

**Testimony of Congressman Tom Reed
New York, 23rd Congressional District**

**Hearing of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment
May 18, 2018**

Good morning, Chairman Shimkus, Ranking Member Tonko, and members of the Committee. I would like to thank you for bringing this legislation before the Committee today. I am proud to have introduced this legislation, H.R. 2389, to reauthorize the West Valley Demonstration Project along with my colleagues Congressmen Nadler and Higgins, and the late Congresswoman Slaughter.

Nuclear cleanup sites must be at the top of the priority list. There are still nuclear sites in the United States that need to be managed and cleaned up. The Western New York Nuclear Service Center in my district is one such site. The Department of Energy estimates that making the investments needed now in nuclear site remediation will save our nation hundreds of millions of dollars in the coming decades.

The cleanup at this site, designated the West Valley Demonstration Project, is very important to our constituents in New York State as nuclear waste cleanup is a matter of environmental health and the health and safety of our fellow citizens. I have worked with my constituents on the West Valley Citizen Task Force, the Department of Energy, state and local officials, along with my colleagues in the Congress, to raise awareness about the need for consistent funding at this facility. Given the public safety issue of dealing with radioactive waste and the long-term cost savings, this bill makes good sense from both a governmental and a financial standpoint.

H.R. 2389 will provide the necessary resources over a sufficient number of years to continue the cleanup work required by the demonstration project act. At its core, the Western New York Nuclear Service Center was an Atomic Energy Commission project, and because New York State was encouraged by the AEC to develop it, the federal government should provide a disposal path for all waste on the site. Records show that the majority of waste at the site was the result of reprocessing federally-owned nuclear fuel, most of it from the federal government's Hanford facility in Washington state. The result of that reprocessing then went back to the federal government, in some part for weapons research or weapons use.

In summary, this bill will:

- Authorize sufficient funding to continue the cleanup work and reduce overall lifecycle costs, and
- Treat all radioactive waste at the site as resulting from atomic energy defense activities.

I appreciate your commitment to this important issue and encourage you and your staffs to continue working with our office as we solve this important issue. Thank you very much for your time this morning.