

Flawed medical arguments used to justify the proposed National Radioactive Waste Management Bill.

Call for an inquiry into the sourcing of radioisotopes in Australia and the need for radioisotope disposal facilities.

Dear Senator,

We the undersigned health organisations write to you because we are concerned that flawed arguments regarding the community's access to nuclear medicine procedures are being presented to influence your vote on the *National Radioactive Waste Management Bill* currently before the Senate.

The production of radioactive isotopes for nuclear medicine comprises a small percentage of the output of research reactors. The majority of the waste that is produced in these facilities occurs regardless of the nuclear medicine isotope production. Linking the need for a centralized radioactive waste storage facility with the production of isotopes for nuclear medicine is misleading.

There are alternatives to producing radioactive isotopes, without the need for nuclear reactors, which provide greater certainty of supply, better economies of scale, greater local scientific development opportunities and with minimal to nil levels of radioactive waste by-products, which can be dealt with locally. The Canadian government has adopted non-reactor production of radioisotopes from 2016, in response to their own inquiry.

The attached statement prepared by the Public Health Association of Australia and the Medical Association for the Prevention of War, is endorsed by Doctors for the Environment, the SA Branch of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance (NT); calls for an **inquiry into the sourcing of radioisotopes in Australia and the need for radioisotope disposal facilities.**

We strongly urge you to:


1. Vote against the *National Radioactive Waste Management Bill* and,
2. Support a Senate Inquiry into the future production and sourcing of radioisotopes in Australia.

The attached Joint Health Sector Position Statement outlines in greater detail our concerns, refutes the claims for linking a waste facility to certainty of access to nuclear medicine procedures and details arguments for such an Inquiry.

Yours sincerely,



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Emeritus Prof David Shearman, Hon Sec.
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Stephanie Bell, Chairperson
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