricity crisis has been widely criticized.

With congressional committees due to take up energy legislation soon, Democrats dismissed the town hall meetings as staged events.

In Philadelphia, a case of laryngitis forced a pale-looking Cheney to let his wife Lynne speak for him at a meeting of the National Association of Counties.
PCL XL error

Subsystem: KERNEL
Error: IllegalTag
Operator: 0x82
Position: 21239

21237
DOE022-0118

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002
June 12, 2001

Dear Senator Reid:

Thank you for your recent letter opposing the increase of nuclear power because it might increase the possibility of Yucca Mountain becoming a nuclear waste repository. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President's energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
June 12, 2001

Dear John:

Thank you for your recent letter opposing the increase of nuclear power because it might increase the possibility of Yucca Mountain becoming a nuclear waste repository. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President's energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable John Ensign
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
June 12, 2001

Dear Representative Berkley:

Thank you for your recent letter opposing the increase of nuclear power because it might increase the possibility of Yucca Mountain becoming a nuclear waste repository. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President's energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Shelley Berkley
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
June 12, 2001

Dear Representative Gibbons:

Thank you for your recent letter opposing the increase of nuclear power because it might increase the possibility of Yucca Mountain becoming a nuclear waste repository. The President certainly appreciates your concern and suggestions.

I have shared your letter with the President's energy policy advisors and the Energy Task Force who are formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again for your letter on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Jim Gibbons
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2203

May 23, 2001

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing in regard to the recently released report by the National Energy Policy Development Group, "National Energy Policy". As you know, this report encourages an increase in the use of nuclear power. Despite tremendous effort, however, our nation still has not developed a sound science and policy program to deal with the existing waste. Although the report recommends using the "best science to provide a deep geologic repository for nuclear waste," no nation, including the United States, has found a suitable geologic repository to safely isolate the waste.

As you know, we are deeply concerned about this issue, because the only site being considered for a proposed repository is at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. This site would be located approximately 90 miles from Las Vegas, the largest city in Nevada and one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. In addition to being home to more than 1.3 million Nevadans, Las Vegas and its neighboring communities draw more than 30 million visitors each year. Nevada communities rely on the water resources below Yucca Mountain for drinking water, livestock production, and other agriculture activities. Radiation contamination of this groundwater or the surrounding environment would create an unacceptable human health risk and would threaten the tourism and recreation-based economy, which provides jobs and important tax revenue to Nevada and its communities.

We are concerned that the report's recommendation for more nuclear power production will lead to additional pressure to move forward on Yucca Mountain, despite the known scientific and public policy shortcomings. Because of these concerns, we cannot support:

1. the relicensing of existing nuclear power plants or the licensing of new nuclear power plants; or
2. the reauthorization of the Price-Anderson Act, a controversial Department of Energy and nuclear power industry liability program.

The continued prosperity of our nation depends upon an evolution in the way our nation produces and uses energy. We cannot support, however, any initiatives that increase the possibility that Yucca Mountain will become the repository for the nation's nuclear waste. We
are willing to work with you to address these problems and make this energy report a document that all Americans can support.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

HARRY REID
U.S. Senator

JOHN ENSIGN
U.S. Senator

SHELLEY BERKLEY
Member of Congress

JIM GIBBONS
Member of Congress
Mr. Frank Blake  
U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC  
U.S.A. 20585

Dear Mr. Blake:

It was a pleasure to meet with you to discuss Alberta’s role as a key supplier of energy to the United States, and our commitment to working with the U.S. Administration to develop the continental energy market and implement the Cheney Energy Task Force recommendations.

As we discussed, our mutually beneficial relationship in energy could be enhanced in a number of ways. Increased investment in Alberta oil sands, transmission of arctic gas through Alberta’s distribution hub, cooperation on clean coal research and technology, and better electricity transmission linkages, would all help to improve the continental energy market. I trust that this mission will prove instrumental in promoting closer collaboration on energy issues between Alberta, Canada, and the United States. We look forward to working with you, Secretaries Abraham and Martens, and Canadian Energy Minister, the Honourable Ralph Goodale, on these matters.

Thank you for meeting with us and I wish you all the best in the future.

Sincerely yours,

Ralph Klein

cc: Honourable Halvar C. Johnson  
Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations  
Honourable Murray Smith  
Minister of Energy  
Legislature Building, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  T5K 2B6  Telephone (780) 427-2251  Fax (780) 427-1349

21247

DOE022-0128

Obtained and made public by the Natural Resources Defense Council, March/April 2002