

Enrolled

Senate Joint Memorial 11

Sponsored by Senator DEVLIN, Representative JENSON

To the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-fifth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas the maintenance of healthy, unpolluted river systems, airsheds and land are essential to the economic vitality and well-being of the citizens of the State of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest; and

Whereas the United States Department of Energy's Hanford Nuclear Reservation is the most contaminated site in North America; and

Whereas radioactive waste stored at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation is already leaking into and contaminating the ground water beneath the Hanford site; and

Whereas contaminated ground water, which ultimately flows into the Columbia River, presents a threat to human health and to sensitive species in the river, including endangered salmon; and

Whereas Oregon cities currently rely on the Columbia River for drinking water and other Oregon communities may eventually exercise their rights to drinking water supplies from the river; and

Whereas the environmental cleanup of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation is a top priority for Oregonians; and

Whereas the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, an Oregon tribe, with treaty rights supported by the State of Oregon that protect resources and access to resources, are at risk from Hanford operations and cleanup activities; and

Whereas the United States Department of Energy projects that cleanup will not be complete at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation until at least 2048; and

Whereas despite considerable progress with many cleanup projects at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, significant other work remains, such as retrieval of buried wastes, the safe disposition of sludge from Hanford's K Basins and demolition of the plutonium finishing plant; and

Whereas the United States Department of Energy is constructing a massive complex of treatment facilities to vitrify the 53 million gallons of high-level radioactive waste stored at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, a process that puts the waste into a stable form suitable for long-term storage or disposal; and

Whereas this waste is stored in aging underground storage tanks, many of which have leaked; and

Whereas significant delays with the vitrification project will likely result in treatment facilities not being available until 2019; and

Whereas the risk of leaks from Hanford's underground storage tanks will increase because of these delays; and

Whereas funding shortages are expected to cause increasing numbers of regulatory milestones to be missed; and

Whereas the State of Oregon is seeking standing under the Hanford Tri-Party Agreement to affect decisions by the United States Department of Energy, the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Washington regarding waste management at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

(1) The Congress of the United States is respectfully urged to:

(a) Provide stable and sufficient funding for the cleanup effort at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, including the construction of the vitrification facilities and other needed cleanup and waste management efforts, to ensure the health and safety of Oregonians and the health of the Columbia River; and

(b) Direct the United States Department of Energy to do the following:

(A) Expedite efforts to protect the Columbia River, including cleanup of contaminated ground water that may threaten the Columbia River;

(B) Work closely with Pacific Northwest officials and residents to ensure success of cleanup and waste management efforts; and

(C) Provide the State of Oregon with a decision-making role in matters affecting the handling, storage and cleanup of radioactive and chemical wastes at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, including a role in the Hanford Tri-Party Agreement or any successor thereto.

(2) A copy of this memorial shall be sent to each member of the Oregon Congressional Delegation and the Washington Congressional Delegation, the United States Secretary of the Interior, the United States Secretary of Energy and the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Adopted by Senate March 24, 2009

Secretary of Senate

President of Senate

Adopted by House May 19, 2009

Speaker of House