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By Darius Dixon

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President Donald Trump's Deputy Energy secretary nominee Dan Brouillette effectively aired his support for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste project this morning.

When asked by Nevada Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto whether he was "in favor" of storing high-level nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain, Brouillette said that he was "in favor of following the law."

That's code of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, and its amendments, which designated Yucca as the nation's sole nuclear waste repository. Trump's DOE budget requests funding to restart the project.

Brouillette agreed with Cortez Masto that science should dictate whether Yucca Mountain is actually opened.

"Obviously, if the science is so definitive as to show that the site is unsafe, I don't think it's in the interest of anyone to dispose of nuclear waste and endanger the lives of Americans anywhere," he said. "But if the science were to show that it is safe, we will be obligated to follow the law."

Still, Brouillette didn't commit to supporting the so-called consent-based siting effort kicked off under former Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, saying only that "it is important that states have input into the process." Yucca Mountain supporters have largely been skeptical of the consent-based siting work.

**WHAT'S NEXT:** Murkowski told committee members today that they should expect to vote on the three nominees, along with Deputy Interior Secretary David Bernhardt, shortly after the upcoming week-long Memorial Day recess.

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