



Medical Association for Prevention of War
(Australia)

www.mapw.org.au

Media Alert

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.

A coalition of leading health sector organisations is calling upon Senators to vote against the *National Radioactive Waste Management Bill* and establish a Senate Inquiry into the future production and sourcing of radioisotopes in Australia.

The coalition is concerned that flawed arguments regarding the community's access to nuclear medicine procedures are being presented to influence the vote on the *National Radioactive Waste Management Bill* currently before the Senate.

"As health organisations, we are appalled that access to nuclear medical procedures is being used to justify the proposed nuclear waste dump. Most waste from these procedures break down quickly and can be safely disposed of either on site or locally", said Dr Bill Williams (Medical Association for the Prevention of War)

Dr Peter Karamoskos (also MAPW) stated that "Linking the need for a centralized radioactive waste storage facility with the production of isotopes for nuclear medicine is misleading. 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."

The coalition which includes the Medical Association for the Prevention of War, the Public Health Association of Australia, Doctors for the Environment, the SA Branch of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance (NT) is also calling for an Inquiry into alternative sources of radioisotopes.

"In addition 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", said Clive Rosewarne (Public Health Association of Australia)

He noted that; "The Canadian government has adopted non-reactor production of radioisotopes from 2016, Australia should seriously consider this pathway as well"

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

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