



Savannah River Site Watch

**Savannah River Site Watch  
For Immediate Release  
Columbia, South Carolina USA  
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**U.S. Department of Energy Advisory Panel Recommends Against Bringing AVR and THTR Spent Fuel from Germany to Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina for Processing and Dumping**

**SRS Citizens Advisory Board (SRS CAB) Rejects DOE Plan to Import German High-Level Nuclear Waste, Vote Not Binding but Reflects Public Opposition to Waste Import from Juelich and Ahaus**

**[CAB Position Statement Against German Spent Fuel Import, 26 July 2016 - Linked Here](#)**

**Columbia, South Carolina** --- A U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) advisory panel has approved a position not to import spent nuclear fuel from Germany to the agency's Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina.

After much discussion, the SRS Citizens Advisory Board (SRS CAB) approved a "position statement" at its meeting on 26 July to oppose the proposal to import spent fuel from the Juelich and Ahaus storage facilities for "treatment and storage" at SRS.

The SRS CAB, established under federal law, advises DOE officials at the Savannah River Site on clean-up of nuclear and toxic waste at the site. The CAB voted 13 to 5 to oppose the import of the spent fuel from the long-closed AVR and THTR reactors.

"We are very pleased that the SRS CAB has reviewed the pros and cons of the proposal to import the AVR and THTR spent fuel and decided it must be rejected," said Tom Clements, director of the public interest groups Savannah River Site Watch. Based on information from German colleagues, Clements first informed the U.S. public in 2012 that the waste export from Germany was being considered. "It is a tribute to cooperation between activist groups in the US and Germany that citizens in the US and the members of the advisory board have been informed about this bad idea and decided to totally reject it," said Clements.

"We now call on DOE and German officials at the federal level and in North Rhine-Westphalia to terminate any further pursuit of this misguided scheme," added Clements, who toured the Juelich site in September 2014 and visited the CASTOR cask storage facility.

The CAB's position is not binding on DOE but reflects general opposition of the public near SRS to import the graphite spent fuel. The vote by the CAB will likely inform DOE's efforts to negotiate with Germany

to import the waste in question and will be a strong signal to German entities that the public near SRS does not want highly radioactive German graphite spent fuel imported to SRS (via the port of Charleston, South Carolina).

SRS is a 1000-square kilometer site that operated five nuclear reactors and two reprocessing facilities to produce plutonium and other materials for the U.S. nuclear weapons program. A vast amount of nuclear waste remains at SRS and DOE is struggling to manage the waste. The CAB, established to formally advise DOE's Office of Environmental Management on the SRS clean-up, has growing concern about import of waste and nuclear materials, including plutonium from Germany, that will further complicate clean-up of the site.

For the past two years, DOE has been preparing an "environmental assessment" on the import and processing of the German waste. DOE had stated that the final EA would be released in June 2016 but on 26 July 2016, SRS officials affirmed that the document is under review and no release date is available. The EA only analyzes continued research and development of processing techniques at SRS of the AVR and THTR spent fuel, anticipated to be paid for by the Forschung Zentrum Juelich (FZJ). The EA, if it is publicly released, does not analyze the actual import of the spent fuel. If the EA is issued and DOE moves forward with the project, a second EA would have to be prepared.

SRS Watch and other NGOs in South Carolina – including the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina, the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League and the Carolina Peace Resources Center - believe that the entire proposal must be stopped and the EA process terminated. These groups and others have spoken out against the proposal since its inception and will continue to oppose the project until DOE terminates it.

The CAB also renewed its position, first adopted in 2013, against bringing U.S. commercial spent fuel to SRS for "interim" storage.

**Notes:**

SRS Citizens Advisory Board "position statement" against bringing German "spent nuclear fuel" (SNF) to SRS, passed 26 July 2016:

[http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/cab\\_statement\\_against\\_german\\_spent\\_fuel\\_import\\_passed\\_july\\_26\\_2016.pdf](http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/cab_statement_against_german_spent_fuel_import_passed_july_26_2016.pdf)

SRS Citizens Advisory Board website: <http://www.srs.gov/general/outreach/srs-cab/srs-cab.html>

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SRS website on with documents on “German HEU Project”: <http://sro.srs.gov/germanheuproj.html>

DOE notice in U.S. Federal Register, “Environmental Assessment for the Acceptance and Disposition of Used Nuclear Fuel Containing U.S.-Origin Highly Enriched Uranium From the Federal Republic of Germany, June 4, 2014, <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-06-04/pdf/2014-12933.pdf>

Article in Augusta (Georgia) Chronicle – near SRS – 26 July 2016: “SRS board votes to officially oppose accepting German spent nuclear fuel” - <http://chronicle.augusta.com/news/government/2016-07-26/srs-board-votes-officially-oppose-accepting-german-spent-nuclear-fuel?v=1469564929>

DOE memo, August 1, 2013 – no proliferation risks to leave the AVR and THTR spent fuel in Germany: [http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/doe\\_no\\_proliferation\\_risk\\_august\\_1\\_2013.pdf](http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/doe_no_proliferation_risk_august_1_2013.pdf)

CAB position statement against US commercial spent fuel to SRS:

[http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/statement\\_against\\_commercial\\_spent\\_fuel\\_to\\_srs\\_july\\_26\\_2016.pdf](http://www.srswatch.org/uploads/2/7/5/8/27584045/statement_against_commercial_spent_fuel_to_srs_july_26_2016.pdf)

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