



 **ENTERED**

**DALE JANWAY**  
MAYOR

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**STEVE MCCUTCHEON**  
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

April 12, 2018

To Ricardo Maestas,  
WIPP Project Manager Hazardous Waste Bureau - New Mexico Environment Department  
2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-6303  
Phone: (505) 476-6000 Fax: (505) 476-6030  
E-mail: [ricardo.maestas@state.nm.us](mailto:ricardo.maestas@state.nm.us)

Dear Mr. Maestas:

We are submitting this letter in support of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant's draft permit modification, titled Modifications to the WIPP Panel Closure Plan. We encourage prompt approval of this plan, which will allow WIPP to move forward with safely closing portions of the south end of the underground repository.

As you know all too well, this plan has been in development for half of a decade now. The NMED originally determined a similar application to be technically complete in 2013. The permit was later withdraw, due to WIPP's 2014 incidents, and resubmitted. The NMED has issued its most recent draft permit based on a revised modification request submitted in November of 2016. This topic has been vetted and digested at every possible level. It is also worth noting that the Environmental Protection Agency has also approved a similar rulemaking change.

WIPP's original panel closure calling for a concrete block explosion isolation wall and a concrete monolith, at each panel, is not practical and wastes millions of taxpayer dollars. The Department of Energy has long ago established that bulkheads (through Panels 1 and 9) and bulkheads and run-of-mine salt (at Panel 10) will safely and sufficiently allow for closure. Furthermore, extensive delay with this permitting process could ultimately present a risk to WIPP's employees, if aspects of panel closure do not move forward.

Thank you and the NMED for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway

180409



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