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INITIATIVE AIMS TO REPEAL CALIFORNIA NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS LAW

A nuclear energy initiative that would repeal California's landmark Nuclear Safeguards Act was released today. "This initiative would open the door for new nuclear power plant construction throughout the state before—as the existing law requires—the federal government has approved and demonstrated a solution for the safe storage of high level radioactive waste."

That's what Rochelle Becker, executive director of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, said today on behalf of a coalition of organizations lining up to oppose the measure.

Concealed behind misleading words, the initiative would:

- Repeal legislation enacted 30 years ago that protects Californians from radioactive waste;
- Permit construction of nuclear power plants along the coast and in active earthquake zones;
- Allow for storage of high level radioactive nuclear waste for up to 100 years at the site of new and existing nuclear power plants in the state;
- Lower the standard for safe disposal of highly radioactive nuclear wastes."

According to Ms. Becker, "The initiative attempts to make a case for nuclear power as energy independence and providing an answer to global warming. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Numerous studies point to the greenhouse gasses generated throughout the nuclear fuel cycle—from mining and enrichment through transportation and decommissioning—while uranium prices are subject to the volatility of unstable world markets." California's Attorney General recognized the inconsistency of author Assemblyman Chuck DeVore's (R-Irvine) proposed title and summary and today provided the official title of "NUCLEAR ENERGY. REMOVAL OF PROHIBITIONS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS. STATUTE."

Ms. Becker said the Attorney General's summary of the measure warns of costs "potentially in the billions of dollars in the event of a major radioactive release."

Ms. Becker pointed out that organizations participating in the coalition against the initiative are recognized as stewards of California's environment and fighters for consumer protection. They include Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility, Bay Area Nuclear Waste Coalition, California Church Impact, CALPIRG (Public Interest Research Group), V. John White, Executive Director, Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technology (CEERT), Coastal Law Enforcement Action Network (CLEAN), Community Environmental Council Santa Barbara Ecological Life Systems Institute, Inc., The Ecological Options Network, Environment California, Environmental Health Coalition, Green Guerrillas Against Greenwash, Local Power, Planning and Conservation League, The Utility Reform Network (TURN), and Utility Consumers Action Network (UCAN).. More organizations will be joining the coalition in the days and weeks ahead as they formalize their opposition to the initiative.