

Senator Basham offered the following resolution:

Senate Resolution No. 8.

A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress, the Department of Energy, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to work diligently to open the Yucca Mountain Federal Repository for high-level radioactive waste so that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources can acquire and use the former site of the Big Rock Point nuclear power plant for park and recreation purposes in a safe manner.

Whereas, The Big Rock Point nuclear power plant located in Charlevoix County was the nation's oldest nuclear power plant, operating for 35 years before it was shut down and decommissioned in 1997. The power plant no longer exists; and

Whereas, Consumers Energy power company, the owner of Big Rock Point, is offering to sell 435 acres of land surrounding the site of the former plant to the state of Michigan. The land, which is along the shores of beautiful Lake Michigan, abounds with habitat for deer, porcupines, bears, bald eagles, and endangered plant species; and

Whereas, The land being offered for sale surrounds, but does not include a one hundred-acre buffer zone encircling a one-acre high-security storage site that contains 441 bundles of spent nuclear fuel rods. This spent nuclear fuel is characterized as high-level radioactive waste and is stored in steel reinforced concrete casks as regulated under federal law; and

Whereas, As mandated in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, the Department of Energy has been working to open a federal high-level nuclear waste repository. However, they are seriously behind schedule and have had to abandon several proposed timelines; and

Whereas, In 2002, the President of the United States and the United States Congress enacted the Yucca Mountain Development Act, which completed the site selection process mandated by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act and paved the way for the Department of Energy to seek licenses from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to build and operate a repository at Yucca Mountain; and

Whereas, Until Yucca Mountain is open, high-level radioactive waste must be stored on-site at power plants across the nation, including the site of the former Big Rock Point nuclear power plant. In this day and age, with the threat of terrorism always looming, it is most prudent to keep high-level radioactive waste in one safe and secure central location, rather than at sites scattered across the nation; and

Whereas, The land surrounding the high-security nuclear waste storage site at Big Rock Point has been deemed safe by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and they have approved its release for other uses such as for recreation. However, the removal of the high-level radioactive waste stored at Big Rock Point would make this land even more attractive and safe; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we memorialize the United States Congress, the Department of Energy, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to work diligently to open the Yucca Mountain Federal Repository for high-level radioactive waste so that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources can acquire and use the former site of the Big Rock Point nuclear power plant for park and recreation purposes in a safe manner; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the United States Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.