



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 21, 2020

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Heinrich:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your March 20, 2020, letter requesting that the NRC delay any public meetings and extend the public comment period on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Holtec International's proposed consolidated interim storage facility in Southeast New Mexico until the COVID-19 pandemic threat has passed. You also asked that public meetings, once resumed, be held at locations across New Mexico.

The current 60-day comment period on the draft EIS was scheduled to close on May 22, 2020. Given recent events associated with the COVID-19 public health emergency, and the corresponding actions taken by Federal and State governments to mitigate its spread, the NRC staff will extend the public comment period for an additional 60 days. A notice of this extension will be published in the *Federal Register*.

The NRC staff plans to hold a nationwide webinar and five public meetings in New Mexico during the public comment period to present the staff's preliminary findings and receive public comments. As the COVID-19 public health emergency evolves, the NRC staff will continue to re-evaluate these plans for engaging the public, and will consider whether additional extensions to the comment period are warranted.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or have your staff contact Eugene Dacus, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at (301) 415-1776.

Sincerely,

Kristine L. Svinicki

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable Tom Udall
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Deb Haaland
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Xochitl Torres Small
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515