

# The Sanders Family: Quid Pro Quo and the GOP Machine

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## The Polluted Political Trail to Sierra Blanca

**Bernie Sanders is a 2016 presidential candidate claiming a strong anti-corporate, pro-environmental record. This research began as a simple search to verify that claim. As the search progressed, the man behind the curtain revealed himself in a story of environmental racism, political partnerships with major GOP operatives and a Texas tycoon, a famous lead polluter known as the King of Superfund Sites costing US taxpayers \$4.4 billion. This research touches on the history of Sierra Blanca, TX since it was the victim of an insider plot to make millions, possibly billions by dumping nuclear waste on a Latino community, 2.6 times below the state poverty level. Bernie Sanders and his wife, Jane O'Meara Sanders are part of a twisting story that crisscrosses from GOP Mega-donor to Goldman Sachs to foreign policy with Mexico. As you read this keep in mind Sanders' campaign focal points; wealth, corporations, corporate welfare, tax breaks, banks, investors, Goldman Sachs, Citizens United. It's all here in this spider web of greed, holding the hypocrisy together.**

### FAST FACTS - TEXAS-VERMONT-MAINE Nuclear Waste Compact

Pro Sierra Blanca: Tycoon Harold Simmons. Gov. George W. Bush R-TX. Gov. Rick Perry R-TX . Rep Joe Barton R-TX. Rep John Fields R-TX. Senator Bernie Sanders I-VT.

Opposed: Citizens of West Texas. Paul Wellstone D-MN. Lloyd Doggett D-TX. NAACP. LULAC.

Sierra Club. Government of Mexico.

- ✓ Influential Texas billionaire Harold Simmons owned the Sierra Blanca waste site.
- ✓ **Presidential candidate Bernie Sanders was a leading proponent and co-sponsor of the Texas-Vermont-Maine compact legislation, HR 629.**
- ✓ **Jane O'Meara Sanders, wife of Bernie Sanders, is a Vermont commissioner for the compact.**
- ✓ Another Simmons company National Lead Industries had already poisoned communities.
- ✓ WCS bought the site (1995) even before it had performed a proper environmental study of it.
- ✓ 12 million shares of Titanium Metals Corp., another Simmons company, provided financial assurance for the dump. It was a highly unorthodox arrangement that critics panned as a "polluters' dream." Titanium Metals' stock plummeted not long after the deal was sealed. (Eventually, in November, another company purchased Titanium Metals for \$2.9 billion. Simmons then used 9.8 million shares of Kronos, another Simmons company (now sold) <http://www.texasobserver.org/problems-with-a-west-texas-radioactive-waste-dump-get-buried/>)
- ✓ The Sierra Blanca nuclear waste site *did not have to be built*. Gov. George Bush said if H.R. 629 did not pass, the Sierra Blanca site would not go forward.
- ✓ 1998-H.R. 629 was a private compact between Texas, Vermont and Maine (Maine pulled out of the compact in 2004). Vermont sends its nuclear waste from the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant to Texas.
- ✓ Sierra Blanca was mentioned 58 times in the committee debate as the designated site.

- ✓ It is located in an earthquake zone 16 miles of the US-Mexico border.
- ✓ Threatens the water supply of nearly a third of America's farmland- Ogallala Aquifer.
- ✓ MIT says that at present rates of use the Ogallala Aquifer will be drained within this century due to pollution and poor management.
- ✓ Studies show only 14 feet of separation between the site and the nearest groundwater.
- ✓ Three commissioners resigned from TCEQ rather than accept the commission's approval of a nuclear waste license for WCS.
- ✓ Opened the door to nationalizing high-level radioactive waste storage for WCS sites.
- ✓ WCS is the only private company in the United States licensed to import class "B" and "C" low level waste from other states. The term "low level" is a catch-all classification that does not mean it's safer or less dangerous; it simply means it's radioactive waste that can't be classified as spent fuel from reactors, which is often termed "high level" waste. Another waste source called "greater than class C" is a more highly radioactive version that must be kept away from human contact for many thousands of years. <http://thiscantbehappening.net/node/2851?page=4>
- ✓ In 1999, WCS opened a second site in Andrews County, Texas, northeast of the Sierra Blanca site after allegations of fraud, environmental record tampering and unethical political influence eroded legislative support for the Sierra Blanca site.
- ✓ In 2011 the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Commission (TLLRWDC) passed a rule allowing WCS-Andrews, licensed since 1997 for radioactive storage, to accept **out-of-compact waste** expanding the Texas-Vermont-Maine Compact to a national waste facility near Andrews, 120 miles NE of Sierra Blanca.
- ✓ May 2013 Energy Capital Partners II, LP and its parallel funds acquisition of EnergySolutions, Inc. purchased WCS from Simmons' Valhi, Inc. ECP is a leading global provider of nuclear services to government and commercial customers **holding 27 energy related companies**. *Starting in 1983 and prior to founding ECP, Senior Partner Douglas W. Kimmelman was instrumental in developing the Constellation Power Source concept as the initial entry point for Goldman Sachs as a principal into electricity markets and spent 22 years with Goldman Sachs in the firm's Pipeline and Utilities Dept within the Investment Banking Division.*
- ✓ WCS shelved the Sierra Blanca site after intense debate and significant efforts by local residents, environmental agencies and groups since 1996, a twenty year ongoing battle for survival. Still, AFCI Texas, an Austin-based company approached Sierra Blanca residents with a proposal for **high-level radioactive waste** as recent as 2011. Sierra Blanca residents, their shoulders already laden with years of indignities are forced to spend their lives fighting for the safety of their community.

Hang onto your hats for the cold winds of corporate greed meet the hot rhetoric of socialist revolution and coalesce as a dark, menacing cloud over a town for 20 years, whose name has come to represent a veritable superstorm of political quid pro quo and environmental racism...Sierra Blanca.

The powerful man behind Sierra Blanca was Harold Simmons, but who was he? Among his many lucrative interests, Harold Simmons was also owner of Waste Control Specialists (WCS) the politically designated disposal site for the Texas-Vermont-Maine Nuclear Waste Compact. The Sierra Blanca nuclear waste site was eventually legislated in H.R. 629 (105th): Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Consent Act Sep 2, 1998 via co-sponsor Bernie Sanders (amid

denials by Sanders that the site was Sierra Blanca) and introduced by Rep. Joe Barton who received regular donations from Simmons and his wife. As you'll see, Harold was far more than one business venture. A mover-shaker in GOP politics, he had created so many environmental catastrophes that his Superfund sites have cost the U.S. taxpayers \$4.4 billion. Would you trust this man to run a nuclear waste dump?

Harold Simmons was right-wing Texas billionaire and corporate raider known as:

- The King of Superfund Sites
- Toxic Tycoon
- Dallas' Most Evil Genius
- SuperPAC Sugar Daddy

Once held 5 companies on the NYSE at one time

Ranked 3rd - Donation Bundler - SuperPAC Funder - Lobbyist contributing \$40M since 1989.

#### **Companies:**

**Contran Corp.**

**Valhi, Inc.**

**TIMET- Titanium Metals Corporation** (sold 2012) (world's largest producer of titanium)

**National Lead Industries, Inc (NL Industries)** Gale Norton, later appointed as Secretary of Interior by George W. Bush was his lobbyist and lawyer against communities bringing suit for **lead poisoning**. *NL Industries* was responsible for the lead poisoning of Cadillac Heights, cursing a poor community south of Dallas with birth defects.

**Halliburton** (Dick Cheney was CEO)

**Snake River Sugar Cooperative** (co-op to take over ASC)

**Amalgamated Sugar Company** (ASC)

**WCS-Waste Control Specialists (Hazardous Waste) (Since 1995)** With proper legislation and agency approval, WCS was on track to earn \$100 million per year. Simmons also owned WCS-Texas Solutions Political Action Committee (PAC). Lobbied successfully to change laws to privatize radioactive waste disposal.

Among top hard-right tycoons: Foster Friess (mutual funds), Harold Simmons (chemicals and metals), Bob Perry (home-building), and Sheldon Adelson (casinos)

#### **Legal Defense Funds:**

for Oliver North, John Poindexter

(Reagan aides implicated in the Iran-Contra scandal)

Tom Delay

#### **Politics:**

Simmons owned WCS-Texas Solutions PAC (Sierra Blanca) Ethics violation 2012 (donations returned)

GOPAC (For Reagan)

Swift Vets and POWS for Truth (Against John Kerry)

American Issues Project (Against Obama)

American Crossroads (Karl Rove - 2010 Midterms)

Make Us Great Again (Rick Perry)

Restore Our Future (Mitt Romney)

Restoring Prosperity Fund  
 Restore Our Future  
 George W. Bush's 2005 inaugural ball  
 Total donations to George W. Bush: \$18 million

Before his death in 2013, Simmons proclaimed he was responsible for 83 GOP wins in midterm elections. Of course that doesn't count the presidents he's helped elect; Reagan and the father-son Bush family presidencies. Prior to Citizens United he was a talented campaign bundler. Along the way he had to pay a few fines. He was the most prominent donor for 2011:

Eric Cantor	(R-VA)	\$32,500	" This was the role Sheldon Adelson, Harold Simmons and Bob Perry played in 2012 (see Table 3). A second strategy is to aggregate \$500,000 and \$1 million dollar contributions, as Restore our Future (Romney) did in 2012 (Magleby and Goodliffe, forthcoming). Interviews with some associated with 2012 Super PACs indicated that some <b>individuals who before Citizens United and Speech Now would bundle \$500,000 or more now preferred to write a single check.</b> "
David Dewhurst	(R-TX)	\$20,000	
Josh Mandel	(R-OH)	\$10,000	
Michael Williams	(R-TX)	\$5,000	
Pete Sessions	(R-TX)	\$5,000	
Marco Rubio	(R-FL)	\$5,000	
Roger Williams	(R-TX)	\$4,800	
John Thune	(R-SD)	\$4,000	
Kenny Marchant	(R-TX)	\$2,500	
Kay Bailey Hutchison	(R-TX)	\$2,400	
Mike Conaway	(R-TX)	\$2,000	
Michelle Bachmann	(R-MN)	\$1,000	
Lamar Smith	(R-TX)	\$1,000	
Jeb Hensarling	(R-TX)	\$1,000	

This is not to say there were not bundlers in 2012, as there were for both the candidates and for their Super PACs." David B. Magleby , A Classification of Super PACs Into Three Types: Candidate, Party and Interest Group. <http://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/a3e3f402-9001-420d-8884-4b1564109c40.pdf>

In an interview with Wall Street Journal covered by Texas Monthly, Simmons says of the midterm elections, *"Any of these Republicans would make a better president than that socialist, Obama," said Mr. Simmons during two days of rare interviews at his Dallas home and office. "Obama is the most dangerous American alive...because he would eliminate free enterprise in this country."*

He had to know all socialists wouldn't eliminate free enterprise because self-avowed socialist Bernie Sanders had become one of his biggest nuclear waste customers at \$20 million a pop, plus \$25 million construction costs, a delicious victory to a man like Simmons whose acquisition strategy was about using other people's money to build his fortune. Maine would also have to pony up \$25 million, to assist in building the waste site. On financial strategy, Simmons once said the beauty of small banks was that you could buy so many of them and never use a dime of your own money.

### **Foundations and Charities**

Simmons also funded a few liberal causes and Democrats. Simmons' politics are *"pro-business, anti-government,"* but he lacks interest in the abortion debate and other issues important to social conservatives. *"I'd probably be pro-choice. Let people make decisions on their own bodies," he said.*

<http://www.texasmonthly.com/politics/wall-street-journal-snags-interview-with-big-spender-harold-simmons/#sthash.xtKBNGPY.dpuf>

**Harold Simmons Foundation** (controlled by two of his daughters)

2012: Planned Parenthood Federation of America \$200,000 and Planned Parenthood of North Texas \$101,750.

Approved \$800,000 in future grants to Planned Parenthood Federation of America and \$300,000 to Planned Parenthood of North Texas

### **Public Campaign (nonpartisan)**

"...dedicated to sweeping campaign reform that aims to dramatically reduce the role of big special interest money in American politics," received \$350,000 from the Harold Simmons Foundation for a "campaign finance reform project." It's due another \$250,000 in future cash.

<http://www.publicintegrity.org/2014/02/12/14136/gop-megadonor-harold-simmons-bankrolled-liberal-causes>

According to the Center for Public Integrity, "Simmons donation dissonance springs from tumultuous relationships with his children and continues a long-standing pattern."

## **Bernie Sanders - Trader of "The People" - It's Complicated.**

The Bernie Sanders world is a constant this-for-that transaction. Hiding behind the red herring of 'nothing moral has money attached to it', his concept of quid pro quo blame applies only to others. Winning elections on trade-offs and legislative favors like the establishment politicians he derides while describing himself as an "outsider" has become the standard Sanders meme. Being weighed on the Sanders Scale can be catastrophic for those not politically heavy:

- Poor Texas Latinos have less value than White Vermonters.
- Black Lives Matter is less than All Lives Matter.
- War protesters have less right to assemble than union strikers.
- Tax payers have jobs and jobs are more important than immigrants.
- A woman is less than an "important issue".

In the Feb. 05, 2016 opinion piece for the Boston Globe, "When Bernie Sanders ran against me in Vermont" by Madeleine Kunin, first female governor of Vermont, we see his offhanded treatment of gender bias and women's issues as a "distraction":

*"When Sanders was my opponent he focused like a laser beam on "class analysis," in which "women's issues" were essentially a distraction from more important issues. He urged voters not to vote for me just because I was a woman. That would be a "sexist position," he declared."*

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2016/02/04/when-bernie-sanders-ran-against-vermont/kNP6xUupbQ3Qbg9UUelVVM/story.html>

His obsession with attacking wealth and power as the source of all evil has blinded him to his own actions. It isn't the wealthy shutting down dissent, it's Bernie.

*"The problem with Washington, and politics in the US, is NOT that ordinary people have too much power and influence. It's not that the needs of the rich and large corporations are ignored. **The problem is that groups representing the wealthiest people in this country are able to decisively influence the legislative process so that public policy reflects the interests of the privileged few and not the needs of the general population.**"* Source: Outsider in the House, by Bernie Sanders, p. 75-6, Jun 17, 1997

### **Speaking of the Wealthiest People...**

This is exactly what Bernie Sanders has done to the people of Sierra Blanca, represented the wealthiest people and voted for a bill that reflects the public policy and interests of a privileged few; the white people of Vermont and a Texas tycoon, but wait, it gets better with time. The Texas Tycoon dies and is

replaced by someone from Bernie's most reviled company...a former star of Goldman Sachs, WCS' new owner!

***Starting in 1983 and prior to founding ECP, Senior Partner Douglas W. Kimmelman was instrumental in developing the Constellation Power Source concept as the initial entry point for Goldman Sachs as a principal into electricity markets and spent 22 years with Goldman Sachs in the firm's Pipeline and Utilities Dept within the Investment Banking Division.***

*Who is Energy Capital Partners? Layers and layers of holding companies and private equity companies on the fast track to becoming the "too big to fail" of energy acquisition firms. From their website:*

Energy Capital Partners is a private equity firm with over \$13 billion in capital investments. The firm focuses on investing in the power generation, midstream oil and gas, electric transmission, environmental infrastructure and energy services sectors of North America's energy infrastructure.

<http://www.ecpartners.com/>

Energy Capital Partners is a private equity firm specializing in investing in buyouts, loan, infrastructure and mezzanine investments formed in 2005.

#### Equity Funds

Energy Capital Partners' flagship private equity funds invest predominantly in control opportunities in North American energy infrastructure. We intend to opportunistically pursue both the purchase of existing assets, contracts and businesses and the development and construction of new ones. We seek to add value to these assets and businesses in several ways...

Members of the senior management team have worked with one another over the past 16 years and have played leading roles as principals in nearly \$20 billion in energy asset purchases across more than 150 separate assets. The team has extensive energy industry experience and expertise spanning multiple energy-related disciplines, including deal origination, commodity risk management, transaction structuring, asset valuation, project and structured financing, operational oversight and regulatory knowledge.

<http://www.ecpartners.com/team.aspx>

More on the many holdings of Energy Capital Partners to come. *Frac sand and pipelines, anyone?*

### ***Playing Dumb***

Unintended consequences for Bernie Sanders or does Mother Nature have a superb sense of humor? He doesn't hesitate to score political points with innuendos about Hillary Clinton's paid speeches to Goldman Sachs, yet *his wife is a Vermont commissioner who oversees deals with WCS, millions of dollars from Vermont's taxpayers to get rid of their nuclear waste problem.* A few suggestions:

- Vermont could pull out of the compact like Maine and take the high road to another company.
- Jane Sanders could resign her commission, easily citing ethics and conscience.
- Any linkage to Goldman Sachs as Bernie has told us, no matter how small, past or present, is insidious.
- Bernie Sanders should walk the talk, but then he should have from the beginning.

Halfway through this paper is the legislative area with votes, history, opposing views, letters and news articles read into record in the congressional debate on HR 629. There is simply no way Bernie Sanders

didn't know what he was doing. There was a firestorm of activity from environmental groups, concerned citizens, agencies and print media contacting his office to protest HR 629. Debates on the floor mentioned Sierra Blanca 58 times and yet in his statement, Sanders pretended no site had been selected, even though Gov. George Bush was making public statements on Sierra Blanca and HR 629. There is also no way he didn't know who was pulling the strings. Harold Simmons and all he represented in politics and business was just too high profile:

### **Bernie's Sweet Tooth**

In 1997, President Bill Clinton used his line-item veto on Harold Simmons. He was the first American president to do this :

*"Simmons has been an adversary of the Clinton's since Bill Clinton's second term as president. In 1997, Clinton became the first president in history to issue a line-item veto in a federal budget bill, removing a provision that would have granted Simmons a \$104 million tax break on the sale of his sugar plant, the Amalgamated Sugar Company, to beet farmers in Oregon."*

<http://www.coanews.org/article/2008/billionaire-backer-of-anti-obama-ad-previously-broke-campaign-finance-laws>

Sanders went so far supporting sugar subsidies he tabled a vote on legislation to repeal sugar subsidies, preventing its' passage.

Sanders received SuperPAC funding from American Crystal Sugar in 2012 in two \$5000 donations.

### **1997 - Hunger Strike at the Texas Capital!**

Bernie must have missed this, too.

Prior to the 1998 HR 629 vote, Mexican legislators went on a very public hunger strike.

[http://www.txpeer.org/Bush/Mexican\\_Diplomats.html](http://www.txpeer.org/Bush/Mexican_Diplomats.html)

### **Sierra Blanca Dump Protestors**



Federal & State Mexican representatives join with members of the Texas Legislature to fight the Sierra Blanca Dump. (Austin, 1997)



Mexican federal legislators on hunger strike in front of Texas State Capitol. (Oct. 1997)

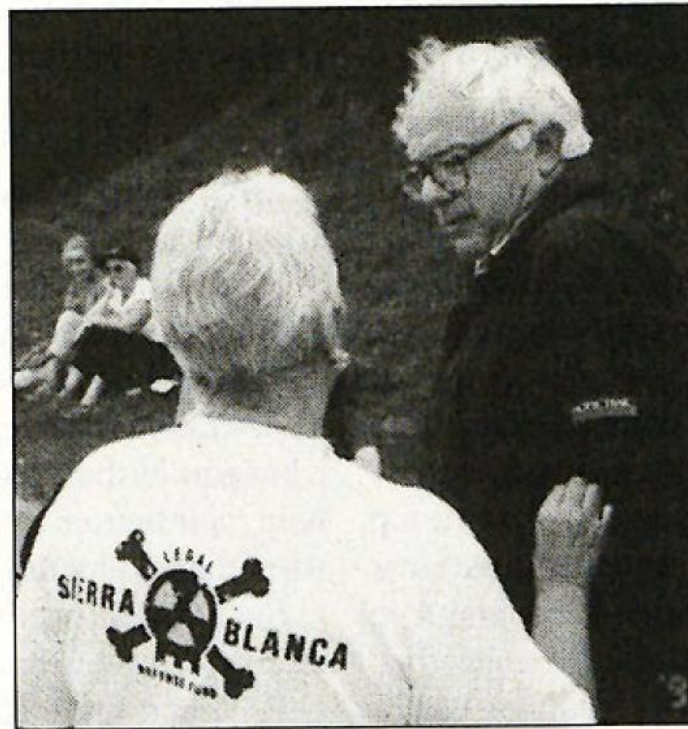
Is the Sierra Blanca case just a fluke, an unusual mistake for Bernie Sanders or is there something in his personality and character everyone has missed? Until recently, it's true that many had tuned out his constant, repetitive socialist growls about the rich, banks and corporations. As Barney Frank noted, Bernie alienates even the people on his side. Is there a pattern? His repeated abusive behavior in dismissing protesters is shocking for a man selling a revolution, energizing America's youth to storm Washington in a Berniemania sea of Occupy Wall St imagery. That will be addressed in this review, but first, let's get to the political side of things from his Burlington revolutionary days to HR 629 - the Sierra Blanca legislation.

### **Sandinistas, Sanderistas and Iran/Contra**

How did Bernie Sanders, pro-Sandinista ally of "heroic" Daniel Ortega (Burlington, VT has a sister city, the Nicaraguan town of Puerto Cabezas) end up feeding the unbridled greed of billionaire GOP mega-donor Harold Simmons, who had funded Ronald Reagan and the legal defenses of Oliver North and John Poindexter of Iran/Contra fame in Reagan's war against the Sandinistas? Common interest: Sierra Blanca. We don't have to guess what Daniel Ortega would have thought of nuclear waste being shipped from the 2nd highest proportion of non-Hispanic Whites (94.3%) to a community of 72.61% Latinos with 22.5% living under the poverty line, 2.6 times higher than the Texas average. None of them had a say or a vote in the decision, for Sierra Blanca didn't even have its own elected representative.



## BERNIE SANDERS AND ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM - 1995, 1998 and 2016.



▲ *María Méndez and Bernie Sanders*

A.C. Conrad

Photo from "Sanders to Sierra Blanca: "Drop Dead!" Sept. 11, 1998. The Texas Observer

What does Bernie Sanders say about race and the environment on his *presidential campaign website*? Here's a stunning excerpt from ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLENCE:

*The environmental violence being inflicted on people of color who are denied the full rights of citizenship — especially migrant workers and new immigrants — is especially pronounced. **Low-income Latino immigrants are more likely to live in areas with high levels of hazardous air pollution than anyone else. In fact, the odds of a Latino immigrant neighborhood being located in an area of high toxic pollution is one in three.***

*Latinos and African-Americans are more likely to work in hazardous jobs that place them at higher risk for serious occupational diseases, injuries and muscular-skeletal disabilities. The fatality rate among Latino workers is 23 percent higher than the fatal injury rate for all US workers. Often reluctant to complain about poor working conditions for fear of deportation or being fired, Mexican migrant workers are nearly twice as likely as the rest of the immigrant population to die at work. This is unacceptable and must be addressed.*

*Taken together, these injustices are largely the product of political marginalization and institutional racism. The less political power a community of color possesses, the more likely they are to experience insidious environmental and human health threats. The environmental violence being inflicted on these*

*communities of color is taking a terrible toll, and must be made a national priority. Access to a clean and healthy environment is a fundamental right of citizenship. To deny such rights constitutes an environmental injustice that should never be tolerated."*

- We must protect low-income and minority communities, who are hit first and worst by the causes and impacts of climate change, while also protecting existing energy-sector workers as they transition into clean energy and other jobs.
- We must have equal enforcement of environmental, civil rights and public health laws.
- We need to address the inadequate environmental cleanup efforts of Superfund hazardous waste sites in communities of color.
- We must stop the unequal exposure of people of color to harmful chemicals, pesticides and other toxins in homes, schools, neighborhoods and workplaces and challenge faulty assumptions in calculating, assessing and managing risks, discriminatory zoning and land-use practices and exclusionary policies.
- Federal agencies must develop and implement clear, strategic plans to achieve climate and environmental justice and provide targeted action where the needs are greatest.
- The environmental analysis for a permit for a polluting facility must consider the disparate and cumulative environmental burden borne by a community.
- States should evaluate and report progress made on addressing climate and environmental injustice.
- We need to mitigate climate change and focus on building resilience in low-income and minority communities.

We must promote cleaner manufacturing processes, renewable energy systems and safe product designs that end pollution and the use of toxic chemicals, while providing safe jobs and other economic benefits for people of color." <https://berniesanders.com/issues/racial-justice>

### ***In 2012 he wrote a letter to the EPA on mercury:***

*"I want to create jobs, not cut jobs, and what we're talking about is creating meaningful, good-paying jobs as we retrofit coal-burning plants so they do not poison the children of Vermont and other states around the country. To Senator Inhofe and others, I say, respectfully, stop poisoning our children. Let them grow up in a healthy way," Sanders said.* <https://votesmart.org/public-statement/710452/senate-supports-clean-air-measure-sanders-to-inhofe-stop-poisoning-our-children#.VrhCg7IrJhG>

### **CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 629, TEXAS LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE DISPOSAL COMPACT CONSENT ACT July 29, 1998**

Excerpts of Sanders argument:

...If I had my druthers, I would close down every nuclear power plant in America as quickly as we safely can. But the issue today is something different. The reality is, we have nuclear power plants. We have universities and hospitals that are using nuclear power. The environmental question today, therefore, is how do we get rid of that low-level waste in the safest possible way?

In my view, that is what this legislation is about. I think the *evidence is pretty clear that Texas is in fact the best location to get rid of this waste.*

***The last point that I would make is there is nowhere in this legislation that talks about a specific site.***

***Nowhere will we find that. We are not voting on a site.*** That decision is left to the authorities and the people of the State of Texas. <https://www.congress.gov/crec/1998/07/29/CREC-1998-07-29.pdf>

Sanders use of the term “the people” does not mean people impacted in Sierra Blanca. “The people” refers to legislators and appointed commissioners. It is also a repeat of his argument from 1995. With the environmentalist storm about WCS and Sierra Blanca coming out of Texas, Mexico, NAACP, LULAC, Sierra Club, newspapers and his dissenting colleagues we're supposed to believe Sanders and Leahy didn't know they were committing environmental racism?

### **Flashback:**

When Simmons bought WCS in 1995, this legislation immediately hit congress. Bernie Sanders was a fast supporter.

### **PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 558, TEXAS LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE DISPOSAL COMPACT CONSENT ACT December 20, 1995**

Excerpts of Sanders argument:

**“Third, what has also, I think, not been made clear is this Congress is not designating a specific disposal site.** That is not what we are doing. Presumably, the people of Texas have a process to determine what is in the best interest of their own people. Frankly, I would hope and expect that the people of Texas would not do anything that is environmentally dangerous to the people of their region. We in Congress are not making that decision. The people of Texas are making that decision, and I hope that we could respect that process.”

**“Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, there is no secret that the depository is going to be in Texas.** That is a decision for the people of Texas.” <https://www.congress.gov/crec/1995/12/20/CREC-1995-12-20-bk2.pdf>

**Bernie Sanders wanted to strip all amendments** as did the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in its complaint regarding Wellstone's amendments which originally addressed racism, poverty, environmental safety and the right to sue for the citizens of Sierra Blanca. Gov. George Bush had predicted the nuclear power people would not like amendments.

When Sanders traded the health and safety of poor Latino lives in Sierra Blanca, Texas for the health and happiness of white constituents in Vermont, he knew exactly what he was doing.

**Sierra Blanca was mentioned 58 times in the conference debate of HR 629.**

Paul Wellstone D-Minnesota excerpt: **“The moral responsibility of the Senate is unavoidable and undeniable.”**

“If we approve H.R. 629 without conditions, the Compact dump will be built within a few miles of Sierra Blanca. There's really very little doubt about that. And if that happens, this poor Hispanic community could become the premier national repository for so-called “low-level” radioactive waste.

If we reject this Compact, on the other hand, the Sierra Blanca dump will not be built at all. The Texas Governor has said so publicly--more than once. It's as simple as that. The fate of Sierra Blanca rests in our hands.

Compact supporters would prefer that we consider the Compact without any reference to the actual location of the dump. But that simply cannot be done. It's true that H.R. 629 says nothing about Sierra Blanca. But we know very well where this waste will be dumped. In that respect, the Texas Compact is different from other compacts the Senate has considered.

The Texas legislature in 1991 already identified the area where the dump will be located. The Texas Waste Authority designated the site near Sierra Blanca in 1992. A draft license was issued in 1996. License proceedings are now in their final stages and should be completed by summer. Nobody doubts that the Texas authorities will soon issue that license.

*There's only one reason why this dump might not get built--and that's if Congress rejects the Texas Compact.*

In an April 1998 interview, Texas Gov. George Bush said, "If that does not happen," meaning congressional passage of the Compact, "then all bets are off." In the El Paso Times of May 28, Gov. Bush said, "If there's not a Compact in place, we will not move forward."

For these reasons, we cannot fairly consider H.R. 629 without also considering the dump site that Texas has selected. Sierra Blanca is a small town in one of poorest parts of Texas, an area with one of the highest percentages of Latino residents. The average income of people who live there is less than \$8,000. Thirty-nine percent live below the poverty line. Over 66 percent are Latino, and many of them speak only Spanish. It is a town that has already been saddled with one of the largest sewage sludge projects in the world. Every week Sierra Blanca receives 250 tons of partially treated sewage sludge from across the country. Depending on what action Congress decides to take, this small town with minimal political clout may also become the national repository for low-level radioactive waste. And I understand plans for building even more dump sites are also in the works.

Supporters of the Compact would have us believe that the designation of Sierra Blanca had nothing to do with the income or ethnic characteristics of its residents. That it had nothing to do with the high percentage of Latinos in Sierra Blanca and the surrounding Hudspeth County--at least 2.6 times higher than the State average. That the percentage of people living in poverty--at least 2.1 times higher than the State average--was completely irrelevant."

**The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is *disturbed* by "terms of race, color, national origin, or income level" in the Wellstone Amendment.**

**Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC, March 20, 1998.**

Hon. Olympia J. Snowe,  
U.S. Senate,  
Washington, DC.

Dear Senator Snowe:

In response to the request from your staff, here are the views of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on two proposed amendments to [S. 270](#), a bill to provide the consent of Congress to the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste (LLW) Disposal Compact. The proposed amendments would add two new conditions to the conditions of consent to the compact: (1) that no LLW may be brought into Texas for disposal at a compact facility from any State other than Maine or Vermont (referred to below as the "exclusion" amendment): **and (2) that "the compact not be implemented . . . in any way that discriminates against any community (through disparate treatment or disparate impact) by reason of the composition of the community in terms of race, color, national origin, or income level" (referred to below as the "discrimination clause"). These amendments raise some significant questions of concern to the NRC.**

First, no other Congressional compact ratification legislation has included such conditions to Congress' consent. Making the Congressional consent for this compact different from that for other compacts would create an asymmetrical system and could lead to conflicts among regions. In the past, Congress has set a high priority on establishing a consistent set of rules under which the interstate compact system for LLW disposal would operate. With respect to the exclusion condition, while the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Act of 1980 and the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985 authorize compact States to exclude LLW from outside their compact region, the terms of doing so are left to the States. This is consistent with the intent of these statutes to make LLW disposal the responsibility of the States and to leave the implementation of that responsibility largely to the States' discretion. Thus, the addition of the exclusion condition to the compact would deprive the party States of the ability to make their own choices as to how to handle this important area. In addition, restriction on importation of LLW into Texas to waste coming from Maine or Vermont could prevent

other compacts (or non-compact States) from contracting with the Texas compact for disposal of their waste (such as has occurred between the Rocky Mountain and Northwest compacts). This type of arrangement with existing LLW disposal facilities may well become a preferred economical method of LLW disposal. It is also important to note that the exclusion condition may hamper NRC emergency access to the Texas facility pursuant to section 8 of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985.

***With respect to the discrimination clause, the Commission supports the general objectives of efforts to address discrimination involving "race, color, national origin, or income level." However, it is unclear how a condition containing broad language of the type contained in the proposed amendment would be applied in a specific case involving a compact. This lack of clarity is likely to create confusion and uncertainty for all parties involved, and could lead to costly, time-consuming litigation.*** Including such a provision in binding legislation may have broad significance for the affected States and other parties and would appear to warrant extensive Congressional review of its implications.

In light of the above, the NRC opposes the approval of amendments to [S. 270](#) that would incorporate the exclusion condition or an undefined discrimination clause into the Texas compact bill.

Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson.

<https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/1998/09/02/senate-section/article/S9809-1>

### HISTORY OF HR 629 from Congress to Senate.

The bill ([H.R. 629](#)), as amended, was considered read the third time, and passed.

<https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/1998/4/1/senate-section/article/s3015-2?resultIndex=95>

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09/20/1998	Became Public Law No: 105-236. <a href="https://www.congress.gov/105/plaws/publ236/PLAW-105publ236.pdf">https://www.congress.gov/105/plaws/publ236/PLAW-105publ236.pdf</a>
09/20/1998	Signed by President.
09/10/1998	Presented to President. Veto-proof margin.
09/02/1998	Conference report agreed to in Senate: Senate agreed to conference report by Yea-Nay Vote. 78-15. <a href="#">Record Vote No: 255</a> .(consideration: CR <a href="#">S9809-9819</a> )
07/29/1998	Conference report agreed to in House: On agreeing to the conference report Agreed to by the Yeas and Nays: 305 - 117 ( <a href="#">Roll No. 344</a> ). (consideration: CR <a href="#">H6522-6535</a> )
07/16/1998	Conference report filed: Conference report <a href="#">H. Rept. 105-630</a> filed.(text of conference report: CR <a href="#">H5724-5727</a> )
07/16/1998	Conference committee actions: Conferees agreed to file conference report.
07/14/1998	Conference committee actions: Conference held.
05/12/1998	To conference: On motion that the House disagree to the Senate amendment, and request a conference Agreed to by voice vote.(consideration: CR <a href="#">H3068-3074</a> )

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04/01/1998 Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.

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10/07/1997 Passed/agreed to in House: On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays: 309 - 107 ([Roll no. 497](#)).

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07/15/1997 Reported by the Committee on Commerce. [H. Rept. 105-181](#).

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02/06/1997 Introduced in House

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#### Wellstone Amendments.

##### [S.Amdt.2278](#) to [S.Amdt.2276](#) — 105th Congress (1997-1998)

Purpose To add certain conditions to the grant of consent to the compact.

Sponsor: [Sen. Wellstone, Paul D. \[D-MN\]](#) (Submitted 04/01/1998) (Proposed 04/01/1998)

Latest 04/02/98 Amendment agreed to in Senate by Unanimous Consent.

Action:

##### [S.Amdt.2277](#) to [S.Amdt.2276](#) — 105th Congress (1997-1998)

Purpose To add certain conditions to the grant of consent to the compact.

Sponsor: [Sen. Wellstone, Paul D. \[D-MN\]](#) (Submitted 04/01/1998) (Proposed 04/01/1998)

Latest 04/02/98 Amendment agreed to in Senate by Unanimous Consent.

Action:

##### [S.Amdt.2276](#) — 105th Congress (1997-1998)

Purpose In the nature of a substitute.

Sponsor: [Sen. Snowe, Olympia J. \[R-ME\]](#) (Submitted 04/01/1998) (Proposed 04/01/1998)

Latest 04/02/98 Amendment [SP 2276](#) agreed to in Senate by Unanimous Consent.

Action:

##### [H.Amdt.421](#) — 105th Congress (1997-1998)

Sponsor: House Committee on Commerce (Offered 10/07/1997)

Latest 10/07/97 On agreeing to the Commerce amendment (A003) Agreed to without objection.

Action:

##### [H.Amdt.420](#) — 105th Congress (1997-1998)

Description Amendment sought to prohibit nuclear waste transported to Texas from being routed through any incorporated area with a population in excess of 25,000.

Sponsor: [Rep. Kucinich, Dennis J. \[D-OH-10\]](#) (Offered 10/07/1997)

Latest Action: 10/07/97 Mr. Schaefer, Dan raised a point of order against the Kucinich amendment (A002). Mr. Schaefer stated that the content of the amendment was non-germane to the bill and was, therefore, in violation of the rule of the House. Point of order overruled by the Chair.

##### [H.Amdt.419](#) — 105th Congress (1997-1998)

Description Amendment provides that only low-level radioactive from Maine and Vermont shall be imported into Texas under the compact.

Sponsor: [Rep. Doggett, Lloyd \[D-TX-10\]](#) (Offered 10/07/1997)

Latest Action: 10/07/97 On agreeing to the Doggett amendment (A001) Agreed to by voice vote.

## **OPPOSITION TO THE NUCLEAR WASTE DUMP AT SIERRA BLANCA AND CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

- **Paul Wellstone**
- **John Bryant**
- **Lloyd Doggett**
- **REP. SILVESTRE REYES**
- **LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS - LULAC**
- **PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE UNITED COMMISSIONS OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, BORDER AFFAIRS, AND FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC REGARDING THE NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITY THAT IS PLANNED IN SIERRA BLANCA, TEXAS**
- **EXAMINERS RECOMMEND NO LICENSE FOR PROPOSED NUCLEAR-WASTE DUMP—STATE AGENCY HASN'T FULLY EXPLORED POSSIBLE HAZARDS OF W. TEXAS FACILITY, THEY SAY**
- **BUSH WANTS NUCLEAR WASTE LIMIT FOR DUMP**

Paul Wellstone D-MN made a lengthy, impassioned plea to stop H.R. 629, finally submitting amendments that offered legal remedies for citizens impacted by the dump site, addressing potential safety issues and violations that were not included in H.R. 629.

Excerpt:

"This oblong rectangle imposed on the map--an area that included Sierra Blanca--was subsequently dubbed ``The Box." The Texas legislature passed the so-called ``Box Law" by voice vote only days before the end of session in May 1991.

Once again, the previous site selection procedures were stripped away. The Box Law repealed the requirement that the dump had to be on public land, the very requirement that has pointed the Authority towards Hudspeth County in the first place. This was necessary because, at that time, the Sierra Blanca site was not public land at all. Most importantly, to prevent another troublesome lawsuit like the Fort Hancock debacle, the Box Law essentially stripped local citizens of the right to sue. It denied them all judicial relief other than an injunction by the Texas Supreme Court itself, and for this unlikely prospect citizens would be required to drive 500 miles to Austin. Yet, as amazing as it sounds, Compact proponents also claim to have the best interests of Sierra Blanca at heart. They claim the Compact will protect local residents because it keeps out waste from states other than Maine and Vermont. They have used this argument again and again, in Sierra Blanca, in the Texas legislature, in the House of Representatives, and they're using it again in the United States Senate.

**Supporters of the Compact are trying to have it both ways. When challenged about the environmental justice of targeting Sierra Blanca, they respond that no site has been selected, and environmental justice can only be addressed if and when that ever happens. Then in the same breath they insist that the dump in Sierra Blanca is definitely going forward and the Compact is therefore necessary to protect local residents from outside waste.** So which is it? Either the Sierra Blanca dump is a done deal or it's not.

The truth is, the most likely scenario is that the dump will be built in Sierra Blanca if Congress approves this Compact, subject to any legal challenges, but the project will not go forward if Congress rejects the Compact. The claim that the Compact will protect Sierra Blanca makes no sense on its face. The dump is unlikely to be built without congressional consent to this Compact; it does not need to be built; and the Compact would not protect Sierra Blanca in any event.

The simple fact of the matter is that the dump will most likely not be if the Compact fails. Governor Bush has made



it very clear that the dump will not be built if Congress rejects the Compact. So the argument that Sierra Blanca needs the Compact for protection against outside waste is nonsensical."

#### **DISSENTING VIEWS OF HON. JOHN BRYANT**

The "Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Consent Act"--H.R. 558--does not deserve the support of the United States Congress and should not be ratified by the House. The overwhelming vote in the House Commerce Committee should not lead one to believe this compact is non-controversial. What the Commerce Committee did was vote against the interests of the 2,900 citizens of Texas' Hudspeth County.. "This compact is unlike any other compact previously approved by Congress in that the host state--Texas--is the only state that has proposed to place its compact site on an international border, near the Rio Grande River, in an environmentally sensitive area.

"The proposed site, which is the only site being considered by the State, is also a volatile earthquake zone. On April 13, 1995, an earthquake scoring 5.6 on the Richter scale struck the West Texas region. Its epicenter was less than one hundred miles from the proposed site, and the quake was felt by individuals several hundred miles away. Numerous earthquakes have occurred in the area--the largest, 6.4 on the Richter scale in 1931 with its epicenter only 40 miles from the site--and the U.S. Geological Survey has concluded that quakes of 7.5 magnitude could occur at any time along any of the fourteen faults in the immediate vicinity.

Any contamination in Mexico resulting from damage to the disposal facility due to an earthquake will force the United States government to compensate the Mexican government and private citizens for any damages. The siting of this compact in a geologically volatile area should be of considerable importance to this Congress.

**Proponents claim that the siting of the compact does not violate the La Paz Agreement because the State of Texas has notified the Mexican Government of its decisions throughout the selection process. However, the Agreement clearly calls for a coordinated, cooperative effort to resolve the environmental problems along the border--not to create new ones.**"<https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/104th-congress/house-report/148>

#### **Lloyd Doggett D-TX - OPPOSITION TO H.R.629**

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I would close by simply emphasizing to my colleagues 5 points.

First, when we talk about this radioactive waste as being low level, that is good for public relations purposes but not for health purposes. The radioactive waste that will be buried at Sierra Blanca will be deadly to human beings for longer than all recorded human history. It is extraordinarily lethal and makes this debate all the more important.

***Number two, the Sierra Blanca site was not chosen because of its suitability but solely because of its vulnerability, its political vulnerability, which is playing out here today. It was not the best site for a storage facility. It was the easiest site, because it is a largely poor, Hispanic area. That is one of the reasons that the Texas State conference of the NAACP this year called this "environmental racism." It is one of the reasons that the League of Conservation Voters has spotlighted this as one of the key anti-environmental votes of this Congress.***

Number three, we do not need this dump. It is great public relations to talk about slowing scientific research or the health isotopes that are vital to the future of our health, but that has absolutely nothing to do with what is really at stake in this debate. We have heard much about all the other compacts that have already been approved. What our colleagues have not pointed out is that of those 9 compacts that Congress has approved, not one of them has secured a license agreement, not one. And two of them have actually stopped looking for a site. This leads to the conclusion that if they sought those compacts, but they are not doing anything with them, why should we approve another one in Texas? Indeed, as the most recent report on radioactive waste storage by Dr. F. Gregory Hayden has pointed out, "There is currently an excess capacity for this type of disposal in the United States without any change to current law or practice."



That leads to the fourth and very important point, that the safeguards that are in this compact, without the amendments that have been stripped out, are meaningless. My colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) from Rockwall, is always eloquent, and he has been very candid in this debate. He has said it is not the fellow with the biggest truck that is going to be decisive here. I agree. My concern is it will be determined by the place with the biggest dump. We all know Texas is bigger than most any other place, and we are about to have one heck of a big dump out there in west Texas. It will become the dumping site for all the people from those other places around the country because, as Mr. HALL has quite appropriately noted, and I quote him from this debate today, "It might reduce the operating cost."

***The economic factors for those special interests, who want a cheaper place to put their radioactive garbage and found a convenient place among the poor people of Sierra Blanca, who now will have no adequate safeguards.***

To suggest that the compact limits it to 20 percent from out of State is misleading. If we read the fine print, it is 20 percent that could come from Maine and Vermont, but there is no limitation that I see with regard to the rest of the States.

Finally, my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) has been fair and direct with me. He told me on this floor that he would check with the governor. That is exactly what he did.

My final point is that without the blessing of Governor George Bush, we would be limited to three States. Governor Bush said one thing in Texas; he did another in Washington. That is most unfortunate for Texas.

#### **TESTIMONY OF REP. SILVESTRE REYES, JULY 29, 1998**

Mr. Speaker, ***I want to make sure that every member of this House is aware of the substantial opposition to this compact. I want to read you a list of those cities and counties that have passed resolutions opposing it:***

El Paso County, Presidio County, Jeff Davis County, Culberson County, Val Verde County, Webb County, Starr County, Hidalgo County, Cameron County, Zapata County, Reeves County, Brewster County, Ward County, Sutton County, Kimble County, Kinney County, Crockett County, Pecos County, Maverick County, Ector County, City of Austin, City of Del Rio, City of Bracketville, City of Marfa, City of Van Horn, City of El Paso, City of Alpine, Horizon City, City of Ft. Stockton, City of Laredo, City of Eagle Pass, City of Presidio, City of McAllen, City Council of Juarez. Mexican State Congress of Coahuila, Mexican State Congress of Chihuahua, Mexican State Congress of Nuevo Leon, Mexican National Chamber of Deputies, Mexican National Senate, Mexican State Congress of Sonora, Mexican State Congress of Tamaulipas.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to enter into the record a letter dated yesterday from the League of United Latin American Citizens.

#### **LEAGUE OF UNITED LATIN AMERICAN CITIZENS - LULAC, *Washington, DC, July 28, 1998.***

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), I urge you to vote No on the Conference Committee Report for The Texas Maine Vermont Radioactive Waste Compact.

LULAC is the oldest and largest Hispanic civil rights organization in the nation. Since 1929, we have been providing a voice to our community throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico. A major concern of ours is the proposed site of a nuclear waste dump near Sierra Blanca in Texas.

As you know, The Compact proposes the construction of shallow, unlined soil trenches for the burial of "low-level" radioactive waste. LULAC strongly opposes this Compact.

Serious issues of environmental justice and blatant discrimination arise when one considers this bill. One should not only vote against this proposal because of serious environmental and health matters, but also because of the racial discrimination practiced against the predominantly Mexican-American population of the area.

Just this month, two Texas administrative law judges recommended the Sierra Blanca compact dump license be denied because of severe geological problems and unanswered questions about environmental racism. If Congress ignores these problems and approves the compact, thus funding the dump, tremendous pressure will be placed on the political appointees at the Texas Natural Resource

Conservation Commission to approve the license despite the judges' recommendation to deny it.

The selection of a poor Mexican-American community (which is already the site of one of the largest sewage sludge projects in the country) brings to mind serious considerations of environmental justice. Although the bill

does not expressly designate Hudspeth County as the location for the site, the Faskin Ranch near Sierra Blanca has clearly been earmarked and a draft license has been approved. The decision Congress now faces on this matter cannot be made in a vacuum, ignoring serious environmental justice questions that have been raised about the site selection process. These unjust procedures are in apparent contradiction of the 1994 Executive Order that firmly upheld environmental justice.

There are also matters of international relevance that must be considered. The dumping of nuclear waste near Sierra Blanca, approximately 16 miles from the Rio Grande, would violate that 1983 La Paz Agreement between the U.S. and Mexico. With this agreement, both nations committed their efforts to prevent, reduce and eliminate pollution in the U.S./Mexico border area. The proposed site is well within the "border area" of 63 miles on each side of the border. The government of Mexico has already expressed its strong opposition to the project in communications to the U.S. Department of State.

LULAC would caution Congress not to be complicit in what has become, whether intentional or not, a repulsive trend in this country of setting the most hazardous and undesirable facilities in poor, politically powerless communities with high percentages of people of color.

Only a vote against The Texas Maine Vermont Radioactive Waste Compact Conference Committee Report will ensure that this trend is not extended into Hudspeth County.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue. If you need more information please call Cuauhtémoc Figueroa, Director of Policy and Communications at (202) 408-0060.

Sincerely, RICK DOVALINA, *LULAC National President*.

Unofficial Translation of Pronouncements passed by the Mexican National Chamber of Deputies (Camara de Diputados) and Senate in opposition to the proposed nuclear waste disposal facility in Sierra Blanca, Texas.

Translation by Richard Boren

The **Pronouncement was approved unanimously** by the Chamber of Deputies on April 27, 1998 and by the Senate on April 30, 1998. The Senate and Chamber of Deputies Pronouncements are nearly identical. Following is the translation of the Senate Pronouncement.

**PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE UNITED COMMISSIONS OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, BORDER AFFAIRS, AND FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC REGARDING THE NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITY THAT IS PLANNED IN SIERRA BLANCA, TEXAS**

Honorable Assembly: The United Commissions of Environment and Natural Resources, Border Affairs, and Foreign Relations of the Senate was given for their study and analysis the point of agreement passed by the Plenary of the Permanent Commission of the Honorable Congress of the Union on February 11, 1998, that is transcribed as follows:

First—That the Mexican Congress, through the Permanent Commission, declares that the proposed project of Sierra Blanca, Texas, like other proposed disposal facilities on the Mexican border, puts at risk the health of the population in the border zone and constitutes an aggression to the national dignity;

Second—That the United Commissions of Ecology and Environment, Border Affairs, and Foreign Relations of the House of Deputies and the Senate, meet with the Intersectorial Group made up of the Department of Foreign Relations, Department of Energy, Environment, Natural Resources and Fishing, and the National Commission of Nuclear Safety and Safeguarding, in order to analyze in depth the consequences for Mexico of the installation of the radioactive waste disposal facility in Sierra Blanca and of the disposal facilities of toxic and radioactive wastes in the border zone of the country with the United States of America, with the purpose of carrying out the pronouncements and necessary measures to impede their installation.

*July 29, 1998 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE H6531*

In order to proceed and comply with the mandate granted by the **Plenary of the Permanent Commission of the Honorable Congress of the Union, the members of the United Commissions of Environment and Natural**

**Resources, Border Affairs, and Foreign Relations of the Chamber of Senators**, have analyzed existing documentation and studies about the radioactive waste disposal facility that is planned in Sierra Blanca, Texas, meeting on various occasions to design a political action strategy. Likewise a work session was held with the inter-sectarial group, with the purpose of integrating the present Pronouncement.

Considering That: (a) the communities on both sides of the border, diverse non-governmental organizations, political organizations, and public officials from Mexico and the United States of America have manifested their total opposition to the construction of the nuclear waste disposal facility that the government of the State of Texas plans to install in the community of Sierra Blanca, Texas, at a distance of approximately 30 kilometers from the Mexican border;

(b) the administrative authorities of the State of Texas convened public hearings with the purpose of hearing the opinions of interested sectors regarding the possible construction of the disposal facility in Sierra Blanca;

(c) the position that the Mexican government assumes with relation to the proposed disposal facility of Sierra Blanca will constitute a clear precedent that can be invoked relating to disposal facilities that are planned in the future within 100 kilometers along the common border;

(d) the intersectorial group—created in 1995 by the Federal Executive Power with the purpose of defining the policy of the Mexican government regarding disposal facilities in the border zone and to continue to review the projects that are planned in the states of the southern United States—wrote a preliminary study regarding the disposal facility being questioned;

(e) the United Commissions have received diverse studies that demonstrate the existence of risks in the zone, not only the seismic activity of the terrain, but also due to the meteorological and hydro-geological registers observed in the chosen site. This represents a high potential risk of contamination for the Rio Bravo and the underground aquifers, which could cause a negative impact for the health of the population, the environment, and the natural resources on both sides of the border;

(f) other adequate sites exist in the United States for the installation of radioactive waste disposal facilities, located outside of the border zone of 100 kilometers which shows that the chosen site in Sierra Blanca doesn't represent the only option for the proposed project;

(g) the radioactive wastes that are planned for disposal in Sierra Blanca, next to the Mexican border, don't only include wastes generated in the State of Texas, but also it is foreseen to deposit wastes from the states of Vermont and Maine, located on the border between United States and Canada;

(h) the construction of the disposal facility in dispute would violate the spirit of diverse precepts of international law and would implicate the noncompliance of the commitments assumed by the United States after the signature of the Agreement on Cooperation for the Protection and Improvement of the Environment in the Border Area (La Paz Agreement), particularly Article 2 of the Agreement approved in 1983, which states:

“The Parties undertake to the fullest extent practical to adopt the appropriate measures to prevent, reduce, and eliminate sources of pollution in their respective territory which affect the border area of the other.” In like manner, the Agreement commits the Parties to cooperate in the field of environmental protection in the border zone, on the basis of equality, reciprocity, and mutual benefit. In

complying with these dispositions, the United States Government must take measures in this case with the appropriate authorities, in order that the project not be authorized. On the basis of what has already been stated and being founded in articles 58 and 59 of the Rules for the Interior Government of the General Congress of the United Mexican States, just as for dealing with a matter that merits an urgent resolution of the Honorable Senate of the Republic, due to the adverse effects that this project could have on the health of our population and the natural resources, we present the following Pronouncement.

**Pronouncement First**—the Senate of the Republic reiterates its complete rejection of the project which is the construction and operation of the nuclear waste disposal facility that the Government of Texas plans to build in Sierra Blanca, Texas, and expresses its disagreement, concern, and inconformity with the policy adopted and followed up to now by the government of the United States, that favors the construction of disposal facilities on the southern border with Mexico, without taking into account the potential negative impacts that this policy can have regarding human health and the environment in the communities located on both sides of the border.

**Second**—The Senate of the Republic has carried out an evaluation of the available information about this disposal project, whose result demonstrates that its operation will bring with it potential adverse impacts.

Based on this, being aware that the administrative authorities in the State of Texas have convened public hearings with the intention of analyzing the implications derived from the construction of said project, it is appropriate that the Mexican Government reiterate their concern and inconformity in light of the possibility that the project will be authorized.

Third—The Senate of the Republic sets forth to the Department of Foreign Relations to consider the formulation of the following proposals to the United States Government:

(a) Manifest the disagreement of the Senate of the Republic regarding the policy of the United States that favors the installation of nuclear and toxic waste disposal facilities in the border area.

(b) Insist in the possibility of relocating the Sierra Blanca project to a site located outside of the 100 kilometer common border zone.

(c) Manifest the wishes of the Senate of the Republic to the members of the House of Representatives of the United States so that they vote against the Compact Law that authorizes the disposal of wastes between the states of Texas, Maine, and Vermont in virtue that its approval signifies a relevant approval for the construction and the management of the disposal facility of radioactive wastes in Sierra Blanca, Texas and represents a violation of the spirit of the La Paz Agreement.

(d) Include the subject of the disposal facilities for radioactive and toxic wastes in the next meeting of the Mexico-United States Bi-national Commission in order to:

I. design criteria for the installation and operation of disposal facilities in the border zone of 100 kilometers within the framework of the La Paz Agreement and the Border 21 Program, in order to include the possibility of establishing a reciprocal moratorium on the installation of disposal facilities for radioactive waste inside the 100 kilometer border zone,

II. establish that a group of experts from both countries analyze the impacts of the proposed disposal facilities in the 100 kilometer border zone.

Fourth—The Senate of the Republic proposes:

(a) To inform the Governors and municipal mayors of the states of the Republic of Mexico in the border zone with the United States about the current status of the Sierra Blanca project and other disposal projects that are being planned in the 100 kilometer border zone with the objective of adopting any measures that are considered opportune.

(b) To transmit existing information about the Sierra Blanca project to the local legislatures of the border states of the Mexican Republic with the objective of making this information available to them so they can adopt any measures which they consider appropriate.

(c) That a multi-party commission of senators be formed with the purpose of meeting with the governor of Texas, George Bush, with the purpose of telling him that the Mexican Senate believes that the Sierra Blanca project violates the spirit of the commitments made with the signing of the La Paz Agreement and that are linked to the state which he governs and which don't contribute to the strengthening of the good relations of friendship and neighborliness that must prevail between both countries.

Fifth—That the Senate of the Republic proposes including this matter in the agenda of the next inter-parliamentary meeting between Mexico and the United States.

Sixth—The Senate of the Republic expresses that this case constitutes a valuable opportunity for both countries to demonstrate their good will, responsibility, and capacity for cooperating in dealing with similar matters of common interest.

Seventh—So that the public opinion has greater knowledge on this subject, it is suggested to prepare as soon as possible a document that can be disseminated through the national and international media, in order to express the nature of this problem and the current status of the project in dispute.

Approved in the Honorable Chambers of the Senators April 30, 1998.

## **EXAMINERS RECOMMEND NO LICENSE FOR PROPOSED NUCLEAR-WASTE DUMP—STATE AGENCY HASN'T FULLY EXPLORED POSSIBLE HAZARDS OF W. TEXAS FACILITY, THEY SAY**

**(By George Kuempel)**

AUSTIN.—In a victory for environmental groups, two state hearing examiners Tuesday recommended against licensing a low-level nuclear-waste dump in far West Texas.

The recommendation was a setback for Gov. George W. Bush, who has tentatively backed the proposed dump, near Sierra Blanca just 18 miles from the Rio Grande.

The hearing examiners found that the State Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Authority, which wants to build the facility, did not adequately determine whether a fault under the proposed site posed an environmental hazard. Kerry Sullivan and Mike Rogan of the State Office of Administrative Hearings also said the agency failed to adequately address how the proposed facility might harm the quality of life in the area. The examiners' report was forwarded to the three-member Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission. The commission staff already has recommended

that a license be issued, but the final decision rests with the commissioners, all of whom were appointed by Mr. Bush.

Their decision is not expected soon. Congress is considering a proposed pact favored by Mr. Bush that would allow for low-level nuclear waste from Texas, Vermont and Maine to be buried at the site.

Mr. Bush said in a written statement that he was "troubled" by the examiners' findings.

"I have said all along that if the site is not proven safe, I will not support it," he said. "I urge the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission to thoroughly review this recommendation and the facts and to make their decision based on sound science and the health and safety of Texans."

Democrat Garry Mauro, who is running against Mr. Bush in this year's governor's race, praised the examiners' ruling. "I hope Governor Bush calls on his three [TNRCC] appointees to immediately reject this permit," he said.

Mr. Mauro said that he is pleased the administrative judges also raised the "specter of environmental racism" but that he is sorry they didn't address Mexico's concerns about a possible treaty violation.

Critics have said Sierra Blanca was chosen because of its largely poor Hispanic population, an allegation that supporters have disputed.

Mexican lawmakers visited Austin last month to protest the dump, saying it would violate an agreement between the nations to curb pollution along the border. Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Rogan spent three months hearing from both sides on the issue. Dump opponents said they were pleased with the findings.

"Politically and legally, it's a victory," said Bill Addington, a merchant in Sierra Blanca, a town of 700 in Hudspeth County, about 90 miles southeast of El Paso. "The authority has not done its job, even with all the money and resources they have at their disposal."

But Mr. Addington also was cautious because the final decision on the dump license rests with the TNRCC, which is not bound by the hearings officers' recommendation.

The dump, which would be built on a sprawling ranch just outside the rural town, is intended to hold radioactive waste primarily from the state's utilities hospitals and universities.

It spawned opposition from critics in West Texas and Mexico, who fear that it would contaminate precious groundwater reserves.

#### **BUSH WANTS NUCLEAR WASTE LIMIT FOR DUMP** (By Gary Scharrer)

BROWNSVILLE.—Gov. George W. Bush will ask Texas lawmakers to pass a law next year making it absolutely clear that only Vermont and Maine may export nuclear waste to the Lone Star State under a compact moving through the U.S. Congress.

"I think we ought to take this to the floor of the state House and Senate and say, 'We will limit future (compact) commissioners to Maine and Vermont and Texas,'" Bush said Thursday at the start of the 16th annual Border Governor Conference. Bush said he agrees with the spirit of an amendment by U.S. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Austin, and U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn.,

that would restrict the proposed compact to low-level nuclear waste from those three states. But the nuclear power industry opposes the amendment, which it contends will delay opening of the state's low level nuclear waste dump near Sierra Blanca.

"If it passes without that amendment, I think it makes sense for the governor to propose a bill out of the Texas Legislature that forever limits low level radioactive waste to Texas, Maine and Vermont," Bush said.

Opponents of the proposed dump site 90 miles southeast of El Paso contend that for West Texas stands to become a national dumping ground if the compact passes without restrictions. A majority of appointed compact commissioners could decide to accept nuclear waste from other states, according to the pact already approved by the three states.

More than 50 Mexican journalists are covering the Border Governors Conference. The issue of low-level waste dominated Bush's opening-day news conference. Bush assured Mexico's news media that Texas won't open the dump "unless it's safe."

The Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission is expected to act later this year on a license application necessary for opening and operating the dump.

Some elected officials in Mexico contend the planned dump will violate the La Paz Agreement negotiated by the two nations in 1983 to prevent and eliminate pollution sources within 52 miles of the international border. The Sierra site is about 16 miles from the Rio Grande.

Bush said he's already received a legal opinion indicating the proposed dump does not violate the La Paz Agreement. Those who disagree need to appeal to federal officials, he said.

"This is a federal treaty. I would strongly urge Mexican officials take it up with federal officials in Washington, DC, to determine whether or not the treaty negotiated between federal governments pertains," he said.

Governors from Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California and most governors from

the six Mexican border states are at the two day conference. Water and border crossings probably will get the most attention, Bush predicted. Texas and bordering Mexican states face the second drought in three years. A plan used two years ago to conserve and share water is likely to be used again this summer, Bush said."

Both he and Republican Arizona Gov. Jane Dee Hull said a proposed larger border-crossing card won't work because Mexican citizens can't afford it. "The idea of the card is fine," she said. "I like the high-tech idea, but it is far too expensive for the Mexican family to afford. And I don't believe we will be able to implement it this quickly, . . . I have suggested that they delay implementation." A laser card would cost \$45 and would be good for 10 years, but doesn't include photo, passport and visa costs.

"It's very important," Bush said, "for the U.S. federal government and the State Department to understand how important daily traffic is between our sister cities along the border, and we ought to make it easy for people to receive a modern card. "The idea of modernizing border-crossing cards is a good idea. But to make it very expensive and difficult to obtain is not a good idea."

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## Dissonance and Dissidents - Jobs and Elections Will Always Trump Protests

In the 2016 campaign for president, Bernie Sanders talks of a movement of protesters swarming Washington to force senators, representatives and the president to do their bidding, but that is in glaring contrast to how Sanders deals with protesters:

**1.** Tom Hall for The World Socialist Web Site in a 15 May 2015 article titled, "The right-wing political record of Bernie Sanders" denounces Sanders judgment in standing with money interests over their solidarity movement:

*"When Burlington business interests and radical posturing came into conflict, Sanders came down unhesitatingly on the side his bread was buttered on. One former supporter, in a recent letter to [socialistworker.org](http://socialistworker.org), describes how Central American solidarity activists picketed the General Electric factory in Burlington that manufactured machineguns used in military helicopters against peasant guerrillas: **"I vividly remember Bernie standing arms-folded alongside the right-wing union officials from the factory and the Burlington Police Department as we were being arrested. He falsely insinuated that we were 'anti-worker,' and he refused to have any serious political dialogue with us activists."** <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/05/15/sand-m15.html>*

Politico's "The foreign minister of Burlington, Vt." by Michael Crowley and Michael Kruse, 07/31/15 describes the GE incident, "Sanders resisted their calls to shut down the plant, arguing that it was unfair to punish workers for *corporate policies influenced by Washington.*"

*"I'm not going to throw 3,000 people out of their jobs at union wages and create a depression,"* he said in an interview at the time." In another interview he argued that *"you cannot split the movement and push workers to one side and have peace activists on the other side."* <http://www.politico.com/story/2015/07/the-foreign-minister-of-burlington-vt-120839#ixzz3zPfaVRPp>

This sounds very much like the treatment Sierra Blanca residents received in their visit to Vermont. (Lockheed Martin purchased General Electric's Lakeside division in 1993)

2. Olive Hershey, a Houston writer and environmental activist's report in the Texas Observer described the experiences of three West Texas citizens who visited Bernie Sanders in Vermont in "Sanders to Sierra Blanca: "Drop Dead!"

***Before the rally Sanders invited the three West Texans to meet with him privately, and the Texans eagerly agreed. The meeting was no longer than Sanders' attention span — when it comes to Sierra Blanca. "He didn't listen," Curry said. "He had his mind made up."*** Afterward, Bernie was giving his proforma campaign speech, never mentioning nuclear power or nuclear waste. Sierra Blanca activist Bill Addington, who'd arrived just that morning to join the march, along with his neighbor Marfa Mendez, had had enough, and he yelled from the crowd, "What about my home, Bernie?"

What about Sierra Blanca?"

Several others joined in. "What about Sierra Blanca, Bernie?"

Sanders left the stage, which surprised no one in the small Texas delegation. Earlier, he had told them, ***"My position is unchanged, and you're not gonna like it."***

When they asked if he would visit the site in Sierra Blanca, he said,

***"Absolutely not. I'm gonna be running for re-election in the state of Vermont."***

<http://archives.texasobserver.org/issue/1998/09/11#page=11> ...

## Lockheed and Sandia Labs

### 3. "Lockheed is not a parent company of Sandia"- Bernie Sanders

Fact: "Sandia National Laboratories is operated and managed by Sandia Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of Lockheed Martin Corporation." <http://www.sandia.gov/about/>

Highlights from Greg Guma - Green Mountain Politics:

- Meanwhile, the Vermont Sandia lab, simultaneously being developed at UVM with Sanders help, would focus on cyber security and "smart grid" technology. Yet Kiss and Sanders denied knowing about the partnership being negotiated by the other. Both Burlington's Progressive mayor and its famous former mayor-turned-Senator apparently saw no need to consult. *Yet somehow everyone was on the same page.*

- By 2011, Sanders was also supporting the Pentagon's proposal to base Lockheed-built F-35 fight jets at the Burlington International Airport. Despite his past criticisms of the corporation's serial misconduct and excess, he joined with Vermont's most enthusiastic booster, Senator Patrick Leahy, signing on to a joint statement of support.
- When Vermont's partnership with Sandia was ultimately announced, Governor Peter Shumlin didn't merely share the credit for bringing the Center for Energy Transformation and Innovation to Vermont. He joked that Sanders was "like a dog with a bone" on the issue. They had agreed to co-host a press conference on December 12 to outline the initiative, which now included Sandia, UVM, Green Mountain Power, several Vermont energy businesses and state government.
- **"In many ways, we are a laboratory for the rest of this country in this area," Sanders crowed. "With Sandia's help, I think we are going to do that job very effectively."** But in another way, it suggested that being a corporate predator wasn't always disqualifying, especially when weighed against the mainstream acclaim and leadership role such a partnership would confer.

Despite the confident presentation, however, the launch ended abruptly after a single question was asked about the city's aborted partnership with Lockheed Martin. **Before a TV reporter could even complete his query Sanders interrupted and challenged it. Lockheed is not "a parent company" of Sandia, he objected.** Then, as often the case when fielding unwelcome questions, he declined to say more—... Instead, he turned the question over to Stulen, the man from Sandia, who offered what he called "some myth-busting."

It was more like a clarification. All national laboratories are required to have "an oversight board provided by the private sector," he said. "So, Lockheed Martin does provide oversight, but all of the work is done by Sandia National Laboratories and we're careful to put firewalls in place between the laboratory and Lockheed Martin."

In other words, trust us to respect the appropriate boundaries, do the right thing, and follow the rules. Moments later, the press conference was over. <http://gregguma.blogspot.com/2015/05/lockheed-in-vermont-sanders-corporate.html>

#### 4. Inside Bernie's Office:

"But the lines were clearly drawn in Sanders' office. Constituent after constituent poured into the office to express dismay at the F-35 proposal, recounting stories of their home values being destroyed or of the terror that their child faced hearing bombers in school every day. **Most of the time, these concerns were dismissed as unserious by office staff--they were often characterized as the concerns of "anarchists" who couldn't possibly understand the art of politics.** Bernie has no influence on military decisions, they kept repeating--these people just really don't get it. In reality, Sanders' support for the basing of the F-35s was critical to the project's eventual success. **Sanders had nothing to say about the burden that the basing would place on working-class Vermont families, and he didn't want to hear from constituents who said otherwise.** As both an activist and an intern, I was forced to choose whether to stand with the people of Vermont or with a politician who remained out of touch with grassroots activism.

I ultimately found myself protesting my own boss at a Vermont Democratic Party fundraiser, dodging the gazes of my co-workers and putting my job on the line. This continuous tug between the two forces continued throughout the summer. I bit my tongue as I worked through ribbon cuttings and town halls, while struggling to remain involved in political organizing beyond Sanders and the Democrats. I still



looked to Sanders for a political lead, hoping to eventually understand his political end game. What did he have to say about the occupation of Palestine? What did he think of our continuing imperialist interventions in the Middle East?

Had I done my research, I would have discovered Sanders' frankly hawkish positions on foreign policy. It only takes a brief search to uncover his ardent support for Israeli apartheid, his repeated authorizations of funding for the U.S. military budget, and even his initial vote for Bush's original Authorization for Use of Military Force resolution that began the war on Afghanistan. ***I would have even discovered pictures in the local newspaper of activists I knew being thrown out of Sanders' office for protesting his support of the U.S. bombing of Yugoslavia.***" <http://socialistworker.org/2015/06/01/what-i-learned-about-bernie-sanders>

**5.** During a town-hall meeting at Cabot's Willey Building Auditorium, Bernie Sanders lost his temper and told an angry constituent **to "SHUT-UP!"**. <https://youtu.be/2K437Zd-gM0>

The real problem here is Bernie has said repeatedly in lectures that he has no idea what to do about Palestine-Israel and the worst thing he could have done was try to fake it with a tightly wound pro-Palestine audience. His solution is that someone needs to sit the leaders down and tell them it has to stop and don't give them any money. This is laughable, simplistic and typical Bernie. The man doesn't have a diplomatic bone in his body, grace or manners when he's dictating his point of view. If he's met with disagreement he quickly loses patience and attempts to shout down his detractor, cut off discussion or walks out. Instead of asking for opinions and listening, he talked down to the audience *after* his aids called the police before any disruption. The audience clearly perceived this as a show of unnecessary force and erupted. Apparently he made a few comments along the lines of, sure, Israel does bad things in Gaza, thinking he could then finish with assigning blame to Hamas. Those "disruptive" (Bernie's staff's term) audience members went ballistic as police quietly listened from the sidelines.

Pulling the pin on the crowd grenade Sanders blames Gaza and Hamas...

***"We have a situation where...Hamas...is sending missiles... into Israel...????....and you know where some of those missiles are coming from? They're coming from populated areas, that's a fact. Hamas has used money that came into Gaza for construction of the...god knows they need roads and all the things that they need and used some of that money to build these very sophisticated tunnels into Israel for military purposes."***

A woman makes an unintelligible comment about Palestinian self-defense.

"I don't want to be interrupted," he says. "A question was asked. It's a fair question. And I'm trying to—

"A bearded man rises to challenge Sanders comments and shouts. Sanders snaps back,

***"Excuse me..."***The man continues and there is the infamous... ***"SHUT UP! You don't have the microphone. You've asked— You know, I don't want police officers here."***

"Are you going to arrest people?" the bearded man shouts.

***"No, I'm not going to arrest people," Sanders fires back. "But are you going to— Are you going to allow us to have a discussion?"***

The large bearded man then stands and shouts at Sanders, "Come down here and be democratic."  
A woman yells, "Occupied populations have the right to resist!"  
**"You're entitled to your views," Sanders says. "You've asked a question and I'm answering it. This is called democracy."**

**6.** Reporters question Sanders on his "no" vote on Amber Alert. Amber Alert contained two things Sanders didn't like; life sentences for repeat sex offenders and criminalizing virtual child porn.

In a television news segment on the Tarrant campaign ad against Bernie Sanders in 2006:

Thom: Channel 5 news Stewart Ledbetter is here to help us sort out what's the truth and what isn't.  
Stew?

Stewart Ledbetter: Well, Thom, each of these new spots document a vote in the house on something like prosecuting child pornographers or keeping drug dealers out of the country, votes in which Sanders had very few allies. These commercials are well produced and represent the start of the tough stuff we've long expected in the senate campaign.

Voiceover: Tarrant's ad begins with a regular Vermonter and hits Sanders hard. Cuts to ad.

Older woman: "406 members of congress voted to crack down on child pornography. Bernie voted against it. Got kids? Check for yourself. He even voted against increased sentences for sex offenders. Why would anyone do that?"

Voiceover: Part of that bill indeed establishes mandatory life terms for repeat sex offenders. Asked to explain his no vote (cuts to Sanders)

**"Whoa whoa whoa...bump" (holds up legislation) "here's the bill." (Unintelligible question) "Now you're doing what Mr. Tarrant does." (waves papers)"what I am simply saying is in a 47 page bill...and if you want to read this it's yours to take...it...in a 47 page bill...there are provisions in there...that I believe are unconstitutional regarding sentence guidelines. The supreme court has ruled that they are unconstitutional."**

Voiceover: Another Tarrant commercial chides Sanders for being only a handful in congress voting against a bill on Amber alert.

Older man: "Bernie Sanders voted against it!" Against kids! Yet Sanders says he's also supported Amber Alert just not everything else that was in that bill.

Sanders: **"I'm not gonna go into all the details see...is that I vote on bills in some cases that have hundreds of pages...as you well know...and within those hundreds of pages, in some bills,...this is 47...pages...there are good provisions, but my job is to look at all...of...the...provisions."**

Voiceover: And he's now launched a tv commercial of his own

Sanders ad: **"I trust you to use your good judgment..."**

Voiceover: Yet Tarrant says Sanders must explain votes in which he had almost no one on his side.

Rich Tarrant: "Any representative of the people of Vermont should be able to discuss how he votes and defend how he votes. That's his job, that's his responsibility."

Voiceover: **Yet after a few questions with us Sanders got up... and left.**

Stewart Ledbetter: **Bernie Sanders gets testy pretty quickly when asked to explain himself, saying that these votes were taken out of context. Rich Tarrant on the other hand says it's his responsibility as a candidate and to voters to tell you what Sanders never will, and of course, Tarrant has plenty of money to make himself heard.** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU0e\\_wiS\\_Ec](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU0e_wiS_Ec)

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## Protectionism and Immigration

Despite Sanders' 2016 shift to the left on the campaign trail, he said this on immigration reform in 2015, ***"There is a reason that Wall Street likes immigration reform," Sanders said. "What I think they're interested in is seeing a process by which we can bring low-wage labor into this county."***

Explaining why he voted against 2007 immigration reform:

***"My concern about the bill that I voted against," said Sanders, "was that there was too much emphasis on bringing low-wage workers into this country. What I want to see, and what is better about the recent bill, is a pathway toward citizenship, which is absolutely essential."***

In 2007 and 2009 he cosponsored legislation with Republican Chuck Grassley restricting the federal visa program, citing protection of American jobs.

In 2007 he amended the Homeland Security Appropriations Act to *protect border militias* from Mexican scrutiny:

"Section. 537. None of the funds made available by this Act made be used to provide a foreign government information relating to the activities of an organized volunteer civilian action group, as defined by DHS OIG-0604, operating in the State of California, Texas, New Mexico, or Arizona, unless required by international treaty."

### **Lockheed - King of the Burlington military-industrial complex.**

Simmons was no stranger to the value of military contracts having tried a hostile takeover of Lockheed from his position as major shareholder and also managed to control Halliburton (Dick Cheney was CEO). Sanders also sees the value of the military-industrial complex, even though it's the bane of the socialist's party as the machine that causes all wars, his support is either "for the troops" or "for jobs". This parallel universe of corporate master to Sanders *for the people* political establishment rhetoric share a forked path, yet one mapped with fortuitous intersections.

Having studied military environmental impact statements, the secret every contractor and politician knows is that they're commonly based on outdated studies, even outdated science. This deceptive tactic is used to assuage public fear when a new project comes to town, as in the Sanders supported Lockheed F-35 jet transplant to Burlington which has grown into another Sanders disaster. According to a 2006 Air Force environmental impact statement, sound pollution was just not a problem. Except it is. Sanders and Leahy shuffle their feet and suggest a new study needs to be done, that it's the Air Force's problem, but they've already installed the Lockheed F-35 program, so it's time for the government to buy people out of their homes,

which has begun. Now the eye-popping concept as civilians discover that these jets have so many problems, crashing on their city is more probable than with other jets.

Despite vague comments of the "gee, I didn't know" variety, Sanders and Leahy worked very hard to get Lockheed to Burlington. One insider commented that suddenly Burlington appeared on the list and nobody knew how. And anyway, Bernie says, it's a done deal so why shouldn't Burlington get the tax dollars and jobs rather than South Carolina or Florida? Years of attacking Lockheed for corruption and wringing his hands over the controversial, shockingly wasteful spending on the flawed F-35 jet and that's it? It's a done deal and he's helpless to change it? There's a little more involvement in the F-35 process than that between Sanders and colleague Leahy: *The Pentagon wanted to kill funding for an alternate engine. Leahy had the money restored in the budget bill and convinced the Pentagon to go along.*

<http://vtdigger.org/2012/05/28/vermonts-defense-industry-grows-under-the-radar/>

Other irregularities have been rumored, such as the "purely coincidental" appearance of Sanders in a company lobbying meeting with Sandia Labs (famous for the Manhattan Project) now working on a smart meter research project in Burlington.

### **How to Set Up a War.**

Gov. George W. Bush was the most prominent player in the Texas-Vermont-Maine compact. Sanders and Bush even agreed that the designated dump site would have to be considered a "*sacrifice zone*". Obviously, in Bush's view that site was Sierra Blanca. They only disagreed on one thing, those amendments. Bush agreed with Doggett's amendment to limit the nuclear waste transfer to the compact members only and he appreciated the compassion of Wellstone, at least publically. Sanders wanted all amendments stripped from HR 629, period. Was there quid pro quo between Sanders and Bush? It's very hard to tell from the outside.

Campaigning, Sanders takes every opportunity to announce that he voted against the Iraq war. True, but he never mentions that he voted for the Iraqi Liberation Act of 1998, regime change to remove Saddam Hussein. This was cited by the Bush administration as setting the precedent to invade Iraq in H J Res 114 Authorizing Military Force in Iraq, the infamous Iraq war vote (Sanders voted no). He also voted for HJ Res 64 - Authorization for Use of Military Force allowing President George W. Bush to attack the target of his choosing if he believed it was even remotely linked to 9/11. Everyone knew Bush had Iraq in his crosshairs. It is still used to approve the war on ISIS. Why would anti-war Bernie vote for such a thing? Why would he vote against closing Gitmo ("it's complicated")? It would not be surprising if Bernie said it was for the troops, his scripted response to his war and military spending votes. It's an odd pattern considering his anger, not to mention piety against the Iraq war.

## Guns, Guns, Guns

Here, Sanders switches the strategy from jobs, to second amendment rights, to gun manufacturers while also protecting the military-industrial complex in his yes vote for the NRA sponsored PLCAA `Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act' 2005.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS in the Act states "(3) PERSON- The term `person' means any individual, corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, society, joint stock company, or any other entity, ***including any governmental entity.***"

NRA called passage of the act "the most significant pro-gun legislation in 20 years", in celebration of the many years NRA worked to get it passed.

PLCAA not only protects private gun manufacturers, it also adds protection to the military-industrial complex bringing jobs and tons of money to Burlington. The relationship Sanders has with military corporations and their embedded financial history of fraud, waste and secrecy should be in direct conflict with Sanders' constant political hammering at institutions. Yet, financial corporations such as banks and major businesses are the most destructive financial forces in America in his view.

**Sanders benefited politically when NRA spent a lot of money on print ads, media and word of mouth against his opponent in a very effective campaign without ever actually saying, "vote for Sanders", keeping their reward system cruising well below liberal radar.**

When they took over the Bell gun turret factory in Burlington, Vermont, a new era had begun in the design of high speed cannons and machine guns. GE transferred the ongoing development work for the M61 from a New York plant to the Burlington, Vermont facility. This was to be the first production of an externally powered Gatling gun. Success of this cannon was important to arm future fighter aircraft on their way to fight a new war in Vietnam. In this war, 20mm cannons armed jet aircraft, and 7.62mm Gatling guns were invaluable in helicopter and fixed wing applications. GE Burlington could only meet these urgent wartime needs by hiring top engineering and manufacturing personnel. The company quickly rose to significant prominence as a weapon designer, developer, and producer, and Lew Wetzel was one of their most prized secret weapons. We met at Lew's house in Colchester, Vermont: <http://www.smallarmsreview.com/display.article.cfm?idarticles=374>

Lockheed Martin purchased General Electric's Lakeside division in 1993. General Electric Armament Systems Division.

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## Something's Rotten in Denmark...

This isn't the end of Bernie's political life review. There are other irregularities that cut to the core of this man obsessed with other people's money...Bernie and Jane Sanders' very strange personal finances. Did he use political savvy to shift assets to his wife to appear as the middle-class hero? According to new disclosures and the scrutiny they bring, his net worth has almost tripled since the start of the campaign

- One small co-op apartment grew to become two homes, land holdings and rental properties, but those are not all listed in the disclosures because it isn't required.
- \$50K to \$100K in IBM stock, said to be for the sole purpose of getting into a shareholder meeting to protest IBM's cuts to employee retirements. When she was Jane Driscoll, Bernie's wife was married to IBM executive, David Driscoll. Is it divorce settlement stock or did Bernie have the financial resources to buy the stock himself?
- According to [opensecrets.org](https://www.opensecrets.org), since 1989 Bernie Sanders has self-funded his campaigns to the tune of \$933,000. That's a lot of cash to have lying around for a man on a mayor's salary, even for his \$176K salary in federal office.
- One journalist reviewed Sanders IRS filing and questioned a \$56K deduction, as anyone paying their taxes knows, is a substantial deduction for an ordinary person with just that \$176K salary and his wife's "small" pensions.
- Investment in a law firm between \$15K and \$50K that brings \$130,000 "income".

More to come, please stay tuned engaged. Meanwhile, be sure to check out #VettingBernie on twitter, controlled by... *"the people"*.