

to fight off several persons, stood his ground for 10 minutes, but indicated that he thought he was going to die as they assaulted him. That's the bad news. The good news is that the law has worked, that this law is bringing new meaning to the notion of justice for all. This law will not allow those who would commit dastardly deeds and be prosecuted in State courts for misdemeanors to go unchecked. They will now face felony charges in our Federal courts. This is the way it should be in the greatest country in the world.

Mr. Speaker, God bless all listening, and God bless the United States of America.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor again to continue to identify and educate you on the various locations where we store high-level nuclear waste around this country and the various positions that our colleagues in the other Chamber have voted either for or against, in hopes that eventually the public will become well informed and that they will take action through their elected officials to do even what the Blue Ribbon Commission suggested, which is decide and locate a long-term geological storage facility.

This is not new. We've been doing it for decades. The Nuclear Waste Policy Act was established in 1982. The amendments were passed through this Chamber and signed into law in 1987, which identified a long-term geological repository at a place called Yucca Mountain in the desert in Nevada.

What I've been attempting to do throughout this past year and a half—I chair a subcommittee that has direct responsibility for this—is identify different locations. So today we go to a place very close to here. In fact, I think it's only 43 miles from the District of Columbia, and that's a place called Calvert Cliffs. I like to compare and contrast it with where our nuclear waste should be stored, not in a decade or two from now, but at this very moment where it should be.

Calvert Cliffs is in Maryland, and at Calvert Cliffs there are 1,300 metric tons of uranium, of spent fuel, onsite versus Yucca Mountain, which is a mountain in a desert where we have no nuclear waste onsite. At Calvert Cliffs, this spent nuclear fuel is stored above the ground in pools and in casks above the ground. If it were stored at Yucca Mountain, it would be 1,000 feet underground. At Calvert Cliffs, the nuclear waste is stored 85 feet above the groundwater, and at Yucca Mountain, it would be 1,000 feet above the water table. Finally, at Yucca Mountain, the nearest body of water is the Colorado River, about 100 miles. As you can see here in this photo, Calvert Cliffs is right next to Chesapeake Bay.

Yucca Mountain is about 90 miles from Las Vegas, maybe 100 miles from Las Vegas. Calvert Cliffs is a straight line of 43 miles from Washington, D.C. The Senators from the surrounding areas, how did they vote? You would think they wouldn't want high-level nuclear waste next to Chesapeake Bay, 43 miles from the capital city. Well, Senator CARPER voted "no" in 2002. Senator COONS, a new Member, we don't know his position. That's part of coming down here. I'm pretty sure that if the majority leader of the Senate would call a vote and this issue was thoroughly debated, it would pass on the floor of the Senate because we have a lot of Senators who have yet to declare their position. Here is Senator CARDIN, a former Member of the House, who voted "yea" in 2002 for Yucca Mountain. Senator MIKULSKI, the same; different Chamber, voted "no."

How does our national tally go? Currently we have 47 U.S. Senators who have a stated position in support of Yucca Mountain. We have over 16 that have never cast a vote or declared their position on what we do with high-level nuclear waste, either spent fuel or nuclear waste, in the processing of nuclear energy or nuclear weapons.

□ 1040

We have 19 who have had a position of "no" at some time in their career. So it's very, very important to continue this debate, Mr. Speaker, to continue to come down on the floor to talk about the Federal law as it is to date.

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act was passed in 1982; the amendment was agreed to in 1987. The amendment identified Yucca Mountain as our long-term geological repository to store high-level nuclear waste. The time is well past since we should be doing this. In fact, we actually pay utilities to hold their nuclear waste since it's our responsibility to take the waste.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN AND BUFFETT RULE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. I'm here to talk about the Buffett bill, but I just cannot allow what Mr. SHIMKUS has just said to go unresponded to because it's such an important issue for the people of the State of Nevada.

The so-called nuclear act that he discussed that was passed in '82 and amended in '87 is known in Nevada as the "screw Nevada bill," and let me tell you what it is. It's a proposal that would ship 77,000 tons of toxic radioactive nuclear waste across 43 States to be buried in a hole in the Nevada desert, which is 90 miles from the major population center of Las Vegas, where we have groundwater issues, seismic activity, and volcanic activity. The EPA cannot come up with any radiation standards that would protect the people of the State of Nevada or anyone else in this country.

Let me tell you, originally, when they came up with this nonsensical plan, which is purely political, that it has nothing to do with science. They said that we could store the rods, the nuclear waste, in Yucca Mountain with no problem, leave it there. Then we realized that that wouldn't work because of the groundwater. So then we decided that they would put their nuclear waste in canisters. But what do you know, there are no canisters that currently exist that can safely store this stuff. Then they came up with shields that would go around the canisters that don't exist to be put into Yucca Mountain.

Then the last Republican Secretary of Energy talked about an army of robots that would walk down Yucca Mountain and be able to check on the nuclear waste while it's leaking and leaching into the groundwater. It's a ridiculous proposal, and it's time to go to Plan B because Plan A isn't going to happen. Seventy-seven percent of the people of the State of Nevada do not want nuclear waste stored at Yucca Mountain. End of that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep disappointment with yesterday's vote in the United States Senate. Once again, Senate Republicans sided with Wall Street millionaires against the interests of struggling middle class families throughout Nevada. The Buffett rule is simple, and it's common sense.

It means if you are a housekeeper, a nurse, a blackjack dealer, or a waitress, or any other middle class professional, you shouldn't pay higher tax rates than multi-millionaires who own yachts and travel in private jets. It means that if you are a Nevadan living paycheck to paycheck, you shouldn't be carrying the burden for Wall Street hedge fund managers and Big Oil company executives.

The Senators who voted against basic tax fairness yesterday need to spend a little more time prioritizing the needs of hardworking Nevadans. They're struggling. These are the people that are struggling to put food on the table, to fill up their cars with gas, and to pay their mortgage or their rent.

The fact that the wealthiest people in this country pay their taxes at a lower tax rate than their secretaries and their chauffeurs doesn't pass the smell test. It stinks, and that's why I'm proud to announce that I'm a co-sponsor of the Buffett rule in the House, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me and let's bring some fundamental tax fairness to the people of the United States of America. Seventy-two percent of the American people agree with me that the Buffett rule should be made into law.

STEM EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, just minutes ago I had an opportunity to be outside