Resolution Supporting an Adequate Appropriation for the Department of Energy's Nuclear Waste Management and Disposal Program

WHEREAS, The amount of funding appropriated by the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development of the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations of $281 million for the U.S. Department of Energy's high-level nuclear waste management and disposal program is, by any measure, totally inadequate to maintain any reasonable progress towards completion of the nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Energy had requested $409 million in order to maintain reasonable progress towards site characterization at Yucca Mountain; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Senate approved only $355 million for the program, which is less than the Department needs, but would allow at least for some minimal progress at the planned repository site; and

WHEREAS, The House Subcommittee's amount of $281 million is not only inadequate to keep the characterization of Yucca Mountain on schedule, it will, according to the Department of Energy, cause an indefinite delay in making its site suitability recommendation to the President; and

WHEREAS, The Nation's electricity ratepayers will pay more than $650 million into the Nuclear Waste Fund in fiscal year 2000, nearly three times the amount appropriated by the Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, At that level of funding, nearly a half billion dollars in millage fees is being diverted to deficit reduction instead of its legislatively mandated purpose of disposal of nuclear waste; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), convened in its 1999 Summer Meeting in San Francisco, California, expresses its strong displeasure over the inadequate Subcommittee appropriation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That NARUC urgently and emphatically requests that the full U.S. House Committee on Appropriations correct this gross injustice by appropriating the necessary funding to assure that the nuclear waste disposal program can proceed to a site suitability recommendation and license application within the time frame currently advocated by the Department of Energy.

Sponsored by the Committee on Electricity
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors July 23, 1999