RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING CITIES TO DETERMINE THE PUBLIC SAFETY IMPACTS RESULTING FROM THE TRANSPORTATION OF HIGH LEVEL NUCLEAR WASTE

The Department of Energy (DOE) continues to work towards licensing Yucca Mountain, Nevada, as the nations first, high-level nuclear waste repository. The city of Las Vegas has been opposed to this project from the beginning. Transporting the waste by road and rail through 43 states is a dangerous proposition, one for which few, if any, communities are prepared. Although it is still uncertain whether Yucca Mountain will be licensed to accept waste, it is important that all cities along the transportation corridor understand the costs associated with preparing for shipments.

The DOE issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) in 2002, which analyzed the potential environmental consequences of transporting nuclear waste from the many production sources throughout the country to the repository at Yucca Mountain. The FEIS analyzed two intrastate transportation proposals: a mostly legal-weight truck alternative and a mostly rail alternative. The mostly legal weight truck option would transport approximately 53,000 shipments over 24 years. The mostly rail scenario is DOEs preferred alternative and would result in approximately 9,600 rail shipments and 1,100 legal-weight truck shipments over 24 years. Regardless of the scenario actually implemented, each of the 43 states where shipments originate or pass through should be prepared for at least several shipments each year (see map of Yucca routes).

The city of Las Vegas recently conducted a study in conjunction with other local public safety agencies in Clark County, Nevada, to determine the *additional* public safety costs that are a direct result from the repository and the shipping campaign. The report included input from local fire, police and emergency management agencies and determined impacts according to updated plans taken from the DOEs 2002 Final Environmental Impact Statement and other DOE documents released by the DOE in late 2004 and early 2005. The additional projected costs for all public safety agencies in the Las Vegas valley at the beginning of the proposed shipping campaign, which in 2002 was to commence in 2010, total approximately $385 million. The additional projected costs over the initial 24-year shipping campaign were calculated to be approximately $3.7 billion. Note that these costs are directly attributable to the transportation of high-level nuclear waste and would not be incurred by local public safety agencies in the absence of a repository or shipping campaign. A copy of the full report is available on the citys Web site at www.lasvegasnevada.gov/yucca.

Section 180c of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1987 directs the DOE to provide technical assistance and funds to states for training for public safety officials to defray the costs of preparing emergency responders for shipments of high-level waste to Yucca Mountain. While the DOE is required to provide some level of funding for training assistance, they are not required to cover other costs to prepare for shipments, including capital costs and equipment. The city of Las Vegas public safety impact study found that only six percent of the $385 million needed to prepare for shipments would be used for

personnel training costs, and it is doubtful that DOE would cover the full costs identified for personnel training. At the very least, public safety agencies in the Las Vegas valley would be forced to find $362 million to cover costs not associated with training. It is more likely that southern Nevada public safety agencies would have to fund almost the entire $385 million without assistance from the DOE.

The city of Las Vegas is proposing that National League of Cities members conduct similar public safety impact analyses so that they have an understanding of the magnitude of the shortfall they will be forced to address should high-level waste be shipped through their cities. Conducting a study of this kind will not only prepare cities for what resources are needed to deal with high-level waste shipments, but will also prepare cities for the resources needed for any type of emergency situation.