



Fred E. Humes
Director

Statement for the Record
By
Economic Development Partnership
To
Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future
January 7, 2011
Augusta, GA

My name is Ernest Chaput and I am a resident of Aiken, South Carolina. I represent the Economic Development Partnership of Aiken and Edgefield Counties, South Carolina; an organization whose mission is the recruitment of quality jobs and investment into our two county region. A large portion of the Savannah River Site is in Aiken County, and we look to SRS and its nuclear missions as an important part of our current and future economic base.

Nuclear energy is not just important to Aiken County, it is an equally important part of the South Carolina economy, resulting in over 28,000 quality jobs and \$3 Billion in economic activity. The importance of nuclear energy will only increase as the nation strives for clean, reliable and indigenous energy resources, and South Carolina has targeted nuclear energy as an area for regional economic growth. The work of your commission is essential to achieving both national and regional goals.

We have two recommendations for the Commission's consideration:

1. We were greatly upset when the Administration took actions to terminate the Yucca Mountain program. For over 20 years this community has been looking to Yucca Mountain as the off-site final disposal pathway for high level defense nuclear wastes generated at SRS. The Federal government has a responsibility to remove these wastes from South Carolina and the SRS vitrified waste is specifically formulated for compatibility with Yucca Mountain. It is our understanding that deep geologic disposition is the only option for SRS's defense high level wastes, so I hope you can understand the level of our concern.

Our disappointment was somewhat mitigated when your charter specifically acknowledged high level wastes and evaluation of deep geologic disposal.

- We recommend your panel endorse the early availability of a geologic repository and propose an aggressive implementation program.
- We recommend that Yucca Mountain remain the primary geologic repository unless a more suitable option is authorized in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

2. We welcome your charter to review the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle as being long overdue. The nation's current policies are based on thirty year old dogma, and deserve to be examined based on current circumstances and technology. We at Savannah River know what can be done with modern fuel cycle technology, including enhanced proliferation resistance, reductions (but not elimination) in nuclear waste requiring geologic disposal and conservation of a vital energy resource. These are objectives worthy of investigation.

We recommend that your commission propose not only a research and development program but also an aggressive demonstration program. The people and facilities are currently available for this work, including talented people and unique facilities here at the Savannah River Site. Rate-payers nationwide have paid billions of dollars to manage the back end of the fuel cycle; it is time for them to see a return on their investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our recommendations for your consideration.