

## USNIC Urges Steps on DOE Waste Management Program

Citing growing concern over lack of U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) progress in re-establishing the Nation's civilian nuclear waste management program, the U.S. Nuclear Infrastructure Council outlined executive action options to re-establish the statutorily established Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM), nominating a director and using an estimated \$10 million in carryover funding to make preparations to restart the Yucca Mountain licensing process.

These steps "would send a clear signal that DOE is serious about discharging its statutory obligations under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act," said the Council in a January 23, 2018 letter to U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry. This month marks the 20th anniversary of the Department's failure to meet its contractual obligation to start removing spent nuclear fuel from commercial nuclear reactors. Federal taxpayer liabilities are approaching \$30 billion with approximately 86,000 metric tons of commercial and defense waste stranded at 121 sites in 39 states.

"Notwithstanding early assurances given to the Congress during your confirmation and subsequent visit to Yucca Mountain that there would be no more 'kicking the can down the road' -- and the President's FY2018 appropriations request for \$120 million 'to restart licensing activities for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository and to initiate a robust interim storage program' -- the Department has given every appearance as of late of returning to a business-as-usual status quo approach," the Council said. "A case in point" noted the Council is the Department's newly established management and organization structure, which omits the OCRWM.

"Clearly, now more than ever Mr. Secretary your leadership is needed to set a new course and re-establish this important national program on a forward path. We hope you will take affirmative steps to deploy concrete actions available to you to stand-up the OCRWM. A working National waste management program is vital to current and future nuclear energy plants as well as national security and defense waste legacy communities," added the Council.

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### About USNIC

*The United States Nuclear Infrastructure Council (USNIC) is the leading U.S. business consortium advocate for nuclear energy and promotion of the American supply chain globally. Composed of nearly 100 companies, USNIC represents the "Who's Who" of the nuclear supply chain community, including key utility movers, technology developers, construction engineers, manufacturers and service providers. USNIC encompasses eight working groups and select task forces. For more information visit [www.usnic.org](http://www.usnic.org).*