



## INTERIM STORAGE

### NRC decision on Holtec's HI-STORE CISF due in May

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has delayed issuing a decision on the licensing of Holtec International's proposed consolidated interim storage facility (CISF) in New Mexico. In a letter sent to Holtec on March 20, the NRC said the delay was "due to unforeseen resource constraints."

The NRC was previously expected to issue a final safety evaluation report, along with its licensing decision, for the spent nuclear fuel storage facility by the end of March. In its letter, the NRC said it now estimates that it will issue its final decision and safety report at or before the end of May.

The NRC's letter comes just days after New Mexico passed legislation meant to prevent the CISF project from moving forward. Signed by Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on March 17, the new law prohibits the storage and disposal of radioactive waste in New Mexico without the state's consent. Holtec is proposing to build the facility, called the HI-STORE CISF, in southeastern New Mexico, near the Department of Energy's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

According to an AP report, five Democrats joined Republicans in voting against passage of the law, which was passed by the New Mexico House on a 35-28 vote, arguing that it challenges long-standing federal authority over nuclear safety matters and would lead to new court challenges.

Holtec, in partnership with the Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance of New Mexico, submitted its application to the NRC for the HI-STORE CISF

license in 2017. If approved, the facility would initially store 500 canisters holding approximately 8,680 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel under a 40-year license. During subsequent phases, the facility would be licensed to hold up to 10,000 canisters of spent

fuel. The canisters would be transported by rail from operating, decommissioning, and decommissioned commercial nuclear power plants around the country.

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