

SR-58, As Adopted by Senate, May 22, 2013

Substitute for Senate Resolution No. 58.

A resolution to urge careful review of the proposed underground nuclear waste repository in Ontario, Canada, and memorialize the United States Congress to do all it can to see that Michigan's concerns are fully addressed.

Whereas, Ontario Power Generation is proposing to construct an underground, long-term burial facility for all of Ontario's low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste at the Bruce Nuclear Generating Station, some of which is long-lived intermediate waste. This site, less than a mile inland from the shore of Lake Huron and about 440 yards below the lake level, is approximately 120 miles upstream from the main drinking water intakes for Southeast Michigan; and

Whereas, Lake Huron and the other Great Lakes are critically-important resources to both the United States and Canada. The Great Lakes contain 95 percent of North America's surface fresh water and provide drinking water to tens of millions of people. Pristine water is important to fishing, boating, recreation, tourism, and agriculture in Michigan and throughout the region. Agriculture, commercial and sport fisheries, shipping, recreation, and tourism are important components of the Great Lakes economy. This proposal to place a permanent nuclear waste burial facility so close to the Great Lakes raises serious concerns; and

Whereas, As part of an effort to protect water quality, Michigan's siting criteria for the disposal of low-level radioactive waste prohibits any site located within ten miles of Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, the Saint Mary's River, the Detroit River, the St. Clair River, or Lake St. Clair. It also excludes sites located within a 500-year floodplain, located over a sole source aquifer, or located where the hydrogeology beneath the site discharges groundwater to the land surface within 3,000 feet of the boundaries of the site. We encourage Canada to consider similar siting criteria; and

Whereas, International agreements between the United States and Canada state that radiological contamination should be reduced and emphasize the concept of prevention. We encourage Canada, as part of its public review process, to make known the steps that have been or will be taken to fulfill the requirements of these agreements; and

Whereas, Siting an underground nuclear waste repository in limestone, as proposed by Ontario Power Generation, is the first of its kind. The environmental impact statement for this proposed nuclear waste burial facility noted that the acceptability of an alternative site was "unknown." We encourage the use of sound scientific principles and analyses in determining whether this geologic formation is appropriate for the safe long-term storage of radioactive waste and that before making any further approvals of this proposed facility, this scientific data, along with information regarding the alternative sites that were considered, be made available; and

Whereas, Given the proximity and potential impact to many Michigan residents, we urge Canadian and Ontario officials, along with all relevant governmental agencies, to ensure open communication and information sharing with Michigan citizens about this proposal and to possibly consider extending the public comment period; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge Canadian officials to thoroughly review the proposed underground nuclear waste repository in Ontario, Canada, including the issues raised herein, and we memorialize the United States Congress to do all it can to see that Michigan's concerns are fully addressed; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Premier of Ontario, the President of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, the Chairman of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the President of the United States Senate, the

Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.