

Minister
of Natural Resources



Ministre
des Ressources naturelles

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E4

July 10, 2020

Ms. Theresa McClenaghan
Canadian Environmental Law Association
theresa@cela.ca

Ms. Brennain Lloyd
Northwatch
brennain@northwatch.org

Mr. Ole Hendrickson
Concerned Citizens of Renfrew County and Area
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Mr. John Jackson
Nuclear Waste Watch
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Mr. Gordon Edwards
Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility
ccnr@web.ca

Ms. Ginette Charbonneau
Ralliement contre la pollution radioactive
ginettech@hotmail.ca

Dear Meses. McClenaghan, Lloyd, and Charbonneau and Messrs. Hendrickson, Jackson, and Edwards:

Thank you for your correspondence of May 15, 2020, on behalf of 100 public interest groups, regarding Canada's plans to ensure that there is a strong policy framework and a clear plan in place for the safe, long-term management of all of the country's nuclear waste and signaling your strong support for this initiative.

The Government of Canada remains committed to a renewed relationship with Indigenous Peoples based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnership. We recognize the importance of committing to open, transparent, and collaborative approaches with the public, including Indigenous Peoples, for policy development and implementation. Policy for radioactive waste management is no exception.

On February 27, 2020, the Government of Canada announced that it will modernize Canada's radioactive waste policy. In the coming months, federal officials will be working with stakeholders and talking to Canadians to ensure that Canada continues to have a strong policy framework and a clear path for the safe long-term management of all our nuclear waste. As part of this process, we will consult and engage with all Canadians. Your views will be an important part of that conversation, and I will ask my staff to reach out to you in advance of the launch of our engagement process on how best to solicit your feedback for the enhancement of the policy and development of a national plan for the management of nuclear waste in Canada. Given the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, this will likely be in the fall, and our engagement process will be adjusted to take into consideration the physical distancing requirements of each jurisdiction.

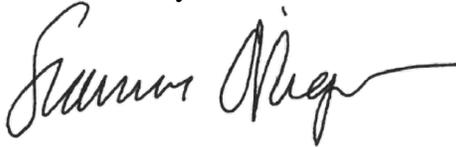
Canada

The Government of Canada is dedicated to ensuring that safe solutions are in place for managing radioactive waste, and we are committed to constant improvement. Canada's Radioactive Waste Policy Framework, in its current form, provides a set of principles governing the institutional and financial arrangements for the long-term management of radioactive waste, including a clear assignment of the roles and responsibilities of both the federal government and waste owners. Projects currently under review will continue to be subject to a thorough regulatory review process, including any effects on the environment, based on science, evidence, and Indigenous knowledge, as well as meaningful consultation with potentially affected Indigenous Peoples. During the review process, opportunities for public input will be provided at key stages of the environmental assessment.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC), Canada's independent nuclear regulator, regulates the use of nuclear energy and materials in Canada across the full life cycle to ensure the protection of health, safety, security, and the environment. The CNSC reviews proposals pursuant to the robust regulatory framework established through the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act*. The CNSC is committed to ongoing improvement and periodic review of its regulatory requirements, including those on radioactive waste and decommissioning activities. Results from the review of Canada's Radioactive Waste Policy Framework can be applied to how the CNSC regulates when the policy review is complete.

Again, thank you for writing on this important matter, and I trust that you will all remain healthy and safe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Seamus O'Regan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Honourable Seamus O'Regan, P.C, M.P.