

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for this opportunity to address such a distinguished audience.

My name is David Lartonoix, I am a graduate student at the University of Illinois in the Department of Nuclear Engineering.

My thesis adviser, Dr. Clifford Singer, professor of political science as well as nuclear engineering, along with Dr. William Roy of the IL State Geologic Survey and Dr. James Stubbins, nuclear engineering professor and department head, have recently submitted a response to the Blue Ribbon Commission's draft report.

At this time, I would like to reiterate and reemphasize their key point:

First and foremost, the recommendations in the July 2011 draft report of the Blue Ribbons Commission on America's Nuclear Future represent a major conceptual step forward. However, I would like to start by addressing one major, potentially fatal flaw. Specifically, this problem pertains to states' roles in the recommended consent-based process for siting new management facilities for nuclear reactor fuel discharges. The executive summary of the draft report says that the role of states should be quote "an element of negotiation" and refers to states having quote "a meaningful consultative role." In addition, states have a quote "responsibility to work in the national interest."

It is our recommendation that the Blue Ribbon Commission unambiguously define what exactly the potential host states' role will be.

Given past history, ambiguity about the state's role is not just a minor editorial concern, but rather a very serious concern. In 1992, Wyoming Governor Michael Sullivan rejected a monitored retrievable storage site in his state, in effect on the grounds that the federal government could not be trusted to be a reliable negotiating partner. Without fully and clearly defining a state's rights and role in the negotiation and discussion for a future site, it is very easy to understand why a present-day governor would feel the exact same way.

To avoid this potentially fatal flaw, the final report should do one of two things:

One approach is to unambiguously recommend that no siting process will be initiated or continued without the fully voluntary cooperation of the prospective host state government. If this route is chosen, it should be clearly recommended that surveys, licensing, construction, and operations should only proceed at the invitation of the prospective host state.

Or, on the other hand, the final report should make an unambiguous recommendation that the federal government offer attractive incentives and reassurances, but then define under what conditions it will proceed with a compulsory siting process if the offers made prove insufficient.

In addition, if the first option is chosen, the final report should discuss the possible alternatives for states that currently store nuclear reactor fuel discharges in case the federal government proves unable or unwilling to force another state to site a facility.

If the second option is chosen, the final report should clarify exactly at what stages of the search, licensing, construction, or operation of a facility a potential host state's objections could be over-ruled.

In conclusion, as Illinois currently harbors the most nuclear reactor fuel discharges of any state in the nation, the ultimate conclusions of the Blue Ribbon Commission are bound to impact us significantly. We therefore ask that you carefully and thoughtfully consider the state's role in the negotiation process with the federal government, and outline a definite conclusion in your final report. We appreciate all the work you have done so far on this matter, and patiently await your final draft.

Thank you for your time.