

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 17, 2002

The Honorable Colin Powell
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Powell:

We are writing to express to you our concerns about a proposal to add nearly 2,000 dry storage casks for high-level radioactive waste at the Bruce nuclear power complex (Bruce Complex) near the shoreline of Lake Huron in Ontario.

As you may know, the Bruce Complex, which is about 150 miles northeast of Detroit, Michigan and sits near the shorelines of the Great Lakes, is the world's largest nuclear power site. The Bruce Complex has a total of nine nuclear reactors on site, four of which are currently operating. Currently, the Bruce Complex is home to about 14,000 metric tons of radioactive waste which includes waste that has been imported from Canada's other nuclear power plants.

Recently, Bruce Complex and Canadian government officials have proposed an expansion to add nearly 2,000 dry storage casks, which would more than double the complex's capacity to store radioactive waste to about 35,000 metric tons. To provide some perspective, there are currently less than 2,000 metric tons of high-level radioactive waste stored at the three operating nuclear power plants and the one decommissioned nuclear power plant in Michigan. The Bruce Complex would store more than 17 times the amount of radioactive waste at one site than is stored in the entire state of Michigan.

In the wake of the events of September 11, 2001, the establishment of such a high-profile and large facility for the storage of high-level radioactive waste on the shorelines of the Great Lakes needs to be thoroughly evaluated and carefully considered. In addition, given the importance of the Great Lakes to tens of millions of Canadian and U.S. citizens for drinking water, fisheries, tourism, recreation, and other industrial and economic uses, special consideration needs to be given to the potential environmental impacts of such a large radioactive waste site on the shorelines of our region's most important natural resource.

In the tradition of nearly a century of bi-national decision-making regarding the stewardship of the Great Lakes, embodied in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, we believe that the decision to store such a large quantity of nuclear waste along the shores of an internationally shared resource needs to be reviewed. Therefore, we urge you to contact the Canadian government as soon as possible and to discuss this issue formally at the next Canadian-U.S. bilateral meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Debbie Stabenow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Debbie" and last name "Stabenow" clearly legible.
Debbie Stabenow

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carl Levin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carl" and last name "Levin" clearly legible.
Carl Levin