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**Submission
No 458**

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Committee Manager
Joint Select Committee on the Transportation and Storage of Nuclear
Waste
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney 2000

30 July 2003

Dear Committee Members,

Katoomba Neighbourhood Centre Inc. (KNC) is a grass roots community organisation in the Upper Blue Mountains. We provide a range of services and activities and advocate for social justice.

We are concerned about the health, well-being, safety and rights of people. We therefore take the opportunity to submit to this inquiry.

We are strongly opposed to the transportation of nuclear waste through our towns - ie on our local road, the Great Western Highway. We support our Blue Mountains City Council's (BMCC) opposition to this transport.

We ask that the NSW government take a decisive stand against the Federal government: who do not have to inform councils when this transportation is occurring; did not consult with the Blue Mountains Community as to whether they agreed to this transportation happening; have not consulted with communities as to whether we want a waste dump in NSW for waste from the proposed new reactor at Lucas Heights.

The Federal Governments EIS stated that there were more risks involved if waste is transported through towns. This places Blue Mountains residents at great risk. As well, this is a National Park and World Heritage area, the water catchment for Sydney with many streams and rivers as well as native fauna and flora - all these are put at risk from very long term contamination should an accident occur.

There are alternatives to nuclear produced medical isotopes - Australia could import from overseas - there is a glut on the world market and Australia could lead the world in the production of non-nuclear alternatives without jeopardising diagnostic abilities.

Incorporating :

Katoomba Volunteer Carers Service
Neighbourhood Counselling
Katoomba Out of School Hours Care
Community and Cultural Development.

Blue Mountains Home Modification & Maintenance Service
Mikayla Occasional Child Care Centre
Community Visitors Scheme

We hold grave concerns about the need for a new reactor – we do not believe that it is justified to spend over \$500 million on a new reactor - there are enough in the world already.

We are very concerned that in the long term nuclear weapons could be produced. We do not feel confident that this would not be the case and we support Australia taking peaceful actions and strategies, not ones that place us at greater risk.

Worlds Best Practice is to store waste above ground at source. Transportation increases the danger to people and the environment.

If a new reactor is built it will need to store waste. It is essential not to store waste underground – radioactive waste has a long life ability to contaminate – we need to consider current peoples and future generations. We have a responsibility NOT to threaten their health and safety. As well, regardless as to how “well” waste is packed for burial there is no guarantee it won’t leak, seep or be affected by land movements all of which have the potential to devastate animals, vegetation, food and farming and water catchments.

WE ASK THE NSW GOVERNMENT TO TAKE A PROACTIVE ROLE TOWARDS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PEOPLE OF NSW AND ON BEHALF OF ALL AUSTRALIANS.

We ask the NSW government to enact legislation to:

- stop a new reactor being built
- prevent transportation of waste through NSW towns on public roads
- stop a waste dump being built for nuclear in NSW or anywhere else in Australia.

We ask the committee to hold a public hearing in the BLUE Mountains to give this community an opportunity to voice their concerns directly.

Yours sincerely,



Brian Gravison,
KNC Chairperson.