

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2018

Senator Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Shaheen,

We write to urge the inclusion of report language that is critical to thousands of Americans who are challenged by the presence of stranded nuclear waste in their communities. Reactor communities nationwide have become de facto high-level radioactive waste storage sites and deserve compensation for the continued economic risks they accept for storing this hazardous substance. Indeed, the presence and persistence of this waste has negative economic consequences that were never intended, nor envisioned, when these nuclear power plants were conceptualized.

Furthermore, although we are deeply committed to ensuring a long-term solution to the nation's nuclear waste we understand those solutions will take time. In the meantime, we believe it is critical that these communities are given resources in the immediate future that will help mitigate the ongoing negative impact nuclear waste is having on their communities.

As you know, the Committee prioritized these issues in the Senate Fiscal Year 2018 bill where it directed DOE to consolidate spent nuclear fuel from around the country to one or more private or government interim central storage facilities. The Committee also recognized the burdens of communities with stranded nuclear waste when they directed the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to prioritize accepting spent nuclear fuel from shutdown reactors, and to accelerate the development of a transportation capability to move spent fuel from its current storage locations.

The Federal Government has many programs dedicated to providing assistance to struggling communities. We request that the U.S. Economic Development Agency (EDA) provide Congress with a survey of financial resources available to communities challenged by stranded nuclear waste. We also urge EDA to coordinate this effort to identify resources across the Administration. We believe EDA is best suited to engage in this effort because the experts there have already been directed by this Committee to help identify and develop best practices to assist communities affected by loss of tax revenue and job loss due to nuclear power plant closures. The report language we are requesting compliments this work.

will serve as an impetus to bring together stakeholders—entrepreneurs, economic development agencies, researchers and institutions of higher learning—to chart out a new future for these communities.

Given the Committee's previous work on this issue, we request that the Committee includes the following report language to the 2019 Fiscal Year Appropriations bill:

*Requested report language: As outlined by P.L. 115-141, the Committee directed EDA to report to the Committees on Appropriations on its work to help identify and develop best practices to assist communities affected by loss of tax revenue and job loss due to nuclear power plant closures, in recognition of the reality that communities that have a nuclear power plant that will undergo decommissioning, is currently undergoing decommissioning, or has completed decommissioning have become de facto high-level radioactive waste storage sites.*

*The Committee directs the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the Secretary of Energy, to build on EDA's efforts by working across the Administration and to report to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress, not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this act, with information regarding existing resources and funding opportunities for which affected communities may be eligible. The report shall also include what opportunities exist for these affected communities to consider alternative uses for these sites upon completion of the decommissioning process.*

We are grateful for the bipartisan leadership of Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairman Leahy, as well as your past efforts, on addressing and promoting near-term action to address the accumulating inventory of spent nuclear fuel. We appreciate your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth  
U.S. Senator



Gary C. Peters  
U.S. Senator



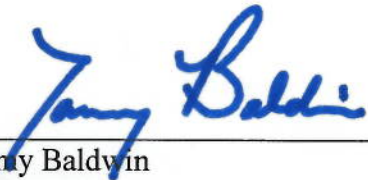
---

Bernard Sanders  
U.S. Senator



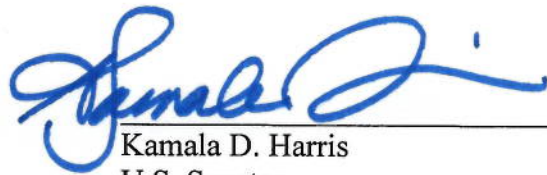
---

Richard J. Durbin  
U.S. Senator



---

Tammy Baldwin  
U.S. Senator



---

Kamala D. Harris  
U.S. Senator



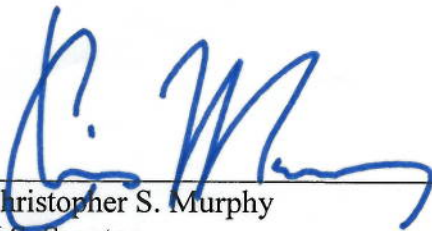
---

Kirsten Gillibrand  
U.S. Senator



---

Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. Senator



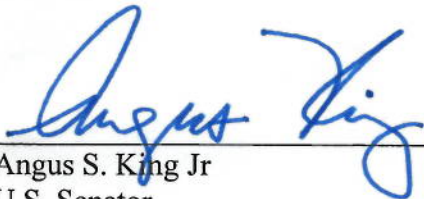
---

Christopher S. Murphy  
U.S. Senator



---

Richard Blumenthal  
U.S. Senator



---

Angus S. King Jr  
U.S. Senator