

STATEMENT  
BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON AMERICA'S NUCLEAR FUTURE

Thomas E. Jennings  
Roswell, New Mexico  
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Welcome to Southeastern New Mexico to the Blue Ribbon Commission of America's Nuclear Future. The opportunity to again address the issue of storing nuclear waste in southeastern New Mexico is welcomed and appreciated.

Let me start by introducing myself, my name is Thomas E. Jennings, a third generation New Mexican native to Roswell, New Mexico.

Twenty-five to thirty years ago the Department of Energy (DOE) held similar hearings regarding the sighting of the then proposed Waste Isolation Pilot Program (WIPP). I personally participated, spoke during the hearings, and, on several occasions, toured the WIPP facility.

The WIPP Land Withdrawal Agreement allowed

- WIPP would only store low level nuclear waste and *never* high level waste
- the DOE and DOT would build a highway bypass around the City of Roswell
- all of southeastern New Mexico (the counties of Chaves, Eddy and Lea) would receive financial benefit with incentives

Since the sighting of the WIPP facility, a highway bypass has been constructed around Roswell, the largest community on the WIPP route. However, the bypass was not built to federal 'interstate' standards but to standards of a road in rural America. The Roswell Bypass is ONLY a two-lane highway with more than several stop signs located at intersections in or near Roswell. The bypass is unsafe and, as you can imagine, there have been many accidents resulting in severe injuries and even death at these intersections.

To my knowledge neither Roswell nor Chaves County have received neither any of the promised monetary incentives nor benefits from the WIPP site.

And, now the DOE is considering enhancing the WIPP site to store 'high' level nuclear waste.

It is hard to believe I am again at a hearing regarding the storage of 'high' level waste at WIPP.

The DOE has not delivered as promised. As a former City Councilor, Mayor, and from a family of politicians, please know our father taught us to be known by your word, as your word was a bond.

As commission members and our representatives to Washington, please know the United States of America should keep its promise to its citizens.