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Sierra Club

Illinois Chapter

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Chicago Public Hearing on Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, NV

Statement of Jack Darin, Director

February 1, 2000

My name is Jack Darin, and I am the Director of the Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter, representing over 20,000 Illinois Sierra Club members committed to protecting our environment for our families and our future.

1... Although the high-level nuclear waste that would travel through Illinois may ultimately be buried many hundreds of miles away in Nevada, we here in Illinois have more at stake in this proposal than almost any other state in America. Illinois is expected to receive the third largest number of radioactive waste shipments -- as many as 13,000 over the next 30 years, or an average of ~~3 per week, every week, for 30 years.~~

5 Today, every day 24
On average, every day, ~~a~~ potentially lethal cargo of radioactive waste will ride our highways next to us in traffic, or ride the rails through our neighborhoods and countryside. Every day for ~~30~~ *24* years through our state, which unfortunately is no stranger to rail collisions, bad weather, and highway accidents.

2 And for what purpose are Illinois residents being asked to bear this risk, to share the roads and rails that bring them to work, home, and school with lethal doses of nuclear waste? A fundamentally flawed proposal to sweep the lethal legacy of our dangerous experiment with nuclear power deep under a mountain in the Nevada desert, despite the evidence of seismic activity and potential for groundwater contamination.

...1 Being at the crossroads of the nation's transportation networks has long been a part of Chicago and Illinois history. Now the nuclear industry is eyeing these rails and roads to take a dangerous, expensive problem off of their hands and give it to the taxpayers, moving much of it through Illinois neighborhoods in the process.

3 *5 a 24*
~~Every~~ day for ~~30~~ years -- perhaps we'd get lucky, and 13,000 shipments of nuclear waste would move through our towns, past our homes, schools, and hospitals without incident. But what would have been accomplished? A massive concentration of private industry's nuclear waste, buried in a mountain prone to earthquakes, and suddenly the taxpayers responsibility. It's a risky scheme that doesn't work for Illinois, for America, or for our planet.