

April 18, 2023

Michelle Miano  
Environmental Protection Division Director  
New Mexico Environment Department

Via Online Comment Submittal

**Re: Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Renewal Draft Permit**

Dear Ms. Miano:

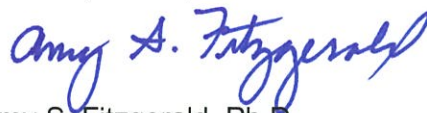
I am writing on behalf of the City of Oak Ridge, Tennessee to convey our community's strong support for renewal of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant's (WIPP) permit by the New Mexico Environment Department. It is our understanding that Secretary of Environment James Kenney has delegated the authority regarding the WIPP permit renewal to you in an order dated April 7, 2023.

Unlike many of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) facilities across the nation, the DOE's Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) is located within the City limits of Oak Ridge. Our citizens have an exceptionally long record of engagement in DOE environmental management issues, and our community has been following WIPP's operation, progress, and permit renewals for more than two decades. In fact, numerous officials from our city have traveled to Carlsbad for meetings and tours, most recently in May 2022 with the Energy Communities Alliance. Descending underground to tour the facility was a valuable opportunity to experience firsthand the effectiveness of the public safety and environmental regulations that are in place, and how the natural environment provides a significant protective barrier for disposition of hazardous materials.

The Oak Ridge Site Treatment Plan delineates the preparation, technologies and schedules agreed upon by DOE and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation for Contact and Remote-Handled Transuranic inventories located on the ORR, and which are slated for shipment to WIPP. The WIPP facility is a prime example of how federal, state, and local stakeholders can successfully work together to resolve complex problems across the DOE complex. The facility is a much-needed asset for the nation, and the City urges the New Mexico Environment Department to renew the permit for the WIPP facility.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely Yours,



Amy S. Fitzgerald, Ph.D.  
Government Affairs and Information Services Director

