

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 2—COMMITTEE
ON LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS AND ELECTIONS

(ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE ON
HIGH-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE)

FEBRUARY 17, 2011

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources

SUMMARY—Directs certain state agencies to investigate whether the State could potentially receive compensation from the Federal Government for environmental contamination in Nevada as a result of certain military exercises, nuclear weapons testing and other activities conducted by the Federal Government in Nevada. (BDR R-247)

~

EXPLANATION – Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter between brackets **[omitted material]** is material to be omitted.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION—Directing the Office of the Attorney General, the Agency for Nuclear Projects and the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to conduct a joint investigation into whether Nevada could potentially receive monetary compensation from the Federal Government for contamination as a result of certain military exercises, nuclear weapons testing and other activities conducted by the Federal Government in Nevada, to the extent that such an investigation would not cost those agencies any money or resources.

- 1 WHEREAS, The Federal Government has conducted numerous
- 2 activities and military exercises in Nevada that have resulted in the
- 3 contamination of the environment of this State with radioactive
- 4 material and other hazardous contaminants; and
- 5 WHEREAS, The Armed Forces of the United States have
- 6 conducted military exercises in multiple geographic regions of
- 7 Nevada using ammunition, weaponry and other military equipment
- 8 that were composed, in part, of depleted uranium, a high-density,



* S C R 2 *

1 radioactive material that is a by-product of the uranium enrichment
2 process, much of which remains as radioactive debris in the Nevada
3 landscape; and

4 WHEREAS, The Nevada Test Site, which is located in Nye
5 County, Nevada, approximately 65 miles northwest of Las Vegas,
6 Nevada, was established by the Federal Government in 1950 for the
7 purposes of detonating nuclear devices and conducting other related
8 nuclear tests in connection with the research and development of
9 nuclear weapons for use by the Armed Forces of the United States;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, From 1951 until 1992, the Federal Government
12 conducted 100 atmospheric nuclear tests and 828 underground
13 nuclear tests at the Nevada Test Site, which resulted in the
14 detonation of 1,021 nuclear devices; and

15 WHEREAS, Each detonation of a nuclear device at the Nevada
16 Test Site produced nuclear fallout consisting of hundreds of
17 different kinds of radioactive isotopes and left behind vast quantities
18 of radioactive materials, waste and debris, including millions of
19 curies of uranium, thorium, iodine, cobalt, tritium, plutonium and
20 other radionuclides; and

21 WHEREAS, The detonation of nuclear devices in the atmosphere
22 caused millions of curies of radionuclides to be dispersed over a
23 large geographic area of Nevada; and

24 WHEREAS, Approximately one-third of the underground nuclear
25 tests at the Nevada Test Site were conducted directly in aquifers,
26 and many other underground tests were conducted above the water
27 table; and

28 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Energy has
29 estimated that nuclear testing at the Nevada Test Site left behind
30 more than 300 million curies of radionuclides, making the site one
31 of the most radioactively contaminated places in the United States;
32 and

33 WHEREAS, Since 1961, Area 5 and Area 3 within the Nevada
34 Test Site have been primary storage and disposal sites of the Federal
35 Government for low-level and mixed low-level radioactive waste;
36 and

37 WHEREAS, The Nevada Test Site continues to be used for
38 activities unrelated to nuclear weapons testing, including, without
39 limitation, hazardous chemical spill testing, emergency response
40 training, conventional weapons testing and waste management
41 studies; and

42 WHEREAS, The aforementioned activities of the Federal
43 Government in Nevada have had a deleterious effect on the
44 environment of this State and have resulted in the contamination of
45 the surface, subsurface, groundwater and aquifers of a large



* S C R 2 *

1 geographic area of Nevada with radioactive and other hazardous
2 contaminants; now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, THE
4 ASSEMBLY CONCURRING, That the Office of the Attorney General,
5 the Agency for Nuclear Projects and the State Department of
6 Conservation and Natural Resources be directed to conduct a joint
7 investigation into whether Nevada could potentially receive
8 monetary compensation from the Federal Government for
9 contamination of the environment in Nevada with radioactive and
10 other hazardous contaminants as a result of military exercises,
11 nuclear weapons testing and other activities conducted by the
12 Federal Government in Nevada, to the extent that conducting such
13 an investigation will not cost the agencies any additional money or
14 resources; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Office of the Attorney General report the
16 results of the investigation to the members of the 77th Session of the
17 Nevada Legislature; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and
19 transmit a copy of this resolution to the Attorney General, the
20 Executive Director of the Agency for Nuclear Projects and the
21 Director of the State Department of Conservation and Natural
22 Resources.

