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1 Thank you for this opportunity to speak today. I've spoken at previous hearings, so I'll base my comments today on things I've that I've heard previous speakers say. My name is Kevin Kamps, I work for Nuclear Information and Resource Service in Washington D.C. And my title is nuclear waste specialist. [One thing I wanted to comment upon was something that Wendy Dixon said during the introductory presentation. That these casks for transportation, and I assume for the repository as well, would be NRC certified. What she was trying to get across with what she said was we should be confident in this. I'm very concerned about that, I don't think that NRC certification is a guarantee in good quality.

In Michigan, where I'm from, the Palisades Nuclear Plant has 15 dry storage casks which are NRC certified. A number of them have defective welds and other flaws and the same cask model actually suffered an explosion in Wisconsin in May of 1996. An unforeseen chemical reaction which was missed by the experts at the NRC, at the utility company and at the cask manufacturer, took place. A reaction Boric Acid in the spent fuel pool water and the zinc coating inside the cask. This is a chemical reaction that high school chemistry students are familiar with, the reaction between acid and zinc generating hydrogen and yet all the experts missed this chemical reaction. It had enough force to dislodge the three ton lid on top of the cask and resulted in a three year cessation of loading of the ventilated storage cask, number 24 model from CR Nuclear Corporation. Three years to get their act together.

When the next VIC 24 cask was loaded at Palisades Nuclear Power Plant in June of '99, additional hydrogen ignition events, so as the NRC called them, took place. Not an explosion this time but, again, an ignition of hydrogen gas coming out of a tube that was venting the gas out of the cask. What was significant this past summer was that the workers, who ignited the hydrogen, failed to report that this incident took place. So the NRC was not notified for three full days after this incident. So it took three years to get their act together, this event took place. And I'm very concerned that these problems have taken place with casks that are stationary, that goes zero miles per hour. And now we're talking about launching these casks, not these same casks, but transport casks at 60 miles per hour on our roads and rails, if not at greater speeds.

2 So I'm very concerned about unforeseen problems that will develop. [Another issue that I wanted to echo that other people have said. Is that [there's a need for extension on this DEIS. It was January 5th that these last three hearings were announced and those were hard won through the work of people like Congressman Kucinich and others who joined him. And this is giving very little time to people like in places like Lincoln and Chicago and here to read a 1,600 page document and make reasonable comments. So a 180 day extension is very reasonable, especially given the DOE's very late publication of the route maps. January 21st, which is just a couple weeks before the end of the comment period, and this is such a huge issue, the transportation.

So it really seems that the DOE has tried to down play the transportation issue and not given the public adequate information on which to comment, which is a violation of the spirit and of the letter of the NEPA Law. [

3       Something that I did not find in the DEIS was the possibility of civil disobedience being used against transports. In Germany in 1997, six casks were transported, there were 20,000 protesters, 30,000 police were deployed, which is the largest police action since the Nazi regime in Germany. There were 500 arrests, there were 200 injuries and the total cost of transporting these six casts a short distance was \$100 million. So where in the DEIS is there any discussion of the possibility of civil disobedience and its impact on these shipments?

Just recently the Department of Energy, Office of Physical Materials Disposition, another office within DOE, transported an experimental plutonium fuel shipment from Los Alamos to a nuclear laboratory in Canada. And especially on the Canadian side, Native American tribes expressed their great displeasure at having not been consulted by the Canadian government about this transport across their territory. And they vowed, because they've suffered from decades of uranium mining and its environmental consequences on their lives and their health. They vowed to block the shipment with a human chain. And 400 people from seven tribes showed up on Thanksgiving Day and formed a human chain along the side of the road. And they said, if the real shipment comes, we will form a human chain across the road and block the shipment until we are consulted with on this as sovereign nations.

And interestingly enough, the Department of Energy trucked the shipment, as their environmental assessment said they would do, to the border with Canada, but at that point, they brought in a helicopter. The Canadian authorities did, and transported it by air the rest of the way, which is a violation of the United States law and the DOE said nothing about this in Court in December when an injunction was sought by concerned citizens in Michigan. So the Department of Energy transported this relatively small shipment in such a manner that really violated the public trust. And so what can we expect from the transport of these high-level waste shipments in the future to the tune of tens of thousands of shipments. I'm very concerned about the violation of democracy and civil liberties. In fact, the helicopter shipment in Canada was guarded by 150 unidentified soldiers. We still do not know who they were. They were in Arctic camouflage at the airport in Sault Ste. Marie, Canada. So it's interesting that the DOE talked about the peaceful atom, atoms for peace, with this shipment and yet it's heavily armed guards that are accompanying it. The same will happen, I just learned today, in urban areas with these shipments of waste. So, so much for atoms for peace.

4       One last thing I'll talk about at this point is [it's been said today by the Department of Energy spokes people that -- and others, that there's a long history of safe shipments with these casks. In Germany there was an incident where a container used for high-level waste transport was coming back from France where reprocessing had taken place and it was found to be contaminated to a level of 3,000 times permissible levels. So right there is one instance of a high-level waste transportation incident with significant public health impact for people who were exposed to that radiation.]

5...       And [I wanted to also, just the last comment, talk about emergency responders. There's a grave concern about the lack of preparedness of emergency responders. And the accident in Kochi, Japan was an indication of this where the ambulance crews were sent in to rescue the workers, who had been so heavily exposed, and were themselves exposed in the process. And so

5 cont. it's a real wake up call to us in the United States as we attempt to embark on such a huge undertaking. Thank you.