

May 8, 2002

Statement by Rep. Akin on Vote to Designate Yucca Mountain

Washington, D.C.- Congressman Akin voted to designate Nevada's Yucca Mountain as a permanent storage site for nuclear waste. Akin released the following statement today:

"The consolidation of spent nuclear fuel from many individual sites around the country to a single, well guarded location will help protect our environment, improve national security and is the safest solution for permanent storage.

"Researchers have concluded that Yucca Mountain will serve as a secure and remote facility for the underground storage of commercial and military nuclear waste. The recommendation to select Yucca Mountain as the national repository is based on over 20 years and over \$8 Billion dollars of scientific investigation and engineering studies. The resolution voted on today will continue the licensing process.

"Although there is concern over the transport of waste, proposed shipments will not be treated as normal freight and will be transported in specially designed containers. To date there have been over 2,900 commercial shipments of spent nuclear fuel with no injuries, no fatalities and no environmental damage because of the radioactivity of the cargo.

"Given that over 40 percent of the Navy's combatant vessels rely on nuclear power, our national security requires finding a safe and permanent storage solution. It is also important to address the threat of terrorist activity against facilities storing waste at existing temporary, aboveground sites.

"Voting for the safe storage of spent nuclear fuel at a single, highly secure location is the safest choice."