

**Blue Ribbon Commission Statement**  
**Augusta, GA 1/7/2011**

My name is Stephen Stegall and I am an engineer employed at Southern Nuclear's Vogtle Electric Generating Plant. I was born and raised in the Augusta area;. I have seen firsthand the benefits of having the Savannah River SiteSRS and Vogtle in this community my entire life. I am here today to share with you my perspectives as a taxpayer, nuclear workerNuclear energy is safe, and most importantly a citizen of the surroundingit provides sustainable jobs which benefit this community. in a positive way from taxes to citizenship.

Nuclear energy is safe and provides sustainable jobs, but it is received cautiously by the average citizen. Even though I grew up in this area, I knew very little about the technology before working at Vogtle.itself. When I was interviewing my currentfor the position I have now, I was taken on a tour around the plantVogtle by a Senior Engineer. As we were walking towards the buildings with equipment, I suspiciously asked, "So, are we getting radiated right now?" He just laughed and responded, "Not even close!" In the few years that I have worked in the Nuclear Industry, I have come to learn why he laughed. Not only areis there a defense-in-depth strategy with redundant safety systems and procedures in place to protect against an accident at nuclear facilities, there is also the attitude that the safety of the public is priority above all else. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, it is safer from a personnel standpoint to work at a nuclear power plant than in any manufacturing discipline<sup>1</sup>. The safety incident rate is approximately 90% safer when compared to other common manufacturing industries.. It is because of this engrained attitude of safety culture and the proven safety record that I believe nuclear technologyenergy should be an integral part of this nation's future in providing affordable and reliable energy.

Another partSpeaking of this nation's the future is, I represent the next generation of nuclear workers in this community and across the country. I represent the as well as 6,000 young nuclear professionals across North America in an organization known as North American – Young Generation in Nuclear. WeWe, the future workers in nuclear, ask the Commission to recommend a timely pathway for recycling and storingdisposal of both Savannah River SiteSRS defense high level wastes and commercial- used nuclear fuel at a permanent repository, and to honor the Federal government's commitments in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. We also urge the Commission to consider interim storage facilities and that the responsibility for used fuel management be transferred to an independent entity. Such a facility, with a management and financial structure capable of withstandingpolicies that are not susceptible political change. We must accomplish this to, will ensure sustained growth for an industry that is on the brink of a true renaissance to provide a sustainable energy source. The nuclear renaissance isn't just for the local communities building new nuclear facilities. U.S. manufacturing and labor unions across the country will be greatly affected by it. Steel mills and suppliers of electrical cables, pumps, valves, piping, motors, electrical breaks, and computer chips across the country are needed to support building these facilities. Carpenters, iron workers, laborers, equipment operators will be needed to do the actual construction.

It is important that the commission understand the true utilitarian aspects of nuclear technology when making your recommendations. The nuclear renaissance doesn't just touch the local communities embracing the construction of new nuclear facilities and technology. Nuclear technology is essential to provide safer foods, a sustainable pipeline of medical isotopes used for cancer therapy, in addition to clean and reliable energy to our country. Due to the necessary role nuclear technology plays in our community, it is important to remember that your recommendations touch the future and sustainability of multiple industries across America.

To elaborate this point further, I want to give you a positive outlook on the potential your recommendations have on sustainable jobs in America. It takes a large number of people and companies from the both the local community and across the U.S. to build a new nuclear plant. To give you a few examples...suppliers and manufactures of steel, concrete, electrical cables, pumps, valves, piping, motors, and electrical breakers across the country are needed to support building these facilities. Over 2000 carpenters, engineers, iron workers, laborers, project managers, pipe fitters will be needed to do the actual construction. And... approximately 800 engineers, mechanics, operators, health physicists, and security professionals will be needed to operate the plant once it is built. It is undeniable the impacts building new nuclear technology will have on the local and national economies and it is all threatened by not having a robust plan for disposal of used fuel.

Before I leave you today, Last but not least, per the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, the Federal Government has an obligation to each taxpayer and electric utility customer that they will manage the used fuel. Still, the promise of managing used fuel remains unfilled. As a radiological worker, and a citizen living in a community surrounding a nuclear power plant, I would like to give my neighbors a better answer than "the utility manages the used fuel safely and securely on-site in dry containers". While this used fuel story is muted at times due to the great safety, performance, and economical benefits of the plant, the lack of having a plan for the used fuel challenges creditability for the future of nuclear technology.

The young generation of nuclear professionals is looking to this Commission to help the nuclear industry bridge the story of nuclear with a plan to manage used fuel and give the community confidence with moving forward with nuclear technology. We know the Blue Ribbon Commission will be successful in the development of forward looking recommendations for the management of used nuclear fuel in the United States. I would like to acknowledge the other Young Generation in Nuclear members in the room. If you would, please raise your hand. These individuals are here to help answer questions that the Commissioners, or any of the community members may have, and to show their commitment to helping our nation provide clean, safe, and reliable technology for the benefits of American citizens. The young nuclear professionals from the local community and across the country are looking forward to your recommendations for the management of used nuclear fuel in the United States. Thank you for your time today.

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<sup>i</sup> The nuclear power industry had an accident rate of 0.5 compared manufacturing disciplines ranging from 1.0-8.0 per 100 workers per 200,000 working hours in 2009.