

SENATE RESOLUTION 3

By Summerville

A RESOLUTION urging the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to disapprove any request to import radioactive waste from Italy, Germany, or any other country, into the State of Tennessee or anywhere in the United States.

WHEREAS, the disposal of radioactive waste has been an ongoing concern throughout the United States and around the world; and

WHEREAS, the incineration, processing and disposal of radioactive waste in Tennessee is a matter of particular concern to the citizens of this State; and

WHEREAS, a Utah-based corporation, EnergySolutions (ES), which operates several waste processing facilities in Tennessee, has applied to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for a license to import 1,000 pounds of radioactive waste from Germany, to be brought to Tennessee for burning at Oak Ridge at its two incinerators for radioactive waste; and

WHEREAS, the German corporation, Eckert and Ziegler Nuclitec (EZN), from whom EnergySolutions will obtain this waste, advertises on their website that they collect radioactive waste from around the world; and

WHEREAS, EnergySolutions has earlier applied to the NRC for a license to import 20,000 tons of low-level and intermediate level radioactive waste from Italy for processing in Tennessee and disposal in the United States; a Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) permit to dispose of radioactive waste from its processes as regular trash in Tennessee solid waste landfills; and

WHEREAS, EnergySolutions/Duratek has applied to TDEC, Division of Radiological Health, for an amendment to their license raising the limit of the amount of radioactive materials they can possess; and

WHEREAS, should the NRC grant licenses to EnergySolutions to import radioactive waste, other processors in Tennessee will probably follow the lead of ES to import radioactive waste into Tennessee for processing, and EnergySolutions will probably import more waste from foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, the incineration of waste produces the routine release of toxins into the atmosphere such as dioxins, furans, heavy metals, and particulates, which are carcinogenic, which can also cause asthma, birth defects, heart disease, disruption of the immune and reproductive systems, and which do the most harm to those most vulnerable: the fetus, the infant, and the child; and

WHEREAS, the incineration of radioactive waste produces the routine release of radionuclide's into the atmosphere, which are extremely dangerous to the health of any person who inhales them, because the beta and gamma rays cause far more damage from within the body than outside; and

WHEREAS, the health and well-being of the citizens of Tennessee must hold the highest priority for those in Tennessee who hold public office; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of TDEC is to protect the health and environment of the citizens of Tennessee, and to inform the public on radiological issues, yet its practice is to issue licenses to processors without public hearings or input; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee desires to avoid increased costs to the State, to its health care providers, and to families for health care for those who may become ill from incineration of foreign radioactive waste; and

WHEREAS, the United States has more than enough challenges in disposing of the radioactive waste generated in this country; it is incumbent upon us to insist that other countries take responsibility for their own radioactive waste and not attempt to utilize the United States as a processor for the world's radioactive waste; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we strongly oppose the import of foreign radioactive waste into the United

States; and that we strongly urge the Governor of State of Tennessee to take all necessary actions to prevent the import of foreign nuclear waste into Tennessee, including instructing the Tennessee representative to the Southeast Compact Commission to oppose importing nuclear waste into the region and to inform the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission of this opposition to requests to import, process, or dispose of radioactive waste from Germany or any other foreign countries into the United States, and into Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Body urges and encourages the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to seek passage of legislation that would allow the department, to the extent permissible under federal law, to amend the licenses of processors in Tennessee to prohibit the processing of foreign radioactive waste.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be prepared and sent to Governor Bill Haslam, to each member of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation, to Gregory Jaczko, Chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, to Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, and to President Barrack Obama.