

member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and this is the gentleman from California making that very argument on Russia Today.

Here, YouTube has actually had to say:

Russia Today is funded in whole or in part by the Russian Government.

So my question is this, Mr. Speaker: If it is good enough for a bill to be filed by the gentleman from California in 2013, and if it is good enough to talk about it on Russia Today, why is it not good enough to give President Trump the very same powers that he wanted to give to President Obama?

That is my question. I am waiting for an answer.

FIXING OUR BROKEN NUCLEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by yielding to the chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Mr. WALDEN.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the Environment Subcommittee, my friend, Mr. SHIMKUS, who has worked tirelessly—not just this year, not just last year, but probably since the first year he came to Congress—to try and find a permanent solution to the storage of nuclear waste in America. He has been a tireless worker in this endeavor, a smart worker in this endeavor, and a successful, so far, worker in this endeavor, as this bill passed out of the committee 49-4.

I rise tonight to address this pressing national need, and that is the importance of fixing our broken nuclear waste management program.

It was more than 35 years ago that the United States Congress made a commitment to communities throughout our Nation which host spent nuclear fuel and nuclear waste. Congress, the Federal Government, agreed to assign the Department of Energy with the responsibility to permanently dispose of hazardous material, nuclear waste, by 1998.

There are many of those communities, like in the Tri-Cities in Washington State, co-located with the Department of Energy's Hanford site just up Columbia River, across the river from where I live and the people I represent. We have been DOE's partner to help win World War II at that site. It has maintained a nuclear weapon deterrent and powered our fleet of nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers.

Additionally, electricity consumers in many other communities have paid the Federal Government more than \$40 billion to develop, license, construct, and operate a nuclear waste repository. They have already paid \$40 billion to do this, and that was pursuant to the Nu-

clear Waste Policy Act, the law that Congress enacted. Yet rate payers have little to see for their investment because, I will call it political science, has deprived the public of the actual science to prove that nuclear waste can be safely and permanently disposed of.

As a consequence of this political interference, taxpayers and rate payers across the country are on the hook for DOE's inaction. The American people pay over \$2 million every day to temporarily store used fuel scattered throughout the United States. So it is up to us to fix this waste management program and stop this cost that will continue in perpetuity if we don't act.

Now, after hearing from dozens of expert witnesses over many years, the Energy and Commerce Committee developed and passed a bipartisan bill by a vote of 49-4. Mr. SHIMKUS led our effort in this measure.

This legislation makes targeted reforms to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to set the Federal Government up to finally, finally, keep its promise.

Nuclear waste challenges have vexed policymakers for generations.

We, this Congress, have the chance now in a bipartisan way to successfully build a durable solution. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to achieve that goal, which brings about tonight's Special Order.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to show something. This is a piece of glass. This is not actually nuclear waste. The Pacific Northwest National Lab, when I visited Hanford a little while back with Secretary Perry, gave me this because it is an example of what the liquid waste, the waste at Hanford, will end up being.

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It will look like this in a big cylinder. It is glass. This is what would go to Hanford, and it would be stored safely when that occurs.

If we don't have a repository, these nuclear wastes, in their various forms, will sit around in various locations, not nearly as safe or secure as we can have with the kind of legislation fully enacted that Mr. SHIMKUS has led on. So I thank Mr. SHIMKUS for his leadership on this. And I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their encouragement, their participation, their counsel. We are going to get this thing done.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my chairman, the gentleman from Oregon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FLEISCHMANN), who has actually been a pretty big leader in this issue because of Oak Ridge and the area that he represents.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be before the House of Representatives this evening, and I want to thank Chairman SHIMKUS.

When I came to Congress in 2011, I didn't know many people, and one

night I had the privilege of meeting JOHN SHIMKUS from the great State of Illinois. I told him I was from Tennessee, and we started talking. And right away we talked about Yucca Mountain. We talked about nuclear waste, and I told him that I was going to be representing a very special place: Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

So let me start by thanking Chairman JOHN SHIMKUS. He has been the hero for the Yucca Mountain project. He has worked tirelessly. He has seen this through the courts. He has seen it through the House. He has worked so hard. I thank him for his efforts.

Oak Ridge, Tennessee, it is a beautiful place. I represent the Third District of Tennessee: Oak Ridge, where we had the Manhattan Project, where we won World War II; Oak Ridge, where we won the Cold War; Oak Ridge, where we have worked tirelessly to build our Nation's nuclear arsenal, and today we are still advocating to do that, to keep America strong—great men and women.

But Oak Ridge, like many other places around the Nation—Savannah River, Portsmouth, Hanford—years ago, ladies and gentlemen, when we manufactured our nuclear weapons, we were not as safe and secure as we are today. There was an immediacy. There was a need during World War II to get the bomb built, and we did it in Oak Ridge, and it ended World War II.

But for years thereafter, we were not as safe at many of these venues. What does that mean? That means that legacy wastes were left in communities: sometimes in the soil, sometimes in the water, sometimes in facilities. And what that means is that the Federal Government has a duty to these communities to clean this waste up. And this waste has to go somewhere.

Now, Chairman SHIMKUS, and we have heard from Chairman WALDEN—for those of you who are listening tonight, they are authorizers. They authorize the law. I sit on the Appropriations Committee. That is the committee in Congress that authorizes the spending for this.

I am the chairman of the Nuclear Cleanup Caucus. That is how passionate I am about cleaning up nuclear waste not only in Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Savannah River; or Hanford, but all over these great United States, because we owe this to the American people.

The Federal Government caused this problem; the Federal Government needs to clean this up. It is the ultimate, I think, in environmental advocacy. This is something that Republicans and Democrats, Members of the House and Members of the Senate, usually agree upon; and we have worked together in this very important caucus.

Why is it important that we pass the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017? Because, first of all, we owe it to the American people. The Department of Energy does a good job in cleanup, but this will revise their programs. It will give what Congress

should do, give direction to a Federal agency. So, as we advocate for dollars to clean up the nuclear waste, we need this key authorization bill to give it structure, to give it purpose.

So, in the end, Yucca is critically important—critically important. And I know the people in these affected communities want Yucca Mountain. That is the interesting thing about it. They want it because they realize it is critically important that we store the waste there: it is important for America; it is important for our environment; it is important to these communities; and it is long overdue.

So I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to please work to support H.R. 3053, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017, and I thank Chairman SHIMKUS.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Tennessee for his comments, and I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SHIMKUS, as well, for continuing to bring light to the broken promise the Federal Government made to our communities.

The State of Minnesota is home to three nuclear reactors, two of which are at the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant in my district. Located directly adjacent to the Prairie Island Indian Reservation and the city of Red Wing, the plant has stored spent nuclear fuel on site since the 1970s. While this is done in a very safe and highly secure manner, storage in close proximity to large communities is simply not appropriate.

In 1982, Congress agreed and made it clear that they wanted the Federal Government to oversee and manage the storage of spent fuel. Congress did not want to put the burden and oversight of maintaining safe nuclear storage on our local communities. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act was adopted, and the Federal Government was tasked with creating a national Federal repository for used fuel.

The Federal Government began collecting taxes on all users of nuclear power. In the end, my constituents, businesses, and Americans throughout the country have paid roughly \$40 billion in taxes and interest.

In 1995, due to the inaction at the Federal level, the plant in my district was forced to take matters into their own hands. While they continued to help fund a repository, they also invested in and began operating a dry cask storage area, a pad on site that could hold up to 48 casks of fuel.

Now, that should have been more than enough to cover their needs until the Federal Government finished their job. Today, Prairie Island is home to 40 casks, with 7 more expected to be filled by 2020.

Thirty-six years after the passage of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, we still have no repository. Prairie Island now has to go through the process of planning to expand their dry cask facilities

in order to accommodate fuel they paid the Federal Government to dispose of.

So I strongly support the efforts of Chairman SHIMKUS, and that is why I cosponsored the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017. We owe it to our communities to follow through on our promise to provide a safe place for storage.

Meanwhile, it isn't just our local communities that are impacted by this inaction. When Congress passed a budget last year, I worked to point out that the Federal Government had assumed major liabilities associated with its failure to provide safe and environmentally friendly storage. The GAO recently reported that the Federal Government's environmental liability alone is nearly \$450 billion and growing.

At the same time, the funds collected from taxpayers to open a repository have begun being diverted to other payout settlements and judgments based on our broken promise. By the end of fiscal year 2016, \$6.1 billion had been paid out, with the Department of Energy estimating another \$25 billion to follow.

It is time to keep our promise. Our communities expect it, and the Federal Government cannot afford not to do so. Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge passage of the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Minnesota and appreciate him spending this evening with us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER).

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening in support of America's nuclear energy industry. Today, America leads the world in nuclear energy production and technological advancement. However, the industry faces unique challenges that prevent us from reaching our full potential when it comes to nuclear energy.

So I thank Mr. SHIMKUS for hosting this Special Order which gives us a chance to shed light on some of these issues.

Over in the Science, Space, and Technology Committee's Energy Subcommittee, we talk a lot about nuclear energy R&D as critical for the United States' national security and energy dominance. Through our numerous meetings over the course of several years, we have put forth multiple bills which will implement long-term R&D investments that will spur American competitiveness and keep us at the forefront of nuclear energy technology. We will need waste sites.

My bill, the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, actually provides important policy direction for the Department of Energy Office of Nuclear Energy. First, it provides DOE with statutory directions to leverage its supercomputing infrastructure for modeling and simulation capabilities

to develop advanced fission and fusion reactors. Second, this legislation provides DOE with statutory direction to use its authority to enable the national labs to partner with the private sector to construct and operate reactor prototypes at DOE sites and to leverage expertise from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Because nuclear reactors are so expensive and so highly regulated, designing first-of-a-kind reactors requires a blend of creative freedom for engineers testing new designs but assurance of safety throughout that process. DOE sites, particularly the DOE national laboratories, can provide a unique environment that safely allows for this kind of creative testing and development for advanced nuclear technology.

Finally, the bill lays out a clear timeline and statutory guidance for DOE to complete a research reactor that will allow for materials and fuels R&D to take place right here in the United States. Currently, this type of research, which requires access to fast neutrons, is only accessible for civilian use in Russia. While modeling and simulation can accelerate R&D, this research must ultimately be validated through a physical source. The versatile neutron source in this bill will enable this vital research.

Last month, my bill, which contains funding for this important research reactor, the Nuclear Energy Research Infrastructure Act, passed this House unanimously. While we at the Science Committee have been working hard on developing the infrastructure for nuclear research and development, I am thankful Mr. SHIMKUS is finding a long-term solution to our current challenges with spent nuclear waste. His bill takes an important step forward in authorizing private and interim storage of spent nuclear fuel, while still allowing the Federal Government to responsibly develop a permanent repository for spent nuclear fuel.

I applaud Mr. SHIMKUS and the Energy and Commerce Committee's bipartisan effort to find a productive, constructive answer to this pressing issue. Together, we will ensure that America's nuclear energy continues to lead the world.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, before I introduce the next speaker, I want to highlight that, in the days when people say we don't work together, there is no bipartisanship shown, I just want to remind folks that this bill came out of our committee 49-4. It has 108 cosponsors, many Democrats on there.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL), a new Member of Congress who has been very active and whom I have been proud to get to know.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman SHIMKUS for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago, Pacific Gas and Electric Company announced its

decision not to relicense the two nuclear reactors at the Diablo Canyon Power Plant in San Luis Obispo County. The plant has been a key economic engine in my district, employing around 1,500 people and powering more than 1.7 million homes in central and northern California.

As our community works together to mitigate the economic impacts of this closure, I am committed to helping secure the central coast's dominance as a hub for renewable energy development. That is why I am introducing legislation later this month that creates renewable energy incentives to offset the loss of jobs and revenue resulting from the Diablo Canyon closure.

In addition to economic stability, our community also needs certainty of responsible management and safe storage of nuclear waste after the plant's closure. The Diablo Canyon Power Plant was built against a seaside cliff near Avila Beach, where it was discovered that its reactors are in proximity to earthquake fault lines. Without a long-term solution, Diablo Canyon would become a de facto storage facility for radioactive nuclear waste and would hinder our ability to repurpose any of the scenic coastline where the power plant currently sits.

Currently, spent nuclear fuel sits across 39 States in 121 communities, including San Luis Obispo County.

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We need a permanent geologic repository to store waste that will last far beyond our lifetimes. Congress must establish responsible interim storage solutions, while continuing to work towards establishing a safe and secure national repository for spent fuel.

H.R. 3053 is a good bipartisan solution to establish a process and outline next steps for interim and permanent storage solutions. With the impending decommissioning of Diablo Canyon, it is vital that we act to find a storage solution. I will continue to work to grow business in our area, remove spent fuel safely, and keep our communities safe and thriving as the Diablo Canyon decommissioning moves forward.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague.

So we have heard from Oregon, Tennessee, Minnesota, and then from California. Now I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his work on this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3053, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act. Spent nuclear fuel currently sits in 121 communities across 39 States, simply because we lack a permanent geological repository to dispose of the waste. That is why I am proud to join my colleagues as a cosponsor of H.R. 3053, which would enact critical reforms to our nuclear waste management strategy.

Back home, in Georgia's 12th, we are leading the way in the expansion of our

Nation's nuclear energy resources. My district is the proud home of every nuclear reactor in the State, with an additional two reactors under construction at Plant Vogtle. Nuclear energy is Georgia's most reliable power source and provides over 6,000 high-skilled jobs, many of which are filled by my constituents in Georgia's 12th. But without a permanent solution, nuclear waste remains on those sites.

Now is the time for Congress to act on fulfilling our obligation to dispose of the spent nuclear fuel sitting in our States. I thank the Energy and Commerce Committee for passing this important legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this important bill.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his comments. I now yield to the gentleman from the State of California (Mr. MCNERNEY), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, a good friend, also.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SHIMKUS for yielding. We work together on nuclear waste. I have been to the Yucca Mountain site, and I have seen the work that has gone on there.

But, first of all, I just want to say there are a lot of issues out there that we are dealing with here in Congress; so how important is nuclear waste? I mean, we have got the gun issue; we have climate change; we have the economy; we want to create jobs; trade. I mean, there are a lot of issues; so how important is nuclear waste? I mean, it has been festering for decades—for decades—so how urgent is it?

You know, we haven't had a major accident yet, but there are tens of thousands of tons of high-level nuclear waste sitting in relatively exposed conditions, so what could possibly go wrong? I mean, high-level nuclear waste is so radioactive that it emits heat. It emits an immense amount of heat. So we could—I will give you a couple of things that could go wrong.

The waste could be commandeered and then made into weapons. It doesn't have to be made into a nuclear fission bomb. It could be made into a dirty bomb. Just put a bunch of nuclear waste with explosive material in some city and that city would be uninhabitable for the rest of our lifetimes, for sure.

There also could be waste leakage. We have nuclear waste sitting on the banks of the Missouri River. We have nuclear waste, tons and tons of nuclear waste, high-level nuclear waste, sitting a quarter mile from the Columbia River, and this is pretty serious stuff. And my friend from Illinois, my colleague from Illinois, I am sure, will tell us about nuclear waste that is on the Great Lakes ready to go. So we have a problem. We have been pretty darn lucky so far.

You know, I worked as a graduate student. I was a graduate student in mathematics. I worked for an engineering professor to study the nuclear

waste project at WIPP, a waste isolation pilot project near Carlsbad, New Mexico, and I can tell you the technical solutions are there. Nuclear waste can be safely engineered for tens of thousands of years, as long as it needs to be stored. Transportation can be done safely. I have seen train cars that are designed to hold high-level nuclear waste slammed into concrete walls with no damage to the interior of the car.

This stuff can be done. It is not an engineering problem. I mean, the engineering and the geological solutions are there if we put our minds to making it happen. It can be done in engineering.

However, nuclear waste is a political problem, and it hasn't been managed so far. The politics of the Yucca Mountain waste project were very badly managed from the very beginning. A successful nuclear waste storage project will need complete transparency from the very beginning with the local community. There will always be some amount of opposition, but without local buy-in, the project is going to fail. Local buy-in is absolutely essential. This can be done if there is complete transparency, if the local people understand what the risks are and what the benefits are. This can be done.

Mr. Speaker, we need to devote the resources to finding a permanent solution to nuclear waste. Meanwhile, H.R. 3053, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017 is a step, a very important step in the right direction.

I want to thank my colleague from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) who has worked on this tirelessly for year after year. I know that some people think that he has gone too far in Nevada, but, nonetheless, if we work together and can become transparent, maybe Nevada will never accept nuclear waste, but we have to find a permanent storage solution that can be done. This is a step in the right direction, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3053 and give this legislation fair and honest consideration.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his comments, and I will pull up a chart later on to show that the five surrounding counties have all passed resolutions in support of Yucca Mountain, and there are recent numbers from the northern part of the State that show a very positive movement as far as the acceptance, as long as we show there is a science. And now I will address that in a later discourse.

I want to thank my colleague for joining us. I now yield to the gentleman from the State of Georgia (Mr. CARTER), another member from the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my good friend and chairman of the Subcommittee on Environment's legislation, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017.

This legislation is important, not only because of what it means for the future of clean energy opportunities for this country, but also what this means for the safety of our communities. Nuclear energy has become a safe and effective way to generate large amounts of energy capability, while maintaining a source that doesn't produce greenhouse gas emissions.

We have come a long ways from Three Mile Island and the safety standards in place to ensure our communities and our grid aren't negatively impacted by nuclear energy. The Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act would finally put in place a permanent repository for the waste generated by energy production that powers millions of homes and businesses across the United States.

As of December, there were 61 nuclear power plants in the United States with 99 operating nuclear reactors. Those nuclear plants provide nearly 20 percent of the country's energy production capability. This is significant because these plants have continued to provide reliable flows of energy for decades, giving Americans a carbon-free source of energy to fuel their consumption.

But one thing hasn't been addressed: what to do with that spent fuel. We began a process in the 1980s to seek and construct a permanent repository for the Nation's spent fuel, eventually coming to Yucca Mountain in Nevada. This site was decided upon, due to its geological features, and extensively studied to ensure it could be done in a safe and effective manner.

Millions of dollars were spent studying and doing initial project development of the site, but it was eventually halted, and that progress was stalled. While this was going on, ratepayers in 39 States continued to pay towards the cleanup fund for a total of nearly \$40 billion. However, that money hasn't been able to be put towards a permanent repository due to resistance.

In Georgia, at Plant Vogtle, we are currently undergoing the only nuclear energy construction project in the country, in large part because of issues that have deterred companies from wanting to expand. That means that people are losing out on energy production, and it actually creates clean energy.

My good friend's legislation authorizes the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste to find a safe, permanent place in contrast to the temporary locations at each nuclear plant. It also authorizes a consolidated interim storage site to ensure there is an option available for the eventual transition.

This is something that needs to get done, and soon. Right now, spent fuel is sitting on site in either dry casks or spent fuel pools without an alternative. Now is the time for us to pass this bipartisan legislation and recognize that we have carbon-neutral energy sources in place, and have for decades, but we

need to get this across the finish line to support our communities and our country.

I urge my colleagues to support the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act because it will give the United States the chance to, once again, be a global leader on our nuclear energy and to secure our communities. I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Georgia for his comments, and now I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for his strong work, his positive statements, and his reaching out so that we could have a national solution to a national problem.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. SHIMKUS for yielding. Again, I am here tonight to join a bunch of my colleagues to speak in strong support of H.R. 3053, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017, which Mr. SHIMKUS has skillfully guided through the Energy and Commerce Committee, again, a 49-4 vote on a committee which basically is challenged, in many instances, with other issues from healthcare and energy policy, you name it.

It is really just an amazing accomplishment on his part dealing with one of the thorniest, toughest issues, which, again, has been out there for 30 years, which is, again, how we, as a nation, deal with the tons of nuclear waste that is now piled up and accumulating in over 100 communities around the country.

Again, I represent the Second District of Connecticut, the eastern half of the State, which has two operating nuclear facilities. One has been decommissioned, the old Connecticut Yankee facility, which sits very close to the Connecticut River. Again, it has been closed for over a decade. The plant itself has been cut up, dismantled. It is now pretty much, you know, just overgrown with vegetation. But still sitting there is dry cask nuclear spent fuel rods, which, again, are being patrolled every single day, literally, as we are here tonight, by heavily armed guards, which makes perfect sense, because, as has been said by other speakers, again, this is still very dangerous material, and again, very close to one of the largest bodies of waters in new England, the Connecticut River.

We also have the Dominion nuclear power plant in Waterford, Connecticut, which today is in full operation. Over 45 percent of the energy consumed in the State of Connecticut is generated at Dominion. It is about 15 percent of New England, because, again, it provides a supply for the rest of the region that is there, and again, this is a plant that goes back decades.

We are also the home of the Groton sub base, which is a base where, again, we have 15 attack subs that are deployed there. Again, the Groton sub base was where the USS *Nautilus* was launched 62 years ago. Admiral Rickover, the father of the nuclear Navy,

actually designed that first sub, which was christened by Mamie Eisenhower.

Again, that sub was built 5 years after the first lightbulb was powered by nuclear power as a nation; again, a pretty amazing accomplishment that Admiral Rickover was able to build and launch a nuclear submarine, something which the folks at the Navy at the time told him wouldn't happen for 75 years. Yet, today, the nuclear force, both in terms of submarines and carriers, are the backbone, again, of our away team, the U.S. Navy.

So, again, we have a lot of history and experience with the fact that we have got really smart capable people who do amazing things in terms of providing the energy needs but also the national security of this country. But, as has been said, again, a byproduct of that is that nuclear waste which we thought 30 years ago was going to be dealt with with the decision that Congress made to dispose of nuclear waste in a central facility in Nevada that, again, ratepayers have paid year in and year out, \$40 billion, as was mentioned earlier, but today is still immobilized.

So, again, Mr. SHIMKUS' effort, in terms of trying to not just restart the process but also to reform it, again, is such an extraordinary effort that really we, as a House, should really take advantage of and move on a bipartisan basis to enact.

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This is not your father's Yucca Mountain bill that Mr. SHIMKUS got through. It made some changes for fairness in terms of ratepayers. It also created more transparency so that local stakeholders in Nevada will have an opportunity to really help make decisions and see and understand the technology that is being employed there.

It also set up an interim process, which, again, if it is over decades, which it is still going to take, that we can at least start moving material out from these over 100 sites situated all across the country, which is so important in terms of reducing costs and reducing national security risk.

His proposal, I think, deserves great support and, frankly, congratulations that he has been able to take this on.

I would note that the country of Finland has actually started to move forward with their own waste disposal site, the Onkalo Peninsula Depository, which a country that is very progressive in terms of a lot of its policies, but that have shown that the technology is there to safely deposit nuclear waste in a way that has real confidence and is moving forward. We should do it, too.

Again, H.R. 3053 is, I think, the roadmap for this country to deal with this problem in a way that is safe, is transparent, and will reduce costs for ratepayers all across the country.

I look forward to seeing a vote take place very soon on the floor of the House. And then, frankly, I look forward to a bill signing ceremony at the White House, where Mr. SHIMKUS

should certainly take a front row seat for his great work.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his remarks. I am glad he brought up the debate and the discussion on the nuclear Navy, because that is really a key part of this debate.

The nuclear-use fuel for our nuclear fleet is, by law, directed to be housed at Yucca Mountain.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, may I just make one last point to really underscore that?

Mr. Speaker, I am on the Armed Services Committee, and we are in the midst of moving forward with a 355-ship Navy.

If you look at the force architecture that is going to be in that growth, it is almost all concentrated in submarines and carriers. The fact of the matter is that the challenge of waste disposal for our national defense and national security is going to be with us for many, many years.

To comment again, the gentleman's proposal is a way for us to deal with that and strengthen our Navy and our national defense.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN), a colleague, a new member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, but no stranger to this issue and this debate.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for holding this Special Order hour to talk about a very critical policy and issue for our country.

Mr. Speaker, nuclear energy is a critical component of the United States' energy matrix. It is no secret that I am passionate about energy independence and nuclear energy as an essential, emission-free, domestic source of electricity.

As we create nuclear energy, we also create nuclear waste. In my district, the Oconee Nuclear Station run by Duke Energy in Oconee County, South Carolina, has 40 years' worth of nuclear waste sitting at the site. Without a permanent geological repository, nuclear waste will continue to pile up at reactors in South Carolina and all across the Nation.

There is currently estimated to be about 4,500 tons of spent nuclear fuel in temporary storage in South Carolina from commercial reactors.

Furthermore, there are more than 10,000 tons of military and research nuclear waste at the Savannah River site, just outside my district.

Nuclear waste sits idle and is stored in dry casks and wet pools in 121 communities across 39 States. It is imperative that we pass Chairman SHIMKUS' legislation, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act, to reform our country's nuclear waste policy and utilize Yucca Mountain as our main point of nuclear storage.

Having nuclear waste dispersed across the country and close to highly

populated areas makes zero sense, and is an unnecessary and avoidable risk.

The depository at Yucca Mountain, after decades of research, has been independently verified to safely dispose of spent nuclear fuel for a million years. It is the law of the land. It is a perfect site for this.

We as a country need to embrace the law of the land. It is a long-term stable storage facility at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. After all the scientific research and money taken from ratepayers, it is time to move forward.

It is sad that this project has been mothballed because of politics and has been used as a political football at the expense of the American ratepayers.

What do I mean by American ratepayers paying for this?

U.S. ratepayers have already paid the Federal Government over \$40 billion to develop Yucca Mountain, and currently all U.S. taxpayers are paying over \$2 million a day because we have not yet fulfilled our legal obligations. Ratepayers are quite literally paying something for nothing.

Ratepayers in my State of South Carolina have already paid \$1.3 billion in fees, which were intended to pay for a functioning Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository. Ratepayers in other States which utilize nuclear commercial energy have paid billions more.

It is time to put politics aside. Authorize what Congress has already approved and paid for by Americans. Yucca Mountain should not have taken this long to become a reality; not after colossal amounts of money have been poured into this infrastructure project.

Members on both sides of the aisle, as you see tonight, are supportive of authorizing the use of Yucca Mountain through the Nuclear Waste Policy Act Amendments. It voted out of the House Energy and Commerce Committee by a vote of 49-4. Let's not let the politics of a few get in the way of reforming our nuclear waste policy and ensuring Americans get what they have already paid billions into.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership, and I look forward to working with him to move this forward.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Illinois has 20 minutes remaining.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHIMKUS. I do that, Mr. Speaker, because we have had Members from Oregon—I am from Illinois—Tennessee,

Minnesota, California, Georgia, South Carolina, Texas, Connecticut come down. Many, many Members from all over this country also wanted to join me here tonight, but they could not, so they will be submitting statements for the RECORD. I appreciate the Chair allowing us to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to highlight a few things and just follow up on some of my colleagues, who I really appreciate coming down and spending their time to talk about the importance of this issue.

This issue has national support, I think identified by the 49-4 vote out of the Energy and Commerce Committee. People are very diverse, from all over the country, on the Energy and Commerce Committee. I would encourage people to go to the Energy and Commerce Committee website and look at the members of that committee and how wide and how diverse we are. We are all united on this issue.

The national newsmakers and the recorders of what is going on are starting to take interest in solving this problem. We have a couple editorials and statements from some major papers and some smaller ones.

Here is The Washington Post: "Put Yucca Mountain to work. The Nation needs it."

As was stated, the law was passed in 1982 and it was amended in 1987. Congressman DUNCAN said it right. This is the law of the land. For the last 8 to 10 years, we have been breaking the law by not moving forward. People have heard me say that numerous times before.

Here is The San Diego Union-Tribune: "Revival of Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project overdue."

Well, it is 20 years. We should have been receiving spent nuclear fuel and defense waste 20 years ago. Now we are paying judgments because of our inability to comply with the law.

Wouldn't you like the government to do what it says it wants to do and then is planning to do it? And then shouldn't they do it?

Here is Aiken Standard: "Fed should proceed with Yucca Mountain."

Here is the Reason: "Open the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository."

Here is the Los Angeles Times and their statement on this issue: "The Federal Government needs to renew its efforts to bring the Yucca Mountain site into operation."

There is a lot of support in California because they are closing nuclear power plants and they have spent nuclear fuel on the beach, as Congressman CARBAJAL has said. He is talking about San Luis Obispo.

I think I will show a chart later on that shows San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, or SONGS, which is being decommissioned.

Here is the Chicago Tribune, from my State: "Yucca Mountain is the only viable alternative to the jury-rigged status quo. We hope the Trump administration and Congress will revive it because if they don't"—well, you can read it, right?

So let me give you an example. It was mentioned by one of my colleagues, and I will talk about Illinois for a little bit. Zion Nuclear Power Station is decommissioned. On the shore of Lake Michigan is spent nuclear fuel.

Part of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act Amendments of 2017 does a couple things. It makes sure the authorization language is in place so that we start moving forward on a final repository.

We have listened to my colleagues from around the country to say it is not going to move fast enough, even if you start it.

Can't we find some regional temporary locations.

Now, in the nuclear timeframe, "temporary" is about 40 years. That is temporary when you are talking about nuclear stuff. So we want to be able to consolidate.

What this shows is licensed and operating nuclear spent fuel storage installations. These are just locations where you have nuclear power. And you can see the red dots all over the place, and other nuclear registered locations.

I am not talking about the other issue, which is defense locations. That is why I am glad my colleague JOE COURTNEY came down to talk about Connecticut and the nuclear Navy.

A colleague that really wanted to be down here was DAN NEWHOUSE, who represents Hanford. Hanford is the epitome story of why we need to get our act together as a nation and fulfill our obligations to clean up these sites.

This is a defense site. We created waste in the production of our nuclear arsenal. Decades, stored in tanks, toxic sludge underneath the ground that needs to be glassified, as Chairman WALDEN mentioned. And where that glassified toxic sludge is supposed to go is underneath the mountain in a desert in Yucca Mountain.

So these are the different locations we have here across the country. As was stated tonight already, 39 States, 121 locations. Thirty-nine States, 121 locations.

So let me give you a few examples of what we are talking about.

My colleague JASON LEWIS was down here earlier, and he mentioned Prairie Island. These are old charts, but they are oldies but goodies because we haven't done anything. I can go into the dustbin of history when I talk about this on the floor, and the only thing that has changed is there is more spent nuclear fuel on these sites.

So you have Prairie Island. You have waste stored aboveground in pools and in casts. You have, in the Mississippi floodplain, on the Mississippi River, 50 miles from Minneapolis-St. Paul versus Yucca Mountain.

Now, what do we have at Yucca Mountain?

Now, Yucca Mountain is where, by law, we are supposed to be receiving long-term repository.

I refer people, there is no nuclear waste on site. Here is the mountain in

a desert. The waste will be stored 1,000 feet underground and 1,000 feet above the water table.

□ 2015

The Colorado River is the closest body of water 100 miles away. So that is the example. That is what we want to show to the American people.

Would you rather have nuclear waste or defense waste next to your major cities and by major bodies of water, or would you rather have them in a desert underneath a mountain?

I had a few Californians down here tonight. Why? Because they are decommissioning nuclear power plants. This is the one I visited just maybe 14 months ago. It is no longer an operating nuclear power station. They are decommissioning it. The waste will be stored onsite. It is the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station. It is between L.A. and San Diego right on the Pacific Ocean. At this time, there are 2,300 waste rods onsite. That has probably increased by a number I don't know. Waste is stored aboveground. It is adjacent to the Pacific Ocean, and it is located 45 miles from San Diego, versus Yucca Mountain which is located here, which is a mountain in a desert. The waste would be 1,000 feet underground, and that is 1,000 feet above the water table.

So I have listened to my colleagues from Nevada. In fact, in this picture, this green area, these are all the counties around the Federal land site that have passed resolutions in support of moving forward.

Now, what do the Nevadans tell me? They want to make sure it is safe. How do you make it safe? You decide to adjudicate the science. We give Nevada, as per law, their last chance to question the science. That is what we are trying to do in the appropriation process is get the money to do the final adjudication so that the question can be answered. To my friends from the State of Nevada: Is a mountain in a desert a safe place to store the defense waste and spent fuel?

Now, the red part is Federal land. Yucca Mountain would be about right here, a little pinhole. That yellow there is—when you hear people say local consensus, the yellow here is a local consensus from Sweden, and if you notice, it is smaller than the Federal land that we have. So I would argue the local consensus is the Federal Government since it is all that property. Now, why do we have all that property? Because Yucca Flat is there. Because we put nuclear fuel—nuclear waste, in some short and some shade, is already housed there. So, again, it is a great location.

I was given a pin tonight from Nye County, and it says, "Host of Yucca Mountain." So with all due respect to my colleagues from the State of Nevada, when they say that everyone is against it, they are not talking to everyone in the State of Nevada. I have been to Las Vegas, I have been to Reno,

and I have been to Pahrump, and there are people that—if proven safe.

So I would ask the Governor, allow us to have the litigation to fight the science. That is what he wants to prove, that is what we want to prove, and that is what we need to appropriate the money, get the final adjudication, and then I am convinced that our nuclear scientists, the studies, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that issued a safety and evaluation report will come out and say: You are not going to find a safer place on this planet; there is no more of a studied location on the planet than Yucca Mountain.

So, again, I want to thank my colleagues for coming down to do a couple things. First of all, we want to highlight to our leadership in this House and our appropriators that we need to get money into the final omnibus to do the adjudication to fight for the science, and we have to do that now—issue one.

Issue two, there is a bipartisan consensus, as proven by the 49-4 vote in the committee and by 108 cosponsors, and when we get the bill on the floor, a passage of a bill that we probably would project to get 300 votes out of 435.

So the nuclear era started in World War II. It was started to beat Hitler to make sure they didn't win World War II. Then we had the arms race with the Soviet Union. It has helped protect our freedom and liberty. There was a price to pay, environmental degradations across this country. We owe it to these communities and to ourselves to safely gather, store, and protect the environment and protect our citizens. We do that through the appropriation process. We do it by passing the Nuclear Waste Policy Act amendments of 2007.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank my friends from both sides of the aisle for coming down this night.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in 2002, after extensive research by the Department of Energy (DOE), scientists concluded that Yucca Mountain met all the requirements to act as a repository for high level radioactive waste. After which, the DOE applied for the license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to begin construction of the Yucca Mountain facility.

Unfortunately, due to political brinkmanship, those plans have stalled indefinitely, despite the fact that ratepayers have contributed nearly \$30 Billion to the nuclear waste fund, which is specifically designated to be used for Yucca Mountain.

The federal government and taxpayers have dedicated enormous resources to completing the nuclear storage facility at Yucca Mountain. However, the Obama Administration did everything in its power to stall the completion of the facility, holding up construction under political red tape—even though the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's own safety evaluation found it would not be a threat to the local population of Nevada as it would benefit all of America.

Thankfully, the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 2017 will finally remove

unnecessary burdens to make much needed improvements to our national nuclear waste strategy.

This legislation is especially important to the residents of South Carolina. South Carolina ratepayers have invested over \$1.3 billion into Yucca over the last 30 years—that's in addition to the billions of dollars collected from ratepayers across the country. During this time, states like South Carolina have remained de facto repositories for nuclear waste. The federal government should finish what they started and complete the Yucca Mountain license application.

Currently, SNF is stored in 121 different neighborhoods, across 39 states—all waiting to be moved to a permanent location. The Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act will address the concerns of communities across the country, in a cost-effective manner, and passed the Energy and Commerce Committee with bi-partisan support, 49 members voting in favor and only 4 against. I am grateful for the opportunity to support this legislation, and am hopeful that it will provide much needed clarification on the disposal of spent nuclear fuel.

I am grateful that text from my bill, the Sensible Nuclear Waste Disposition Act was included in this bill and thank Chairman JOHN SHIMKUS for his leadership.

SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL: RACISM AND POVERTY 50 YEARS AFTER THE KERNER REPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of the Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor that I rise today to anchor the CBC Special Order. I would like to thank the CBC chairman, Chairman RICHMOND, for his leadership in this effort.

For the next 60 minutes, we have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about issues of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus and the millions of constituents we represent.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about a topic that has affected this country and plagued us all. Over 50 years ago, in the middle of the Detroit riot, President Lyndon B. Johnson established the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, commonly known as the Kerner Commission. The goal of that Commission was to identify the underlying causes of the civil unrest in communities across the country.

This was a time of tremendous tension in our great Nation. Many Ameri-

cans were confused about the root causes of the riots and the unsure path forward.

On February 29, 1968, following several field trips to troubled communities, the Commission released the Kerner Report, a 176-page report that examined cultural institutional racism, from segregated schools and housing discrimination to generational poverty and to limited economic opportunity.

The Commission largely held racism responsible for Black rioting and warned that our Nation is moving to two societies, one Black, one White—separate and unequal. The Commission called for bold policies to counter decades of political failure, such as investment in much-needed social services, housing, and education programs; and incentivizing diversity among law enforcement.

Sadly, President Johnson ignored the Kerner Report and rejected its recommendations. In the midst of that, we had the assassinations of several prominent Americans: President John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Dr. Martin Luther King.

Fifty years later, America has made some improvements, but African Americans continue to face some of the same issues discussed in the Kerner Report.

Since its release, Black American homeownership has been flat, and unemployment is still twice that of White Americans. The Black prison population has tripled here in America. It used to be two other countries, South Africa during the apartheid years and the former Soviet Union, had more people in prison. Now the United States has more people in prison than any nation in the world.

Black household wealth is less than one-fifth of the national average, and almost 33 percent of Black children are growing up in poverty.

Recently, Fred Harris, the last living member of the Kerner Commission, issued a new report highlighting the persistent issues plaguing the Black community and calling on major investments in education, workforce development, and a living wage. This comes in stark contrast to the severe cuts proposed by President Trump in the fiscal year 2019 budget.

Today, in fact, I attended a meeting for the CEO Council for Growth at Drexel University. The council's mission is to lead our region forward by convening decisionmakers, taking action, and doing the things necessary to strengthen our regional economy.

With poverty at 26 percent in my district, I am committed to working with the CEOs present at today's meeting and others who are using creativity and innovation to help reduce poverty, combat hunger, and spur economic growth.

I also attended a discussion at Temple University in Philadelphia. Although the recently passed budget was by no means perfect, I firmly believe

that our leadership and our actions matter.

So it was great to hear firsthand from professors at Temple University today about how the recent jolt in NIH funding will allow them to keep their research on the rise. If we want to continue moving the needle on poverty reduction, we must make it our priority to invest in all of our neighborhoods.

We are in the business of doing no harm. As elected officials, we are here to help move our neighborhoods forward, not backward, and we must continue to urgently press for commonsense economic solutions for Americans most in need.

I stand before you today to tell you just as I have always done before, we must continue to make ideas matter. We must push for commonsense solutions to help move us past the conditions that led to the Kerner Report.

Mr. Speaker, I have my colleague from California (Ms. LEE) here, who is someone whom I have watched and observed. As a matter of fact, she is the chair leading the effort from the Democratic perspective on attacking this issue of poverty. She has been in the forefront of this particular issue, and her voice is heard throughout this entire Nation, the Honorable BARBARA LEE from the 13th District.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first, let me thank Congressman DWIGHT EVANS for, once again, hosting this very important Special Order and for really continuing this fight for racial and economic justice both here in the House of Representatives but also in his congressional district. So I thank the gentleman very much for his tremendous leadership.

Fifty years ago at the height of the civil rights movement, violence erupted in cities across America. Over generations, systemic racism had produced what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., called a tale of two cities. One city was bright and full of opportunity for a select few, and another city was shrouded in darkness and locked in a never-ending cycle of poverty.

African Americans, suffocating under the pressure of institutional racism and discrimination, took to the streets.

After race riots erupted in Watts and Chicago; Newark, New Jersey; and Detroit, our government took notice. President Johnson convened the Kerner Commission, which Congressman EVANS laid out, which had three goals to investigate the root cause of the unrest.

Many activists and civil rights leaders were concerned that the Commission wouldn't reveal the true facts. But to our surprise—and I remember this very clearly—the report was brutally honest.

According to the report, White racism was responsible for the rising tensions and explosive violence ripping our Nation apart. So that should have been a wake-up call.