

Dear Mr. Maestas and colleagues,

I am writing to express my grave concerns about the permit renewal process for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, especially the proposals to lengthen the time the facility will accept waste and to store new types of waste.

WIPP's location is inherently risky since it's above a highly pressurized brine reservoir. The site is supposed to be safe because it's encased in "undisturbed salt beds." With every year of operation and every expansion, however, the salt beds are disturbed, raising the risk of polluting underground water which would eventually reach the surface. Generating more heat would also compromise the salt beds. For these reasons, regulation of waste at WIPP should be strengthened, not weakened.

I request that NMED hold public hearings and make sure they are well-advertised in English and Spanish in every part of the state in order to encourage participation in the permit renewal process.

Thank you for your time and attention,

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