

THE  
NEW ENGLAND  
COUNCIL

October 13, 2009

Dear Secretary Chu,

I am writing to you on behalf of The New England Council, the oldest regional business organization in the country, to respectfully urge you to include an expert on the challenges facing decommissioned nuclear power plants on any Blue Ribbon Commission forging a strategy on the future of nuclear waste storage.

For years The New England Council has been a strong supporter of the development of the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository. As you know well, the National Academy of Sciences has issued numerous studies on the scientific soundness of the facility, and it has been recognized on numerous occasions as the best way for the federal government to fulfill its obligations under the Nuclear Waste Act of 1982. However, we recognize and respect the Administration's decision to explore other long-term solutions, and are optimistic the creation of a high-level Commission will lead to effective options for consideration.

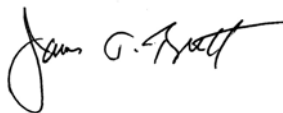
As you work to create the Commission, we respectfully recommend that the Administration include on any panel the expertise and experience of someone intimately familiar with the challenges and day-to-day management of decommissioned plants, especially the three sites located in New England. We are heartened at your August 4 reply to the Massachusetts Senate delegation stating that you are in agreement with the suggestion that "such an expert" should be included on the panel.

We are also hopeful the Administration chooses to develop and operate the panel consistent with the creation of other federal advisory committees. It is critical that the energy community, ratepayer advocates, and other stakeholders are represented on the committee or at the very least have an opportunity to participate in an open and transparent process.

The safe long-term management of nuclear waste should be an important part of any energy strategy developed by the federal government. We hope in the short-term the Administration recognizes the challenges faced by the decommissioned nuclear plant sites in New England that are serving as de facto interim nuclear waste storage facilities and that the Blue Ribbon Commission is instructed to specifically develop recommendations for timely removal of the radioactive material stranded at these sites.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me or Jeff Turcotte of the Council's Washington, DC office at (202) 547-0048.

Very Truly Yours,



James T. Brett  
President & CEO