

Resolution Supporting Legislation to Establish an Integrated Nuclear Waste Disposal Program

WHEREAS, The United States Congress passed the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 in order to provide for the management and permanent disposal of spent nuclear fuel; *and*

WHEREAS, The Act, including amendments, directs the U.S. Department of Energy to develop the nuclear waste management and disposal program to begin accepting spent nuclear fuel no later than January 31, 1998; *and*

WHEREAS, The member Commissioners of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners are obligated to protect the interests of electric utility ratepayers and are concerned about the timely temporary storage and permanent disposal of spent nuclear fuel and the propriety of continuing ratepayer payments into the Nuclear Waste Fund in the face of the Federal government's continuing failure to provide such storage and disposal; *and*

WHEREAS, Ratepayers served by nuclear utilities contribute approximately \$600 million per year into the Nuclear Waste Fund, the U.S. Congress appropriates only a small portion of the money for the nuclear waste program, with the rest of the annual contribution being used to reduce the federal government's budget deficit; *and*

WHEREAS, Despite recent improvements by DOE to focus the program, State Commissioners have concluded that Congress should enact legislation that is compatible with the NARUC principles adopted on November 16, 1994; *now, therefore, be it*

RESOLVED, That the Executive Committee of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 1996 Summer Meetings in Los Angeles, California, urges the Senate to adopt legislation compatible with the NARUC principles:

- The federal government should fulfill its obligations under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act in a timely and efficient manner.
- Congress should reform the funding mechanism to ensure that nuclear waste funds are used for only program purposes.
- Congress should enable the Department of Energy to proceed with an Interim Spent Fuel Storage Installation in conjunction with active pursuit of a permanent repository.
- Congress should improve the efficiency of the licensing process of the high-level nuclear waste repository, without compromising health, safety, and environmental factors.

and commends the Senate for bringing S. 1936 to the Senate Floor for swift action; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the NARUC strongly urges the House to also take swift action this year on a companion bill; *and be it further*

RESOLVED, That the NARUC strongly urges both the House and the Senate to provide sufficient funding in the Fiscal Year 1997 Energy and Water Appropriations Act for the Department of Energy to proceed with site characterization work at Yucca Mountain, Nevada for a permanent repository, as well as the development of a centralized interim storage facility.

Sponsored by the Committee on Electricity

Adopted July 25, 1996