

Congressman fights nuclear waste imports

by UPI

WASHINGTON - A Utah congressman is fighting against a proposed project that he says could turn the United States into a nuclear waste dump for the world. The Christian Science Monitor reported Friday that U.S. Rep. Jim Matheson, a Democrat, is battling efforts to allow the Utah firm EnergySolutions to import large amounts of low-level radioactive waste from Italy. "I recognize that small amounts of waste have been permitted entry into the U.S. in the past; however, encouraging other nations to actively pursue disposal options in the U.S. seems shortsighted at best," the Utah Democrat wrote in a letter this week to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Environmentalists too are opposed to the project that would allow the company to ship up to 20,000 tons of mildly radioactive material from Italian nuclear-power plants to Tennessee to process it, then dispose of the waste in Utah. "If this massive quantity from Italy is accepted, it just blows the doors wide open for nuclear waste to come in from all over the world," said Tom Clements of Friends of the Earth. In a letter to federal regulators, the company said about 8 percent — about 1,600 tons — of the original volume would be sent to Utah for disposal.

© 2008 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Congressman fights nuclear waste imports by UPI