

not have to rely upon "good intentions." Why take the risk? Let's write it into the amendment.

MORNING BUSINESS

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session to Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-33. A joint resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of New Hampshire; to the Committee on Armed Services.

"SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1

"Whereas, the Department of the Navy has maintained the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard since June 12, 1800; and

"Whereas, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard has performed in an exemplary manner throughout its almost 2 centuries of history; and

"Whereas, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is one of the most modern facilities available in the United States for the repair, overhauling, and refueling of naval vessels; and

"Whereas, the communities located near the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, in Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts offer an abundance of highly trained, skilled and experienced workers who have an outstanding work ethic; and

"Whereas, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is uniquely and strategically located for the continued defense of our country; and

"Whereas, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is known for its leadership in the environmental field and has worked hard to be a partner with the surrounding communities; and

"Whereas, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard has an aggressive pollution prevention program which determines how to eliminate pollution at its source by preventing hazardous waste from entering the waste system; and

"Whereas, the previous closure of Pease Air Force Base has had an extremely negative economic impact on the seacoast region with recovery from that loss taking much longer than anticipated; and

"Whereas, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard contributes approximately \$594,700,000 in personal income and this loss would contribute to the further contraction of the economic base of the region; and

"Whereas, the closure of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard would have a devastating impact on an area much larger than the seacoast with that impact being much greater than that caused by the closure of Pease Air Force Base; and

"Whereas, the state of New Hampshire is firmly committed to actively supporting the continuation of the United States Naval Shipyard at Portsmouth; now, therefore, be it

"Resolved by the Senate and the House of Representatives in General Court convened:

"That the general court of New Hampshire respectfully recommends and urges the Congress of the United States to continue to operate, develop, diversify, and make fullest use of the United States Naval Shipyard at Portsmouth, New Hampshire;

"That the general court further urges the Congress of the United States to take all necessary action to ensure that the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard remains an integral component in a post-cold war defense strategy; and

"That copies of this resolution signed by the governor, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house be forwarded by the senate clerk to the President of the United States, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, President of the United States Senate, the Secretary of Defense, and to each member of the New Hampshire and Maine Congressional delegations."

POM-34. A resolution adopted by the Municipal Assembly of Morovis, Puerto Rico relative to Presidential elections; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WELLSTONE:

S. 473. A bill to establish as the nuclear energy policy of the United States that no new civilian nuclear power reactors shall be built until adequate waste emplacement capacity is available, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MACK (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 474. A bill to provide a veterans bill of rights; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. D'AMATO, and Mr. SIMON):

S. Res. 79. A resolution designating March 25, 1995, as "Greek Independence Day: A National Day Celebration of Greek and American Democracy"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mr. BAUCUS, and Mr. REID):

S. Res. 80. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the impact on the housing industry of interest rate increases by the Federal Open Market Committee of the Federal Reserve System; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WELLSTONE:

S. 473. A bill to establish as the nuclear energy policy of the United States that no new civilian nuclear power reactors shall be built until adequate waste emplacement capacity is available, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

THE NUCLEAR ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 1995

• Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, today I address a subject that has received too little attention here. I'm talking about nuclear waste. Since the Senate's last major action on this issue, 8 years have passed, extremely little progress has been made, and more questions have been raised than resolved. I propose an approach designed to keep us from ending up embroiled in another nuclear waste crisis, and to that end today I introduce the Nuclear Energy Policy Act of 1995.

The nuclear waste issue is coming to a boil throughout our country. We all know that—and hear every day about—the Department of Energy's difficulties in figuring out what to do with our high-level nuclear wastes.

My own State of Minnesota has been at the forefront of this complex issue. The legislature last year decided to allow some dry-cask storage of high-level nuclear waste on the site of the Prairie Island nuclear plant. During the debate, people were confused by the advertisements and varying claims the different sides made about the permanency and safety of such a waste dump, and about alternatives to nuclear power electricity generation. And the Federal Government did not help Minnesotans make that decision. In fact, while the battle was raging in Minnesota, the Director of DOE's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management was telling the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that if Minnesota was to allow dry-casks at Prairie Island, he could not guarantee that the waste would ever leave. And Minnesotans were then and still are all too aware that if Yucca Mountain fails to qualify as a permanent repository, there is no Federal policy for what to do with the waste then.

And we also have no policy concerning future nuclear power plants. We have no policy protecting us from a second nuclear waste crisis.

Today I introduce a bill that provides that policy. It should have been the first law Congress passed upon entering the Atomic Age. It is nothing short of common sense.

The bill I introduce today simply requires that we build no more nuclear power plants until we have some place to permanently store the waste they will generate. That's all there is to it.

There is nothing radical about this idea. It is not a partisan idea—just look at the list of original cosponsors: two Democrats and two Republicans. All this bill does is put the nuclear cart back behind the horse, where it belongs.

It is true that no utility has yet stepped forward to site a new nuclear

power plant, and that is exactly why now is the time to pass this law. Once utilities make a huge investment in siting, licensing, and building new plants, the pressure upon Congress to provide a waste-disposal option for them becomes immense. Unfortunately, if Congress acts under such pressure, it might not come up with the best resolution. Let's ensure that for future plants, we deal with the waste issue in a deliberate way, free from pressure applied by utilities with vested interests.

I want to make this point crystal clear: this bill would not impact any existing plants. It would apply only to plants that would be constructed after the date of enactment. It would, therefore, not apply to renewal of existing licenses.

Here is the current commercial high-level nuclear waste situation in a nutshell: we have DOE, by Congressional mandate, putting all of its eggs in the Yucca Mountain basket. Even when Yucca Mountain is on-line—if ever—it will be able to hold only the waste that has been and will be generated by our current generation of reactors.

Where will the waste from a new generation of reactors be disposed of? This bill requires that we answer this question before that second generation is born.

This bill does not judge the deep geologic repository approach that the DOE is currently pursuing. Nor does it make any mention of a monitored retrievable storage facility. It only says that we ought to always have enough permanent storage capacity to take care of the waste that will be generated by a new nuclear power plant.

It is not enough to have a plan for adequate storage. It is also not enough to have begun construction on a storage facility. It is not even enough to have finished building but not yet licensed a storage facility. The permanent storage facility must be sited, built, and licensed for operation before construction may begin on a new plant under this bill.

The bill is written that way because of the huge difference between the planning and building of a waste facility on the one hand, and its actually accepting waste on the other. With politically charged issues like nuclear waste, it is wise to make absolutely certain that there is water in the pool before jumping in, rather than just turning on the spigot, taking a deep breath, and diving.

I urge Senators to support this important legislation. It is time to use a little common sense.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 473

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Nuclear Energy Policy Act of 1995".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) a national energy policy that allows the construction and operation of new civilian nuclear power reactors may serve to aggravate the problem of management of high-level nuclear waste including spent nuclear fuel from the reactors;

(2) the creation of the nuclear waste has a direct effect on the amount of nuclear waste transported in interstate commerce; and

(3) it is not in the public interest, and it should not be the policy of the United States, to allow the construction or operation in the United States of any additional civilian nuclear power reactor unless a facility for the permanent emplacement of the waste exists with enough capacity for the waste that the reactor is reasonably expected to generate in its lifetime.

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to ensure that the United States does not aggravate the nuclear waste problem by permitting the creation of a new generation of civilian nuclear power reactors without adequate capacity in a permanent waste emplacement facility by establishing as the nuclear energy policy of the United States that no new civilian nuclear power reactor shall be built until adequate waste emplacement capacity is available.

SEC. 4. NUCLEAR ENERGY POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.

(a) ADEQUATE EMPLACEMENT FACILITY.—No civilian nuclear power reactor shall be built after the date of enactment of this Act until—

(1) there is a facility licensed by the United States for the permanent emplacement of high-level radioactive waste (including spent nuclear fuel) from the reactor; and

(2) there is an adequate volume of capacity within the emplacement facility to accept all of the high-level radioactive waste (including spent nuclear fuel) that will be generated by the reactor during the reasonably foreseeable operational lifetime of the reactor.

(b) GENERATION OF SPENT FUEL.—At no time shall the aggregate volume of high-level radioactive waste (including spent nuclear fuel) that is generated, or reasonably expected to be generated, by all civilian power reactors on which federally authorized construction was begun after the date of enactment of this Act exceed the total volume of capacity available in facilities licensed by the United States for the permanent emplacement of the high-level radioactive waste (including spent nuclear fuel).

SEC. 5. ENFORCEMENT.

Any affected citizen may enforce this Act by bringing a civil action in the United States district court for the district in which the person resides or in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.●

By Mr. MACK (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 474. A bill to provide a veterans bill of rights; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

THE VETERANS BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 1995

● Mr. MACK. Mr. President, today my colleague from Florida, Senator BOB GRAHAM, and I are introducing legislation to ensure that all veterans have access to the same care and benefits provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, religion, age, or geographic location.

Under the Veterans Bill of Rights Act, veterans in all States will have equal access to such services as VA medical facilities, treatment, and personnel; VA home loan guaranty assistance, job training assistance, the administrative claims process, and equal treatment in the handling of claims for benefits.

While equal access to these essential veterans benefits and services is implied, in reality, it is not always the case. My home State of Florida, for example, has the most 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans in the United States. It is also home to the second largest overall veterans population. Consequently, the demand for services from the Department of Veterans Affairs is far greater than other States. Florida's veterans population, however, has far less access to medical care and other benefits than nearly every other State. In fact, veterans in Florida are forced to wait months for appointments at VA medical centers and outpatient clinics while veterans in other States have no waiting lines. That's wrong, and it must be changed.

Our Government made a contract with the men and women who bravely served our country in times of need. The contract guaranteed that the Federal Government would provide for them in return for their service. Many who honored this contract were injured or disabled. The Federal Government must live up to its' end of the contract by providing equitable treatment regardless of where the veteran lives.

Veterans in many States, like those who reside and vacation in Florida, do not receive their fair share of benefits. The Veterans Bill of Rights corrects this inequity, and I strongly urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 474

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Bill of Rights Act".

SEC. 2. ADMINISTRATION OF RIGHTS AND BENEFITS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall take any action necessary to ensure that any rights and benefits provided under title 38, United States Code, to veterans who qualify for the rights and benefits—

(1) are made available to the veterans in any one State or geographic location to the same extent as the rights and benefits are made available to the veterans in any other State or geographic location; and

(2) are not denied to any veteran on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, religion, age, or geographic location.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION.

For purposes of this Act, the term "State" has the same meaning given such term in