

YUCCA MOUNTAIN TASK FORCE

**Statement By
The Honorable Charles Pray
Co-Chairman, Yucca Mountain Task Force
&
State of Maine Nuclear Safety Advisor**

**Regarding the Administration's
Nuclear Fuel Management & Disposal Act**

April 5, 2006

The Task Force is encouraged by the comprehensiveness of this legislation. The legislative package thoughtfully facilitates key infrastructure and programmatic reforms to expedite Yucca Mountain, which are both critical to progress and reflect common sense modernization of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

The funding solution embraced in the bill is straightforward and particularly imperative to ensure necessary funding for licensing and development -- and full appropriation of the more than \$750 million collected annually from nuclear energy consumers. We also applaud the inclusion of other sensible, long overdue reforms to lift outmoded Yucca Mountain capacity limits, allow licensing and regulatory flexibility, expedite infrastructure activities including implementation of transportation initiatives -- and clarify waste confidence to permit the operation of new nuclear energy plants in States that wish to include them in their energy portfolio mix.

While the time remaining in the current session of the Congress may be limited, it is our hope that -- given the paramount importance of this issue to the country's national security and economic health as well as the \$25 billion investment by ratepayers -- the leadership of the House and Senate will work proactively toward enactment of this legislation this year.

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The YMTF is a joint bipartisan national initiative of the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition, U.S. Transport Council, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Prairie Island Community Council, Decommissioning Plant Coalition, and other organizations that collectively represent state regulatory authorities, nuclear utilities, and businesses with principal operations throughout the United States.

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