



# Briefing Notice

## What Congress Needs to Know About Pending Nuclear Waste Legislation

Friday, November 13, 2020  
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Please RSVP to receive updates: [www.eesi.org/111320nuclear#rsvp](http://www.eesi.org/111320nuclear#rsvp)  
Live webcast will be streamed at: [www.eesi.org/livecast](http://www.eesi.org/livecast)

The **Environmental and Energy Study Institute** (EESI) invites you to join us for an online briefing about pending nuclear waste legislation, including amendments to the *Nuclear Waste Policy Act* and other bills, which would radically alter the way radioactive waste from civilian nuclear power plant is handled and stored. The nuclear waste issue is coming to a head as more and more nuclear plants shut down and enter decommissioning. Irradiated nuclear fuel (a.k.a. “spent” fuel) is currently stored in fuel pools and dry storage canisters on reactor sites, but these systems are unhardened and subject to leaks, failures, and attack. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is in the process of licensing two private “consolidated interim storage facilities” (CISFs) in New Mexico and Texas, which would store the waste indefinitely in surface-stored or shallowly buried casks that are also subject to leaks and failures. Opening CISFs would trigger thousands of shipments of irradiated fuel over decades, crossing through most states and Congressional districts. All these approaches are fraught with feasibility problems and risks that could profoundly impact public safety, the environment, and the economy.

The briefing will discuss the status of pending bills and amendments and how they propose to deal with these problems and risks. While most Hill watchers expect few bills to move in this Congress after the election, it is worth noting that in the past, when legislation that changed how the United States handles nuclear waste was enacted, it occurred during the lame duck session, and therefore could again. But whether current bills dealing with nuclear waste move in this Congress or the next, the issue is pressing. Key decisions about what to do with nuclear waste from decommissioned plants are imminent, CISF licensing is moving ahead quickly, and Congress may soon be asked to vote on legislation that would change procedures and liability for storing nuclear waste at reactor sites, and enable it to be transported across the country to CISFs. This is the third EESI briefing on nuclear plant decommissioning and radioactive waste issues. It will be a moderated discussion with leading experts and advocates, including:

- **Robert Alvarez**, Associate Fellow, Institute for Policy Studies; former Department of Energy Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary for National Security and the Environment
- **Don Hancock**, Nuclear Waste Program Director, Southwest Research and Information Center
- **Diane D’Arrigo**, Radioactive Waste Project Director, Nuclear Information and Resource Service
- **Daniel Bresette, moderator**, Executive Director, Environmental and Energy Study Institute

This briefing was sponsored by [Hudson River Sloop Clearwater](#), with support from members of the **National Decommissioning Working Group**.

This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Amaury Laporte at [alaporte@eesi.org](mailto:alaporte@eesi.org) or (202) 662-1884.

