

Rep. Sheppard offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 21.

A resolution to memorialize the Congress of the United States to reinstate funding for the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository.

Whereas, Over the past four decades, nuclear power has been a significant source for the nation's electricity production. There are 104 operating nuclear power reactors in the United States, providing about one-fifth of the nation's electricity generation. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Michigan's three nuclear power plants provided 28 percent of the electricity generated in Michigan in 2013; and

Whereas, Nuclear power can provide large amounts of reliable, emission-free electricity at stable prices. Many electricity markets across the nation are, or will soon be, in need of new baseload generating capacity. However, the construction of new nuclear power plants is being hampered by the unresolved issue of spent nuclear fuel; and

Whereas, Since the earliest days of nuclear power, the great dilemma is how to deal with used nuclear fuel. Currently, more than 70,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel are stored in pools or casks at temporary, and potentially vulnerable, sites around the country, including in Michigan. More nuclear waste is generated every day. This high-level radioactive waste demands exceptional care in all facets of its storage and disposal, including transportation; and

Whereas, The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 requires the federal government, through the Department of Energy (DOE), to build a repository for the permanent storage of high-level radioactive waste from nuclear power plants. This act includes a specific timetable to identify a suitable location and to establish the waste repository; and

Whereas, The establishment of a federal nuclear waste repository is more than fifteen years overdue. Under the Act, the DOE was supposed to begin accepting and storing the nation's nuclear waste by January 31, 1998. In 2002, Congress and President Bush approved Yucca Mountain in Nevada as the site of the repository, and in 2008, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) accepted an application by the DOE to construct and operate the repository. However, in 2010, at the urging of President Obama, the DOE chose to unilaterally and irrevocably terminate the Yucca Mountain repository process; and

Whereas, The NRC released a report in October 2014 that found Yucca Mountain would be a safe and acceptable repository for the permanent storage of used nuclear fuel. The repository would meet all NRC standards for protecting people and the environment from radioactivity. Clearly, it is time to re-open the Yucca Mountain process, as it will provide the best long-term solution to our nation's used nuclear fuel problem; and

Whereas, The Yucca Mountain process cannot move forward without the U.S. Congress appropriating additional funds. Electric rate-payers in Michigan and across the country have paid billions into the federal Nuclear Waste Fund specifically to support development of a long-term repository. Since 1983, in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, customers of Michigan electric utilities have paid \$812 million into the federal fund. While fee collection has been suspended as of May 16, 2014, the fund still contains a total balance of over \$31 billion; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to reinstate funding for the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository; and be it further

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