BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON AMERICA'S
NUCLEAR FUTURE

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MEETING
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FRIDAY,
JANUARY 7, 2011

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The Commission convened at 8:00 a.m. in the Estes Ballroom of the Augusta Marriott Riverwalk, Two Tenth Street, Augusta, Georgia, Brent Scowcroft, Co-Chair, presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT:
BRENT SCOWCROFT, Chair
MARK AYERS
VICKY BAILEY
ALLISON MacFARLANE
RICHARD MESERVE
PER PETERSON

PHIL SHARP

ALSO PRESENT:
TIM FRAZIER, Designated Federal Official
JAMES MILLER, Southern Nuclear Operating Company
DEKE COPENHAVER, Mayor of Augusta, Georgia
GEORGE DeLOACH, Mayor of Waynesboro, Georgia
LINDSEY GRAHAM, Senator representing the State of South Carolina
SHAWN MERRICK, Labor Relations Plant Site Coordinator

ELLEN WEAVER, on behalf of Senator Jim DeMint of South Carolina

TRICIA CHASTAIN, on behalf of Senators Johnny Isakson and Saxby Chambliss of Georgia
REAGAN WILLIAMS, on behalf of Representative Paul Broun of Georgia
LYNTHIA ROSS, on behalf of Congressman John Barrow of Georgia
TOM CLEMENTS, Friends of the Earth
DIANNE VALETIN, Georgia Women's Action for New Directions
MANUEL BETTENCOURT, Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board
CLINT WOLFE, Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness
CHARLES UTLEY, Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League
KAREN PATTERSON, Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council
BRENDOLYN JENKINS, SRS Superfund Job Training Initiative
RONNIE YOUNG, Aiken County Council Chairman
DAVID JAMESON, Community Reuse Organization
BRIAN TUCKER, CSRA Chambers of Commerce
DANNY BLACK, Economic Development Organizations
SUSAN WINSOR, Aiken Technical College

PUBLIC COMMENTERS:
STEPHEN STEGALL
KEITH GRAHAM
CHARLES MUNNS

ERNEST CHAPUT
DONALD BRIDGES
JOHN DEMKO
KERRY RIDGEWAY
MEL BUCKNER
LOUIS ZELLER
AMANDA HILL ECKINSON

TOM HIMBER
MICHELLE WILSON
SUZANNE RHODES

SAMANTHA SIEGAL
BILL LAWLESS
TOM HALLMAN
MALI LIGHTFOOT
LEAH KARPEN
LEW PATRIE
ROBERT HOWARTH
JAMES SHEELER
LAURA SORENSON
OLE SORENSON
TERRENCE CLARK
TOM COULSON
ELLEN THOMAS
RUSSELL D'ARENBOURG
MEL JENKINS
ANDY YASINSAC
JOE ORTALDO
CLARE HANRAHAN
ROBERT GUILD
LESLIE MINERD
DEBBIE PARKER
ELAINE COOPER
NICOLAS HERNANDEZ
JUDY TREICHEL
ROSE HAYES
DAVID PENIX
BILL TINLEY

MICHAEL COLATARCI
LAM LE
DENISE TRAINA
ANDY CWALINA
FRED CAVANAUGH
GABRIEL FAIR
HOLLY GARRETT

T-A-B-L-E O-F C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

8:01 a.m.

MR. FRAZIER: Okay. I have assembled the appropriate number of Commissioners so that we can get started. If you all will take your seats, please.

The chattering crowd, please, hello.

Thank you, sir.

My name is Tim Frazier. I'm the Designated Federal Officer for the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future. I want to welcome you all to this meeting that we're having here in Augusta.

Just a brief comment. We had a great tour yesterday afternoon of the Savannah River Site. And our hat goes off and our thanks to those that helped arrange that and all the work that went into that. It was outstanding. A lot of information was gained.

General Scowcroft is quoted in the paper this morning as, it was an educational

afternoon, and it certainly was for all of us.

So we're going to hear from lots of different people this morning. We've got time reserved for public comments this afternoon.

And to keep us track, I'm going to sit down. General Scowcroft?

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Tim.

Good morning, and thank you all for coming to this meeting of the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future.

As Tim said, we had a great day yesterday and we're looking forward to your comments and being informed by them today.

The Commission was formed by the Secretary of Energy at the direction of the President. The purpose of the Commission is to conduct a comprehensive review of policies for managing the back end of the fuel cycle, nuclear fuel cycle, and recommend a new plan. And that's what we're working to do.

We would like to remind those with

us today we are not a siting commission. We should also point out that our Commission's charter does not include the details of the on-site cleanup activities at the Savannah River Site, although we certainly recognize the importance of this federal responsibility.

In keeping with the Commission charter, we decided to visit the Savannah River Site because we must hear from communities with a substantial in solving the waste problem as we conduct our work. We also know that touring the site would give us, and did give us, a valuable opportunity to see firsthand a variety of facilities involved in the treatment, packaging and storage of used fuel and high-level waste.

We will spend the first hour this morning hearing from three speakers who are involved in the ongoing operations and new construction at Vogtle Nuclear Power Plant in Waynesboro, Georgia.

We will then hear from government

officials, community organizations and others about their views on the matters before the Commission.

We recognize there are many other individuals and organizations in this region and across the country who care deeply about the issues before this Commission. We, of course, cannot hear from all of them during our visit, but we look forward to hearing from more people and groups going forward. And we encourage anyone with an interest in our work to submit written input to the Commission now, or at any point in the process. Your comments will be posted on the Commission website and will be made available to the full Commission.

We remind our invited speakers today that they should keep their formal presentations to their allotted time. The remaining time will be used for questions and discussions with the Commission.

We appreciate the time and effort the speakers have put into their presentations

and we look forward to hearing what they have to say.

We are webcasting this meeting, as we have done for all of our meetings. We want people who are not able to get to our meeting locations to be able to follow our proceedings. The video and transcript from this and all Commission meetings will be posted on the Commission website.

At the end of today's session, we will hear from any member of the audience who wishes to speak. We have allowed for an extended public comment period at the end of the meeting in light of the large number of people who have commented at our prior meetings.

A sign-up sheet for the public comment period is now available, and will be available until 1:00. The amount of time which we can allot to each speaker will depend, of course, on the number of people who wish to speak.

With that, I will open the floor to the Commissioners for any statement or comment they wish to make before we hear from our first speaker. Are there any such comments?

If not, we will turn to our first speaker, who is Deke Copenhaver, Mayor of Augusta, Georgia.

(Off-mic comment.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Well, in view of that, let's turn next to the Chairman, President and CEO of the Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Mr. James Miller.

Mr. Miller, the floor is yours. We appreciate your being with us.

MR. MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Commission today.

My name is Jim Miller, James H. Miller, President and CEO of Southern Nuclear Operating Company. I've attached a brief r,sum, so we don't have to go through that as

an exhibit to my testimony, and also the next exhibit gives a more full description of my company, but I'll do so briefly for you so you'll have a good jumping off point.

Southern Nuclear is the licensed operator of six commercial power reactors. We operate the Vogtle Nuclear Power Plant, which is loosely 30 miles south of where you are right now, a two-unit Westinghouse PWR.

We have the Hatch Nuclear Power Plant near Baxley, Georgia. It is a two-unit GE Boiling Water Reactor.

And over near Dothan, Alabama we have the Joseph M. Farley plant, which is a two-unit Westinghouse PWR.

They comprise about 6,000 megawatts and right at 17 percent of the total annual generation of the Southern Company, which is a holding company of Georgia Power, Alabama Power, Mississippi Power and Gulf Power.

And on behalf of the Southern

Company, Georgia Power, allow me to welcome you to Georgia and to Augusta and express our appreciation to you for the important work that you do.

It's fitting that this Commission meet this morning in Augusta. This area, in a very real way, is the center of gravity for the nuclear revival in the United States. In addition to the important work at Savannah River, Southern Nuclear is an applicant for a combined construction and operation license for what we call Vogtle 3 and 4. I'll call that a COL. And we currently are in construction.

Southern Nuclear is the first holder of a limited work authorization granted from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, when an Early Site Permit was approved. These new units at Plant Vogtle represent the culmination of two decades of effort by the industry and Government to improve the operating records of the existing nuclear

plants, as well as the technical, regulatory and economic model for new nuclear power plants.

If the United States is going to lead the world in the peaceful use of nuclear power, as I believe we should, the recommendations this Commission makes will be crucial to us achieving that goal. Such a mission deserves our collective best efforts.

Let me make a historical observation. The fundamental underpinning of electric power production is the efficient use of the basic steam and water cycle. Hydro power, gas peaking units, certain renewal fuel such as wind and solar are very important fuel choices for America, but the bulk of our electricity currently comes from steam turbines and their associated generators.

Over the last two centuries we have learned that the lowest-cost steam is produced by a fuel source that has the most concentrated form of thermal energy. Think of

the progression of concentrated energy as you move from wood, to coal, natural gas and oil. More efficient, reliable and low cost electricity production was realized by managing efficiently these ever more concentrated forms of energy. And I've put a couple of exhibits in my testimony that illustrate the thermal capacity of the various fuel choices I've just described.

And uranium possesses far more concentrated thermal energy than any of the fuel sources I just named. Peaceful use of the nuclear technology for baseload generation is a natural progression for an industrial society such as ours. If the 20th century was the century of oil, then at least for electric power generation and baseload generation, the 21st century has the potential to be the century of the atom.

We owe it to our fellow Americans to get it right, and getting it right requires a first step, and at Southern Nuclear we have

taken one. We are constructing the first nuclear power plant in this country in over 30 years.

Let me give you a status report. We began working in earnest on this project in 2005. First with our co-owners and then with the many disciplines necessary to evaluate the various fuel choices for low-cost service to our customers. We spent the better part of two years in analysis through many scenarios and many variables, nuclear constantly emerged as a viable option and a clear leader for baseload generation.

The Georgia Public Service Commission held a competitive bidding process; Vogtle 3 and 4 were selected. And in 2008, pursuant to their rules and regulations, the project was certified them as in the best interest of the customers of Georgia Power Company.

Since then many events have occurred. The receipt of an Early Site

Permit, an application for a COL, numerous interactions with the NRC on both technical and licensing issues. More recently, just last month, December 13th, the NRC Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards said the Westinghouse AP1000 Design Certification Amendment met all NRC requirements.

On December 17th, ACRS Subcommittee completed its review of our COL for Vogtle 3 an 4 and full Committee consideration is set for just next week, January 13th. Approval there will open the way for the issuance of the Vogtle COL later this year. But by the time the COL is issued significant work has been accomplished already:

Subsurface foundation work for the nuclear island has been going on for over 18 months;

Backfill work on Units 3 and 4 is underway;

We'll construct a crane foundation

for what will then be the largest crane in the world;

A mechanically stabilized earth retaining wall;

The construction of ancillary structures such as a module assembly building. I was there yesterday, it's fully enclosed, and;

The fabrication of modules and nuclear island components are well underway.

I have brought with me a DVD giving the latest of where we are at Vogtle 3 and 4. We'll leave a number of copies with the secretary, as well as some literature for you to use that. And if you wish, you may go on our website, www.southernco.com, and follow the links to the nuclear company.

I mention these things to emphasize to you that Vogtle 3 and 4 is not theoretical or hypothetical project. It is very real, and a major economic engine for this area. To illustrate the accuracy of what

I just told you, right across the hall on this floor is a meeting of the Vogtle Project Team. They are working out, the Shaw Westinghouse Consortium is working out the additional schedule requirements necessary to bring this project in on time and on budget.

We expect to deliver electricity from Unit 3 to the Georgia Power and the co-owner customers in 2016 and from Unit 4 in 2017. Economic impact; 1500 workers are employed at the construction site today, and we will increase that to 3500 workers at its peak. Thereafter, it requires about 800 workers to operate the plant successfully on a going-forward basis. The significance of all of this, they illustrate the achievements that are possible when industry and government work together within a framework of a coherent public policy.

The creation and implementation by the NRC of a new reactor licensing process, the enactment of incentives for construction

of new plants, and the Energy Policy Act of 2005, cooperative efforts of DOE in the industry under Nuclear Power 2010, creation of a stable regulatory environment for construction of new plants by the state of Georgia have all combined to make it possible for us to go forward and construct Vogtle 3 and 4.

Well, what is the lesson learned there? The same sort of coherent policy and cooperation between government and industry is necessary to involve to resolve the issues associated with the management and disposal of spent nuclear fuel. Such a policy was created by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, but unfortunately that policy has not been implemented successfully. The failure to implement that policy has been, in my judgment, for political and not technical reasons. It is my sincere belief that if the policy had been guided by science and not politics, we would be well on our way to

developing a geological repository at Yucca Mountain.

The customers who are served by the Southern Company's fleet of nuclear assets have paid well in excess of $1 billion in fees to the federal government since the Nuclear Waste Policy Act was signed into law, and have seen very little by way of a return on their investment. What we see mostly is increasingly creative defenses to legal breach of contract claims and increasing denial to a continuing record of adverse legal decisions.

While there is no doubt that spent nuclear fuel can be stored safely at the nation's nuclear power plants -- the NRC just issued its Waste Confidence vote just a few months ago -- these facilities were not ever intended to be the permanent repository of spent nuclear fuel.

Having visited Yucca Mountain, having listened to the engineers debate the alternatives, I remain convinced that the

geological repository is the best technical solution. I'm also convinced that Yucca Mountain is the best site in this country for such a repository. Accordingly, I believe the Commission would do the country a great service by recommending that the licensing and development of Yucca Mountain be continued, but in any event -- in any event, that the technical knowledge developed about it, long-term storage and disposal of spent nuclear fuel, be preserved.

Now this is not to say that the Nuclear Waste Policy Act could not be improved. Subjecting the funding for the repository to the appropriations process has overly politicized the licensing and construction of the project, made it difficult for those charged with developing the project and, in turn, the commercial power plants who depend on the project to plan efficiently.

The diversion of the fees in the years when receipts exceed appropriations

threatened the viability of the program. We need a coherent nuclear waste program with safeguards that include that the fees are available for expenditure for the program.

In conjunction with reformation of the funding process, it's time to re-evaluate the entity responsible for implementation of the nuclear waste policy. Unfortunately, the recent events to withdraw the application demonstrate that DOE will forever be subject to changes in executive and congressional attitudes concerning the necessity of compliance with the Act. For that reason the Commission should consider and support legislation currently pending in Congress that will transfer this responsibility for the repository to a public corporation, but doing that without depoliticizing the funding process, it just simply shifts the responsibility around.

Finally, we should consider long-term, centralized storage at Yucca Mountain or

another site. Licensing Yucca Mountain for long-term storage of 100 years allows scientists to study the reaction of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste to placement in the repository and allow advancements in spent fuel recycling, shielding, storage, and disposal technologies to be implemented before the first casks are made inaccessible.

The Commission should also consider a recommendation to reform the repository licensing process. Repository closure would then be subject to a license to close the facility only after a suitable period of study of the stored material and new technologies, which may reduce the volume.

At a minimum, as I've said previously, the Commission should recommend that the technical knowledge and experience gained at Yucca Mountain be preserved and the site maintained as an option in the event circumstances create the opportunity to finish

the work that has been ongoing at that site.

I appreciate the opportunity to share these thoughts with the Commission. I look forward to reading your report and appreciate your leadership in our great industry. It depends, our industry depends on the adoption and implementation of a sound nuclear waste policy in the long term. And I've got confidence in the members of this Commission to give the Administration the guidance it needs.

I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Chairman Miller, for a very thoughtful presentation.

Are there any questions from the Commission?

MEMBER AYERS: Yes. Thank you, General.

I just want to say for the record how grateful the industry is that Southern

Company was the first to step up to reinvigorate the nuclear renaissance. And in our dealings with the Southern Company and your contractors, we couldn't have picked a better partner to start the first new unit in this country in 30 years. And there's no doubt it will be a successful model. Thank you.

MR. MILLER: Commissioner, thank you for those kind words. The Southern Company prides itself in being a leader in our industry. And I was intimately involved in this. I was asked early on by the Chairman of Southern Company to study whether we should get back into the nuclear business. And like you, I am thrilled that we're back in there. I'm thrilled that we are the leader. And I can tell you very confidently we will build these reactors on schedule and on time.

We have a mutual agreement with a Chinese utility. I've been to Sanmen and seen the AP1000, a couple of years ahead us in construction. We can build this reactor, and

we will build this reactor on time and on budget.

But I think you for your confidence.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Okay. Vicky?

MEMBER BAILEY: Yes. Thank you, Jim.

Just a few clarifying questions, and for the ability to get it on the record, what are the number of nuclear plants in your fleet now?

MR. MILLER: We have six reactors at three plant sites.

Vogtle has, what we call Vogtle 1 and 2. They're, for the record, two four-loop Westinghouse PWRs, approximately 1200 megawatts each.

Farley near Dothan, Alabama are three-loop Westinghouse PWRs, approximately 900 megawatts.

And the Hatch plant, two units also, near Baxley, Georgia are Boiling Water

Reactors, GE Boiling Water Reactors of approximately 900 megawatts each.

MEMBER BAILEY: So this is an expansion at Vogtle?

MR. MILLER: This is an expansion. Georgia is growing. The baseload requirements of Georgia are growing. And when we planned this, our forecast told us that Georgia Power and its co-owners would need this baseload generation beginning in 2016, and those forecasts remain true today.

MEMBER BAILEY: Yes. How did you decide on your type of design, what design you were going to use?

MR. MILLER: Excellent question.

I led that effort, Commissioner. And what we called ourselves, we said we would be dispassionate megawatt buyers. And so we had a technical team headed by then our Southern Nuclear Vice President of Technical Services, and we did not rule in or out any particular technology. But as he did his

work, and it took more than a year to do that. We circled and circled and came back to the AP1000.

I have to tell one of the strong influencing factors was what I mentioned to Commissioner Ayers, that others had this technology under construction. We could go see our plant two years now.

MEMBER BAILEY: Yes.

MR. MILLER: And that's how we decided on it. It had all of the other technical items: heat rate, generation, efficiencies, ability to train operators to operate it were all very influential factors.

MEMBER BAILEY: Any relationship to the type of waste that would be generated, any issues, any other issues that went into consideration on your selection of the design?

MR. MILLER: Well, all the reactor engineers, of course, had a say in it. But every commercial power plant operates in a way to make spent nuclear fuel. The efficiency

really would be less spent nuclear fuel because this plant is more efficient than the first generation of plants. So in that respect the answer would be yes.

MEMBER BAILEY: Okay. Your current storage arrangements? What do you on site now?

MR. MILLER: At two of our more earlier constructed plants -- Hatch is an example, it uses on-site dry cask storage. At Farley -- Hatch was the first unit that went commercial in '75.

MEMBER BAILEY: Yes.

MR. MILLER: And the Farley first unit went commercial in '77. And it also uses on-site dry cask storage.

Vogtle, being a little bit later generation, has not started construction of its on-site storage facility, but we have begun the process within the NRC to get one licensed.

MEMBER BAILEY: And are these

located in residential areas? What type of communities are these located in? Tell me --

MR. MILLER: They're located on the plant site, inside the security boundary on --

MEMBER BAILEY: No, I know that. But the plant themselves?

MR. MILLER: Oh, I'm sorry.

MEMBER BAILEY: Yes. I wouldn't expect those dry casks to be out in the neighborhoods.

MR. MILLER: Yes. No, I'm sorry.

Well, the Mayor of Waynesboro is here. And Waynesboro is a beautiful residential area. But Plant Vogtle is not exactly in those boundaries. Plant Vogtle is north of it, and it is in, I think a fair description would be an isolated area.

Plant Hatch is about 10 or 12 miles south of Vidalia and not quite that many miles from Baxley, Georgia, right on the Altamaha River. And it doesn't have many

things around it.

Plant Farley is in a more isolated area on the Chattahoochee River near Columbia, Alabama.

But there are not many residential communities near any of these plants.

MEMBER BAILEY: Okay. Do they have pretty large perimeters, security perimeters?

MR. MILLER: There are. Interestingly enough, the one at Plant Farley is currently being expanded. It had the smallest protected area of virtually any commercial plant, and we made a decision a number of years ago to expand it. It takes a while to design all the things. But, yes. Yes. And they are extremely well secured.

MEMBER BAILEY: And you are taking a leadership position, but tell me a little bit about public involvement. What kind of reaction, what was the breadth of reaction to your decision?

MR. MILLER: Outstanding. Plant Vogtle, I'll use that as an example because that's where we decided to put the next two units, is very lucky to have the strong support of both Richmond County and Burke County. It's actually in Burke County.

And when you do the surveys, as a number of independent groups have done, the closer you get to that plant, the more enthusiastic they are about another nuclear power plant. They're very bright people. They care an awful lot about, very deeply about their community and they see those 800 jobs, they see those tax revenues, they see the impact of 3500 construction workers over a period of four years and they liked that. It's good for them, it's good for their families, it's good for their community.

We have had -- I have had a delegation from Plant Hatch come to me and say, how can we build Hatch 3 and 4. Well, it depends on the load. You can't build one

unless you have a customer to take the output of the units. But the advantage of a nuclear power plant is if you have a site, we need water and transmission, once you have that you can have a capable site.

And if Georgia keeps going, there'll be more built in Georgia or throughout the Southeast.

MEMBER BAILEY: You said you did a survey. Was this a survey that you put together or was this was an organized? How did you --

MR. MILLER: Yes. The one I recall the most vividly is the one done by NEI, and it was done by Bisconti Research. If you would like, I'll be happy to locate that and submit it for the record.

MEMBER BAILEY: Okay. Yes. Thank you very much.

MR. MILLER: Be happy to, Commissioner.

MEMBER BAILEY: All right. Thank

you.

MR. MILLER: I'm over 60. I don't have to remember that, but I've got a guy right there that's going to remember that I do.

MEMBER MESERVE: Mr. Miller, thank you very much for your comments.

One of the assertions that's been made to us in several of our meetings is that the failure to have a repository serves as a significant barrier to new construction. That's obviously something that you've been able to overcome here with regard to Vogtle 3 and 4. I'd like to see if you could comment on how you did that and how significant the barrier is or whether the situation or circumstances in Georgia from your view are different from other parts of the country on this issue.

MR. MILLER: Excellent point. I've heard that before. I don't agree with the characterization of significance. It's a

management issue, just like any other. Let me give you some facts.

In November of 2008 we signed a contract with the Department of Energy pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act for them to off-load the spent nuclear fuel created by Vogtle 3 and 4. And that contract is in place. But if you think about how nuclear plants store spent nuclear fuel, here's the math.

Three and 4 will have an on-site wet storage in their spent nuclear fuel pool for approximately 20 years. So take 2016 and add 20 years to it, that's the first time when some has to come out. Well, we're confident in the next 20 years, this country will come to the correct decision that storage of spent nuclear fuel, transporting it to someplace like Yucca Mountain is an engineering, science and technical issue and not a political issue, and we will solve that.

We had to acknowledge the issue,

but it was not a significant hindrance. It was just a management issue. In the same way hypothetically is how you get your steam generators shipped from Korea to Augusta, Georgia, Waynesboro, Georgia; it's just another issue.

MEMBER MESERVE: One of the other issues we've heard discussion about is the significance of loan guarantees for new construction. I know you benefitted from loan guarantees and you also, unlike, have the benefit of a regulatory system where you recovery your costs. Could you say something about the importance of loan guarantees for new construction?

MR. MILLER: We think loan guarantees are an important signal from the U.S. government about the significance of nuclear energy on a going-forward basis.

We were lucky, and are lucky at Southern. We've got great customers and we've got a strong enough balance sheet where we

could do this project, and did commit to the project, without loan guarantees.

There are others who, for one reason or another, their situation is different or they may be not in a regulatory environment the way we are and are in a more competitive environment, where loan guarantees play a very important part in reducing the risk to their investors so the investors will commit to do that.

In any event, we think they play a very important part in energizing our nuclear power plant engines so we can go forward and produce for other areas the benefits that Vogtle 3 and 4 will produce for the State of Georgia and the customers of Georgia Power Company and its co-owners.

MEMBER MESERVE: Good. Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Per?

MEMBER PETERSON: I have a question that relates to what may be the future expansion in nuclear generation

capacity. Of course, Vogtle will be the first new plant built in the United States. And the potential for expansion has implications for the issue of how we manage spent fuel.

I'd be curious if you could comment a little bit more on what has changed that gives you the capability to have confidence in predicting schedule and budget for building new plants that would be different from the previous experience where perhaps those things didn't play out as well as they might have in the United States?

MR. MILLER: Yes. The ideal opportunity to comment on the benefits that happen when public and private, when government and industry work together.

Number one, change; we have reformed the licensing process. Again, using Vogtle as an example, it got a license to construct, went through a long and sometime difficult period constructing the plant and then had to go back to the Nuclear Regulatory

Commission to get a license to operate; a two-step process.

In the Energy Policy Act of 1992 that got reformed and allowed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to issue what they would call their Part 52 regulations. And you get one COL, combined construction and operating license. It has associated with it inspections, test analysis and acceptance criteria. If you meet those, you may go commercial and your plant moves on. So that's a significant part.

The second significant thing: standardized design. Each of our prior plants, there was some overlap, but in many respects they were their own stand-alone design. Didn't get the benefits of common operator training, the benefits of common parts, worldwide vendors. That was just not as fully refined as it is now.

You've heard me talk about China. China currently has four AP1000s, that's our

design underway. I've been there. I've seen what our plant will look like two years from now.

So a common design, certified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. In our case, it just happened, our COL and the AP1000 design that major steps were taken just last week. Tells the investor in a utility, if you build that design on that site, you can go commercial if you follow the construction ITAAC that I mentioned to you earlier. And those are huge. Those are huge, huge events.

You know, coherent regulation being guided by science instead of politics all comes into play. But if I had to put my finger on the top two, it's those two. But never forget we build them for the customers. So the third leg of the stool is you have to be in an area where your load is increasing or you're going to use that nuclear power plant to replace a plant that's maybe aging and is going to be retired.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Phil?

MEMBER SHARP: Thank you very much for your testimony, Mr. Miller.

I wanted to ask, yesterday when we visited the MOX facility that's under construction here, one of the issues that was raised with us was the managerial challenge of being able to teach vendors and workforces to the standards of safety that are required by the NRC in construction. And I wonder if you can speak to that challenge and how you're meeting it, since we've had very little construction -- well, no plant construction in this country for 30 years?

MR. MILLER: That's right. I'll briefly touch on the operating side because I know you're interested. In the operating side, of course, we have a safety culture, the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, about which you've read, associated with the oil spill: very disciplined, very rigorous. We routinely do culture audits and evaluations to

talk to our operators. And you know, it's safety first, safety second, safety third; that's how we live our lives.

Well, you got to take that culture that we have embedded on the operating side and shift it over to the construction side. And that is a work in progress. Many of the very, very fine construction workers that we have are excellent at what they do, but they've never built a nuclear power plant before. And we are working very hard with them, Commissioner Ayers knows this. We worked with his team very hard to get them into the nuclear mindset of close enough is not good enough. Not only do we have to be precise about what we do, but we have to be precise about the paperwork. Because we need to be able to go back at any point in the future and say, I know exactly who put in that weld. I know whether they were right handed or left handed. I know the date and the time that they did it and what they used. And that

is an ongoing exercise, but it is panning out and bearing fruit right now. They're more than willing to learn and be successful and commit to a standard of excellence. But nobody's challenged them in that way before because only nuclear has that very, very rigorous discipline. And they're learning and coming along, and I predict they will be very successful in that.

MEMBER SHARP: Secondly I wanted to ask you, you spoke to obviously the ultimate need that all of us recognize for a disposal site, the ultimate geologic disposal site. But one of the recommendations before us and under consideration is that we should also have one or more interim storage, long-term centralized storage sites where dry casks could be taken, especially from the decommissioned power plant sites, and moved there. And I just wondered if you have any insight into the importance of that or the relative of which things are more important?

MR. MILLER: Yes. Well, there's no reason you have to choose an either/or. You can avoid the tyranny of the or and go with the power of the and, and you can have both of them.

We support interim storage. At some point this country will reprocess, the same way France and England and Japan do. It's not currently the most economic way to approach spent nuclear fuel. But when it does becomes economic, when it does become public policy to close that fuel cycle, we need to be able to go get these spent nuclear fuel bundles, harvest the remaining thermal energy in them and make more nuclear fuel and put it back in our reactors to make electricity.

MEMBER AYERS: Mr. Miller, something I was going to ask you, if reprocessing -- not if, we all know that it's not economically feasible at the current time, but it is in other countries. What's the difference?

MR. MILLER: I think there seems to be two differences, and I'll use Japan as an example.

They have very little indigenous fossil fuels, not much hydro power, access to limited amounts of natural gas. As a policymaker they're going to consider economics, of course, but they're going to say, I also need to ensure that I'll always have access to the fuel necessary to power my reactors. France is the same way.

It's been a while since I've examined this, so you got to trust my memory. But I believe back in the '70s during the Arab oil embargo, they made a public policy decision we're going to close the fuel cycle, we're going to control our destiny.

Canada is very close by, which has a fair amount of uranium, and so the United States is not quite at that point. We will be at that point sometime in the future. I can't tell you exactly when.

So, for Japan, France, et cetera, it's a combination of economics, but it's also a combination of control your destiny in public policy.

MEMBER AYERS: And just one other comment, and it is a comment, not a question. As Congressman Sharp indicated, yesterday, we had heard that some concern that there weren't qualified contractors, subcontractors, maybe even craftspeople. And you know this, we can't overlook the fact that we have thousands of very highly skilled qualified workers that are refueling nuclear plants, they're working the shutdowns, they're doing the maintenance and repair and renovations. So there's still a pretty sizable workforce that's plugged into the industry. And I think you would agree with that.

MR. MILLER: Commissioner, they're going to think you and I worked this up in advance. You're absolutely right.

You stand in awe at the skill set

of some of these young men and women coming into our workforce. They have great technological ability. They're driven to do an outstanding job. All of their lives they've talked about how we have to be competitive to be successful. And they're very highly motivated.

We produced a training for them, and we will -- not just we as in Southern Company, but we as the United States of America, they will respond. They will respond.

Great societies build things and we have plenty of people capable -- willing, capable, ready and able to build things for this country.

We didn't work that out in advance.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Any other comment?

Mr. Miller, I want to thank you for a very constructive dialogue. We appreciate your participation very much.

MR. MILLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: We will next hear from Deke Copenhaver, the Mayor of Augusta.

Mr. Copenhaver?

MAYOR COPENHAVER: Good morning.

First off, I'd like to apologize for my tardiness. Obviously, we have a little parking issue out there. But that's okay, because it goes along with progress.

First off, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome the Blue Ribbon Commission to Augusta and to our community as a whole.

But fortunately, let me say this, my tardiness allowed me to listen to Mr. Miller's presentation and so I can comment on a few things with regards to that.

I think what you will find in Augusta and throughout our community is really a community that embraces the nuclear

industry. I think there are a lot of reasons for that.

I grew up here. It's been here and been a partner for our community literally for decades. So I think Augusta and the surrounding area is maybe a little bit unusual throughout the country, in a community that actually embraces the nuclear industry.

But I also, one of the things that he commented on as well, I've been Mayor for five years now. And one of my goals has been to recruit and retain the best and brightest in our community as I think that that leads to a sustainable future for any community. The nuclear industry is allowing us to do that.

We have young people graduating from Georgia Tech that are from here that are coming back to our community. So the nuclear industry plays a vital role in the sustainability of our community.

I'd also like to make another comment that I have no political affiliation.

And I'm glad to say that, but I have long been an advocate of making decisions not on politics, but on the best information available, the science. And I think that that speaks, and you will also hear throughout your visit here to Augusta and the area, that we speak with a unified voice in saying that we believe that Yucca Mountain is now and will remain the best repository for highly radioactive waste. And that's based on, once again, the science and the best information available as opposed to the politics. So we are extremely excited to have you in town.

I know that you're going to find us a community that really, you can take and speak about another community, so I'm excited about that. But please enjoy your visit. Thank you for being here.

And if there's anything we can from my office to make your stay more enjoyable, please do not hesitate to call me.

Thank you so much.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor. We appreciate it very much.

Next we will hear from Mr. George DeLoach, the Mayor of Waynesboro.

You my proceed.

MAYOR DeLOACH: Good morning.

I bring you greetings and welcome from Waynesboro and Burke County, Georgia.

I am a native and life-long resident of Burke County. And I know my people. And as Mr. Miller just stated, we've had several meetings with the NRC here in our community in Waynesboro. And the majority of the local people there are fully behind Plant Vogtle and its expansion.

I've prepared a few remarks to explain what the impact Plant Vogtle has been on Waynesboro and Burke County.

I would like to tell you how the construction of Plant Vogtle in Burke County has affected and changed our local community.

Fifty years ago after I graduated

from Waynesboro High School, there were only a few students who finished their college education and returned home to Waynesboro to make their livelihood and start a family. Usually the only ones who returned were those that had a family business to operate and care for.

In the 1960s, Waynesboro and Burke County's economy was basically 80 percent agribusiness. New technology in agriculture had replaced and displaced the farm-related worker and unemployment was at a record high for our area of the state.

Trying to help the unemployment problem and recruit new industry, I remember our local Chamber of Commerce erected a billboard on the edge of town that stated in large letters: Burke County, an Environment for Growth.

In 1969, Georgia Power Company announced that Southern Company would build and operate a nuclear power electric

generating plant with Unit 1 and 2 located on 3500 acres of land on the southwest side of the Savannah River in eastern Burke County, approximately 18 miles from the city of Waynesboro.

At the completion of construction of Unit 2 in 1989, there were over 14,000 construction workers employed at Plant Vogtle. However, the number of employees needed to operate the facility was around 900. Can you imagine what great benefits a small rural community like Waynesboro and Burke County received from such sudden growth?

For each new construction, manufacturing or operations job created in nuclear power plants, four new jobs are created to provide goods and services to that plant and surrounding communities.

Utility and property taxes paid by Plant Vogtle amount to about $24 million per year to our county. Our local School Board and Burke County Commissioners have spent the

tax money wisely. We have built five new schools, a new hospital and a state of the art Emergency Management Facility with 13 substations throughout our county. And I am proud to say it is the best rural EMA facility and system in the State of Georgia.

The City of Waynesboro has been able to improve and extend its infrastructure for present and future growth with planning and help from the state and federal Government. We now have a four-lane superhighway linking Waynesboro with metro Augusta and the deepwater port in Savannah, Georgia.

Our local upgrades and improvements in our infrastructure have brought us great success and economic development in recruiting new industry. I can name probably eight new plants that we have located in our city and county in the last 15 years.

The city of Augusta has provided

the leadership in urban growth, and Waynesboro and Burke County take pride in being a part of America's nuclear renaissance with the completion of Units 3 and 4 at Plant Vogtle in 2017. After 2017 Plant Vogtle will be the only nuclear power plant in the United States with four working reactors producing electricity for our state and nation.

I thank Georgia Power and Southern Company for their investment in our community. And I thank the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission for keeping our local environment safe and secure.

And if you have any questions, I'd be happy to answer any questions that you have at this time.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: I thank you very much, Mayor DeLoach.

Are there questions for the Mayor?

Thank you very much, sir.

MAYOR DeLOACH: Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: We appreciate

your participation.

Next we're privileged to have Senator Lindsey Graham.

Senator Graham, the floor is yours. Welcome.

SENATOR GRAHAM: Good morning.

I hope you've enjoyed your visit.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Very much so.

SENATOR GRAHAM: Spend money on both sides of the river.

I just want to thank the members of the Commission providing a service to the country. You're about to tackle a major problem for America. And since I'm the only one here, I'll take a little more than five minutes, if that's okay. And I'd like to have a little interaction, ask any question you like and I'll try to answer it the best I can.

I want to welcome the people from Penn State. There's some athletic thing here. You're very loud, but you're all welcome. It was in the hotel last night having a good

time. So, if I'm a little slow this morning, that's why.

My basic premise to the Commission is that nuclear energy and nuclear power, if you're serious about improving our carbon footprint, to those of you in the environmental community that believe that carbon pollution is a problem that needs to be dealt with, and I don't think you have to look at it from the polar bear's point of view, but I do believe that carbon pollution is something we should be trying to deal with in a responsible, business-friendly manner. And if you're going to replace coal-fired plants, I think you need an all-of-the-above approach. And when you look a wind and solar, it's part of the puzzle but it's a very small piece, quite frankly.

If you took all the wind and solar technology and deployed it, maybe 15 to 20 percent of the grid.

There has to be a place for clean

coal because we have 250 years of it.

And I'm trying to work with my Democratic and Republican colleagues to march this country toward energy independence as much as that is possible.

General, you know we live in a very dangerous world. The fact that we have more dependency on Mideast oil today than we did in the '70s is a national disgrace.

The fact that we're sending about $400 billion a year overseas to buy oil from people who don't like us very much, is a national security problem. So what does that have to do with nuclear power?

On the transportation side, we need to find ways to transport Americans and our economy with less dependence on foreign oil. We need to find more here, but eventually use less. So I'm a big believer in hybrid technology and developing better fuel standards so that we can be less dependent on foreign oil.

But on the power production side, for America to grow and prosper, we need affordable power. And the one thing that South Carolina and Georgia has going for both states, is this is a good place to do business and you have access to affordable power. And when it comes to nuclear power, South Carolina has more nuclear power per capita than, I believe, in any state in the nation. We still have coal-fired plants, but we're very friendly to the nuclear industry. Same in Georgia.

The French, our good friends and allies, 82 percent of the power produced in France comes from the nuclear industry. Surely we can be as bold as the French. We have about 20 percent. And if you believe there's a place in America for nuclear power, as I do, we need to grow that number. And that means we need to build more plants. And one of the biggest impediments to building more plants is, what do you do with the waste. That's on

the commercial spent fuel side.

Now, this Commission was formed because of a decision made by the Obama Administration to take Yucca Mountain off the table in terms of a repository for defense waste and commercial spent fuel. I know it's not your charter to change that decision, but it is my obligation whenever I can and where I can to voice my objection. I think it was a very shortsighted decision that could have devastating consequences. And to the Governor-elect of South Carolina, keep fighting, Nikki Haley, this decision.

To our friends in Georgia, keep fighting because this is not the right decision for America. This was a very politically driven decision and if nothing else, the Commission ought to address this problem. You've taken $1.3 billion in Waste Fund fees from utilities and customers of utilities in South Carolina to build a hole that we're not going to use. We want our

money back or use the hole.

Now please look long and hard at that. Because once you take Yucca Mountain off the table, it has a series of cascading consequences.

You went to the site yesterday? Let me tell you a little bit about the site from my point of view. I think it's a national treasure. And the people of South Carolina and Georgia have done things that other communities would be reluctant to do because we have understood nuclear materials. We were on the front lines of winning the Cold War producing the tritium that created a nuclear deterrent force that I think was very beneficial to our national security for about six decades here. And we've accumulated a lot of defense waste, not commercial spent fuel.

And I, along with other members of the South Carolina and Georgia delegation, welcome the MOX plant to the Savannah River Site.

And I don't mean to pick on you, General. I just know you the best, and I admire you.

The idea that 36 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium will be converted from nuclear bomb material to commercial spent fuel here and Russia is a very good idea. It makes us all safer. Taking a sword and turning it into a plowshare.

So the Site has been taking weapons grade plutonium from throughout the weapons complexes, and all the complexes with the understanding that we would convert it through the MOX system into commercial grade fuel, and there would be pathway for it.

We're good at some things, but we're not designed and never have been designed to be a repository. There are 51 tanks at the Site that have 1 billion gallons of waste that helped -- that was created from winning the Cold War.

We had one heck of a debate four

or five years ago in the Congress. The Bush administration came to me with a proposal that we could clean the tanks up, but in the heel of the tank of you left some residue that could be treated safely and concrete poured into the tank as a final storage plan, the State of South Carolina would be involved in approving that plan, that we would save $16 billion.

Now that's the State of South Carolina working with the federal government to say that we're going to be rational about waste. You could scrape these tanks for 100 years and fill up a place like Yucca Mountain with material that really doesn't need to go there.

So, we've done our part. We've been very rational. And I pushed that legislation with the understanding that we would close these tanks, keep some waste in the bottom of the tank safely to save money for the federal government. I accepted, along

with other members of the delegation, the plutonium from other sites understanding we would do a good service for America by converting it to spent fuel. It could never be used for bombs. I wasn't really worried about our material falling into the wrong hands, but I sure am worried about what's going on in Russia. So if they can take some of their weapons-grade plutonium off the table, we have to do the same; that's a good deal.

What is a bad deal is to take the pathway forward off the table. Because now no one knows what we're going to do. That's why you have been created.

This country has watched the world advance on the nuclear front while we've stayed stagnant until recently.

And I will say something good about the Obama Administration now. Secretary Chu has been one of the best Secretaries of Energy I've ever dealt with. The

Administration, generally speaking, has had a good vision for the development of commercial nuclear power. They have put on the table loan guarantees more robust than the Bush administration. And Secretary Chu has convinced me that another form of reprocessing, better than what the French and the British and the Japanese do, may be at hand in the next decade.

I'm willing to entertain that idea, and I'm very willing for the Savannah River Site to be the research and development facility for the nation to make that idea a reality. Because Secretary Chu believes there's a better way to do this then what the French are currently engaged in, and I've been there.

So, let me associate myself with the idea that there may be something on the horizon in the next decade that can allow America to do something better than the world is currently doing. And the goal of

reprocessing and recycling is to reduce your storage footprint, right? The proliferation concerns from reprocessing, I think quite frankly, are overstated. What the French do is not the problem with the world's proliferation. The problem with the world's proliferation is Iran and people like Iran and North Korea wanting nuclear weapons. And no matter what we do at Savannah River Site, they're not going to stop those plans unless somebody makes it unacceptable for them to go forward.

So, what I would ask the Commission to do is look long and hard about the consequences of closing Yucca Mountain. These tanks that we're cleaning up as I speak, if H-Canyon is not available to the Site, you're going to extend the cleanup far beyond what we envisioned when I did the deal with the federal government to lead the heel footprint in place. If you don't allow H-Canyon to be fully utilized, you're going to

deny this site the ability to deal with the waste material that we have accumulated in winning the Cold War. And you will undercut in my view, the gains we have achieved by the agreement with the federal government to close the tanks with some residual material in the heel of the tank.

I know the Administration has concerns about H-Canyon being used in a reprocessing fashion. I've come out on a different place there. I really want you, if you would, and I know you will, to look at the consequences to this facility if the tanks cannot be cleaned up on time and on schedule, and all of the waste we've accumulated is either going to be vitrified or MOXed. That was the deal, that you send us plutonium, over time we will turn it into something that's safe and productive, but there would be pathway out.

And I was in Congress when we did this deal, and Senator Thurmond was in the

Senate. And that covers a long period of time. And there are fines in a statute that we created if the federal government does not honor its commitment. I want the Commission to look at that statute, I will send it to you.

And this is very important: If communities like Savannah River Site, Augusta and Aiken and CSRA area believe that you can't do business in good faith with the federal government, you're going to send the wrong signal at the wrong time. And I am very bipartisan about this. We had a knock-down, drag-out with the Bush administration. The statute was done when the Bush administration was in office. I love President Bush, but I don't trust anybody to look after South Carolina and Georgia other than the people who are elected from South Carolina and Georgia. That's why we have that statute.

And I put my reputation on the line saying that this is a deal that makes sense for America, and I expect the federal

government to honor that agreement.

So this Commission when you look at what you're going to recommend, you have to understand that some of the deals that have been made that were made in good faith are now in jeopardy because of the closing of Yucca Mountain. I'm a very reasonable, patient man to a point. I'm not going to let my state or my sister state be left holding the bag without one hell of a fight.

We need not have this fight. This can be a win-win for America, South Carolina and Georgia. But the reason I came here today is this is so important to South Carolina and Georgia and to our country. To those of you who wish to have a nuclear renaissance, we will not be able to get there until we'll deal with permitting reform, but until we come up with a waste disposal plan. And the biggest impediment to nuclear power production over time is on-site storage.

So, I hope that this Commission

will recommend a pathway forward when it comes to waste disposal that will allow a nuclear renaissance to occur at a time when America needs it the most. We have 9.7 percent unemployment. If you wanted to create new jobs in America that pay very well, then build nuclear power plants.

To the Obama administration, I appreciate the fact that you are accepting of the idea of a nuclear renaissance. I am disappointed in your decision to take Yucca Mountain off the table. I will work with you to come up with a waste disposal plan that is third-generation. I will be patient. But it has to be something that makes sense and that can be achieved in a reasonable period of time, not some fanciful idea that will never jump off the paper.

If I could repeat what Senator Thurmond has done, I would have 45 more years in this job. I don't think that's going to happen because I'm, if nothing else,

genetically term-limited. So, while I may be patient -- I apologize.

Anything over ten or 15 years in terms of coming up with an alternative to Yucca Mountain will destroy, in my view, the ability to jump start a nuclear renaissance. And if we don't watch it, ladies and gentlemen, we're going to be buying everything nuclear from China. There is a race going on in this world in the energy arena. The technology for nuclear, solar, wind, alternative technology is being developed in China as I speak. And I think President Obama understands that. So I would like to find a rational way forward on all fronts, not just nuclear power.

So, I appreciate you very much coming to view the site. And please, and I'll send you some material, understand our unique needs here. And please understand what we have done before you were empaneled to make the waste problem more efficient and more logical.

We took risks that I thought were reasonable with the understanding that we had a reliable partner. And I hope the purpose of this Commission will be fully realized, and that can only happen in my view, if you reward reliable partners. What you do and what our federal government does in the area of dealing with the post-Yucca Mountain waste problem will determine whether or not states like South Carolina and Georgia are going to be partners with the federal government.

We're either going to go forward or we're going to go backward. And it is my hope that we go forward. That the waste here at Savannah River Site will be well treated, but there is a pathway forward as promised. And H-Canyon to me is not a reprocessing technology that is going to lead to proliferation. It is a reprocessing technology that will allow the States of South Carolina and Georgia to get the full benefit of the bargain we made with the federal

government that will save the taxpayer a lot of money.

So, with that I do appreciate the fact of your willingness to serve. And I can't think of a more important topic facing America, other than our national debt and Iran getting a nuclear weapon, than what you will decide for the future of American nuclear power and the way we dispose of the legacy of the Cold War.

Thank you very much. And if you have any questions, I'll take them.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Senator.

SENATOR GRAHAM: Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: We very much appreciate your frankness and we're fully aware of the farsighted approach that you and many of the citizens of this region have taken on this important issue.

As you know, we are not a siting

commission.

SENATOR GRAHAM: I understand.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: But Yucca raises a very interesting point. I don't want to speak for all the Commissioners, but my sense as we have gone into our investigations is that there is a feeling in the country that the government, and I won't narrow it down below that, keeps changing the rules of which Yucca Mountain is only the last one.

SENATOR GRAHAM: I share that view.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: And so one of the problems we face is how do we set a system--

SENATOR GRAHAM: Right.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: -- in which people can have confidence won't be changed with the next election cycle or something else. And we would appreciate your help as we undertake --

SENATOR GRAHAM: Well, General,

you've nailed it right there. Because when we did the agreement about tank cleanup, agreeing to keep some material here rather than sending it to Yucca Mountain through vitrification, it saved a lot of money, $16 billion. And that depended on H-Canyon and vitrification working.

If we don't honor these agreements and give people certainty, we're going to fall apart completely at a time we need to advance.

Again, back to the Obama administration's desire to do something different than what the French and the Japanese and the British are doing. I am very willing to accept Secretary Chu's proposal that we look, that we don't build a $2 or $3 billion recycling facility that may be outdated before it starts. But for me to be able to sell this community on the research and development, and the country as a whole, we're going to have to honor these commitments. Because there is an exciting

future ahead for America in the nuclear power industry. And I think there's a way to make the world safer.

The START treaty, I wished it could have been better, but the idea of taking nuclear weapons off the table and turning the plutonium pit into commercial grade spent fuel is a godsend. Because there's so much of this stuff floating around. And we're willing to do all this, but we just as you say, have to have the confidence.

And the reason we passed the statute during the Bush administration is because they were about to pull the plug on the MOX facility.

We had a conversation with Secretary Bodman that you would have to bleep like crazy because they were about to change the rules then. And it was only because of some stern talk that the MOX program survived the Bush Administration. To the Obama administration's credit, the facility is going

up ahead of schedule and under budget. I just want to use it.

So, thank you very much for coming.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Senator. We really appreciate you taking the time to be with us. Thank you.

We will now turn to Mr. Shawn Merrick, Labor Relations Plant Site Coordinator.

You may proceed, sir.

MR. MERRICK: Chairman Hamilton, Chairman Scowcroft, and esteemed members of the Committee, it is an honor and a pleasure to address you and provide you with my assessment of the nuclear industry's workforce, employment opportunities, and challenges.

The importance of the nuclear power renaissance to our nation's security, energy needs and economy cannot be overstated, and the enthusiastic availability of the

world's safest, most highly trained an productive skilled craft workforce is a vital component of the resurgence and expansion of the nuclear power industry.

Plant Vogtle's Units 3 and 4 in Waynesboro, Georgia are the first nuclear power plants to be built in the United States in 30 years. This means there are very few construction workers, engineers, or management personnel with any firsthand experience in building nuclear facilities as most have either retired or moved on to other professions. This reality, combined with the fact that qualified boilermakers, millwrights, pipefitters, electricians, and ironworkers are expected to be in short supply in some local markets sheds some light on the scope of the challenges of building a building plant in 2011.

According to a 2009 analysis on design and construction conducted by Bechtel Power Corporation for a bipartisan commission

lead by former US Senator Domenici, approximately 4,000 skilled craft professionals will be required at peak construction for a new nuclear power plant generating 1600 megawatts of electricity.

The Department of Energy has reported that there are 17 Combined Operating License Applications covering the construction of 26 new reactor facilities that have been docketed with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Accordingly, over a 100,000 skilled craft workers who are trained and certified for nuclear construction work will be required for the manpower needs of those projects currently on the NRC docket.

In addition to the need for a workforce to construct new nuclear power plants, there is a critical need looming for plant operations and maintenance. There are 104 existing nuclear units operating now employing approximately 700 employee each, totaling 72,800 employees. These figures do

not include ancillary or support jobs. Thirty-five percent, a figure of 25,480 employees of the 72,800, are or will be eligible for retirement by 2012. A loss by non-retirement attrition is not included in these figures.

These and other factors beg the question as to whether or not the building trade unions have the capacity to meet this demand. The answer to that question is yes, the building trade unions do have the capacity to meet this demand. They are exploring and implementing new ways to supplement the current and future capacity in order to address various isolated issues associated with demographics and geography.

For example, they are thinking and acting proactively about the necessary steps needed to ensure the development of a safe, productive and qualified workforce in areas that are remote and thinly populated. Currently, one of the biggest problems that

they face is on the demand side. The current depression, and I use the term depression not recession because, when you have 20 percent unemployment in the construction industry like we do today, this is a depression. And it is putting us in danger of losing many of our best and most skilled workers to other careers and industries.

Recognizing the immense challenges of the industry and accumulating a pool of highly skilled and highly trained and qualified construction workers needed to build nuclear facilities, the owner of Plant Vogtle, Southern Company, Georgia Power, the builder Shaw Nuclear Power Group, the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, the North American Contractors Association and the Nuclear Energy Institute all work together and are committed to meet the challenges of a nuclear power renaissance. They agree that these challenges could not be met with conventional concepts and policies, so they

forged ahead thinking innovatively and strategically.

As a result of this commitment, the Nuclear Power Construction Labor Agreement was developed. Innovative and substantially different from other labor agreements, this labor agreement is designed to meet regional and project-specific needs as well as the needs that are national scope.

Some of the significant changes and innovations in the way a project is performed are;

This group of nuclear industry stakeholders has taken a bold step in creating a new and innovative labor-relations model, the Labor-Relations Site Coordinator, who reports to a committee comprised of the stakeholders. This will help ensure that each project is completed on time and on budget. This will help ensure that each local community and their economy will benefit from the projects. This position will also help

ensure that local minorities: women, the disadvantaged, the unemployed and the underemployed have opportunities.

This position will also coordinate the use of the Building and Construction Trades Department's Helmets to Hardhats program ensuring our military transitioning to civilian life are provided with opportunities to benefit from the project.

The Nuclear Power Construction Labor Agreement has a training framework that is built on the apprenticeship system. The agreement adds important enhancements to the existing apprenticeship system necessary to achieve the level of specialized training required in the exacting nuclear construction industry. The agreement includes unprecedented language that would allow labor shortages in one craft to be filled with workers from other crafts or from any other credible source.

The agreement contains language

allowing 100 percent portability for outages -- - for outage work for the same owner in order to meet the short term demands of such outages.

The agreement provides for the use of apprentices and other sub-journeyman classifications in order to contain unit costs and encourage efficient crew composition.

The agreement establishes an extraordinary commitment to the development of on-site or near-site multi-craft training facilities to ensure a steady supply of skilled workers to provide specialized training for journeymen and/or apprentices, or to be used by vendors to train and certify workers on the installation of specialized equipment.

The skillcraft training system that the unions operate in the United States is apprenticeship-based and is maintained by labor management contributions. Over $750 million is spend each year by this system in

direct training expenses. When the wages to the apprentices for on-the-job training are included, that total expenditure each year is approximately $15 billion.

Today, the trade union training capacity is significantly underutilized. That is mostly caused by the current economic depression in the construction industry. But even in tight labor markets their training capacity has been underutilized. These facilities can also be used to provide career development to workers recruited from the communities by the owner for operations and maintenance decisions necessary to operate and maintain the facility upon completion.

The partnerships, commitments, innovative concepts all are convertible and adaptable and can be applied to the back end of the nuclear industry to substantially reduce costs, provide a safe, productive, and professional nuclear waste containment and recycle workforce.

I have provided you with a copy of the preamble for the Nuclear Power Construction Labor Agreement. In this document, you can clearly see the stakeholders' intentions and commitment to cooperate and deliver a successful project.

I have also provided you with a copy of the Executive Summary of the Nuclear Power Construction Labor Agreement. In this document you can see the detailed and in-depth thought and study that the Building and Construction Trades Department has given to the nuclear power renaissance in a modern innovative labor agreement. You can also see a more complete set of industry benefits and changes to the labor agreement.

And finally, I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to address you. I hope you find this information useful in your endeavor to develop a new plan. If I can be of any further assistance to the Committee, please feel free to call upon me.

If you have any questions, I'd be glad to --

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Merrick. We very much appreciate your statement.

Are there any questions from the Commission? Yes, Mark?

MEMBER AYERS: Yes. Mr. Merrick, how many people are employed on the project now, and are they local people?

MR. MERRICK: At the moment, there is approximately 800 people employed, and a majority of those people, I believe, are local people.

MEMBER AYERS: Thank you.

MR. MERRICK: And when I say local, I'm talking about a large area, not necessarily the Waynesboro community itself. But some South Carolina, Augusta, down in Savannah, I'm considering that local.

MEMBER AYERS: I'm assuming that this project is really a blessing in disguise for the those that really saw not too many

other opportunities in this current, as you state it, depression.

MR. MERRICK: It is, and at the peak of construction, we're expecting somewhere between 4,000 and 5,000 people will be employed. And as we move toward that, there'll be some opportunities there for some people that are usually considered fringe people, underemployed people that maybe have some skill levels but don't quite have the skill level that they need to take advantage of an opportunity like this.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Dick?

MEMBER MESERVE: I'd like to thank you for your comment. This really is quite a remarkable achievement that you've discussed with us.

My question is a rather simple one: if I'm a operator and I want to build a plant, does this agreement cover all the workers that I need to be able to proceed?

MR. MERRICK: Yes, it does. Yes,

it does.

MEMBER MESERVE: Thank you.

MEMBER AYERS: Dick, I'm not sure that Shawn understood the question you were asking him, but it doesn't include the operations people.

MR. MERRICK: Oh, well that's true.

MEMBER AYERS: But we offered to train them.

MR. MERRICK: And it doesn't include management or some particular vendors who have a specialty system that takes specialized training beyond what the normal training is; it doesn't include those people. There's some traditional positions; guard, secretaries, those kind of positions it does not cover, but the hands on skilled craft builders, it covers all of them.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Other comments

MEMBER PETERSON: I'd like to ask a question that relates to the different

technology that's being used in AP1000 for construction. Maybe many people are not aware, but the construction methods are very different from what's been used previously to build nuclear plants or the experience, for example, of the MOX plant, particularly around modularization and factory prefabrication, site assembly. Because these methods are different, how does one tackle the problem of the training needed to do this first-of-a-kind type of construction that hasn't been done previously in the U.S.?

MR. MERRICK: Well, when you take the part of your question of modular construction, that's new to the nuclear industry but not to other industries, such as the oil industry, several other industries. And the building trades unions has for years back to the mid-'70s when they started using modular construction in the oil fields in Alaska, is very familiar with that.

These particular modulars are new

to everyone because of the new technology and working with the owner -- well, all the stakeholders will be developing and are developing training that is particular to this new technology.

Does that answer your question?

MEMBER PETERSON: Yes, indeed, it does. Thanks.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Any other questions?

Thank you very much, Mr. Merrick. We appreciate your participation.

MR. MERRICK: Thank you, sir.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Next we will have a statement from Senator Jim DeMint to be delivered by Ellen Weaver. Thank you for being with us.

MS. WEAVER: Good morning.

It's an honor to be here with you all today. And it's an honor to follow my senior senator in extending a warm South Carolina welcome to you all, even though we're

on the Georgia side of the border.

You know, I'd like to say on behalf of Senator DeMint that he regrets that he wasn't able to be here in person today. But I appreciate the opportunity to deliver these prepared remarks on his behalf.

For the past six decades South Carolina has played a vital role in ensuring a strong, national nuclear posture through the invaluable work of countless individuals at the Savannah River Site. Our state has also been at the forefront of the commercial nuclear industry.

The first reactor came on-line almost 40 years ago in Hartsville, and today over half of the electricity generated in our state come from these seven nuclear reactors operating in South Carolina. I can say confidently that you will find few states in the nation with more community support for nuclear, or that will be more effected by the policies that this Blue Ribbon Commission

recommends.

I believe that America's nuclear future stands at a crossroads today. Our country faces many issues regarding our nation's energy security, our environment and the demands on our society. At times, balancing these issues can be precarious at best. However, it is not impossible and, done properly, it will provide a better quality of life, increased energy security and strengthen competitiveness in the global marketplace.

The Savannah River Site is a testimony to our ability to confront and balance these challenges successfully, and we as a local community, a state, and a nation are stronger and more secure because of the work that is done here.

One of the best opportunities that we have to increase our energy security is through new domestic nuclear power. But one crucial issue must be addressed: nuclear waste, which is of course why this

distinguished Commission is here today.

For the record, I strongly believe that our nation needs a permanent repository for spent fuel, and I believe that that permanent repository should be at Yucca Mountain. Yucca Mountain is a vital component of America's energy security and the refusal of a few has halted decades of progress and billions in funding for what has been determined by endless studies and scientific research to be an environmentally safe and secure facility. Without a final destination for our nation's nuclear waste, I fear that our nuclear industry will never reach its full potential, costing Americans well paying permanent jobs and a secure energy future.

Opening a nuclear waste repository is also essential to ensuring that the 51 million gallons of defense waste currently housed at the Savannah River Site will be removed and permanently stored in a safe and secure location. SRS was never meant to be a

permanent or de facto home to our nation's defense waste. And I will continue to work with my Georgia and my South Carolina colleagues to ensure that this does not become the case.

Additionally, I think it is important to remember that when South Carolina agreed to take in special nuclear materials from sites around the country at SRS as part of cleanup efforts, we received a guarantee that these materials would be processed through MOX and H-Canyon, ensuring a disposition path out of our state. Maintaining the operability of H-Canyon is key to this plan, and I hope the Commission will keep this important fact in mind as they develop their final recommendations.

While I believe first and foremost that the Yucca Mountain repository should open, I am also confident that South Carolina and the Savannah River Site can play an active and important role in managing the back end of

the nuclear fuel cycle through recycling. Because of SRS' long history with the nuclear arsenal, the cleanup mission that is ongoing there, and the operation of H-Canyon, the site has an unparalleled level of knowledge and expertise that should be tapped to develop solutions for America's nuclear waste.

I would urge the Commission to fully explore the possibilities available in dealing with this waste, including nuclear recycling and to look at SRS and the Savannah River National Lab at the Site to help lead the way in this important work.

Again, I appreciate you being here today, and I hope your visit to the CSRA is a productive one. I look forward to working alongside you and my colleagues in Congress to develop reasonable, long-term answers to America's nuclear future.

Thank you again for your time and your careful consideration of these critical issues.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Ms. Weaver. We appreciate it.

Next we will have a joint statement by Senators Isakson and Chambliss of Georgia to be delivered by Tricia Chastain.

MS. CHASTAIN: Good morning.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Welcome.

MS. CHASTAIN: Thank you.

Again, my name is Tricia Chastain. I work for Senator Isakson, but I'll be presenting a letter on behalf of both of Georgia's U.S. Senators, Johnny Isakson and Saxby Chambliss.

First, General Scowcroft, members of the Commission, welcome again to the Central Savannah River Area and to Augusta, Georgia. We truly appreciate the time you spent yesterday at the Savannah River Site and the time you're spending with us today to hear this community's views.

I'm going to spare you and not

read the entire statement. I'll hit the highlights, and then I'll give copies for the Commission members, and of course an official copy for the record.

First, in regards to Yucca Mountain. We have long advocated that the Department of Energy immediately halt all actions to dismantle operations at Yucca Mountain. Congressional intent is clear and the Congress has voted several times to retain Yucca Mountain as the national repository. We believe that DOE must recognize the letter and spirit of the law and halt all efforts to reprogram funds or terminate contracts related to Yucca Mountain.

In regard to the Savannah River Site. The needs for disposal of defense high level radioactive waste are significantly different but equally as important as the needs of commercial used fuel. As you know, defense waste does not currently have treatment options which minimize materials

requiring disposal in a geologic repository. This could change with a national investment in reprocessing.

Our constituents at the Central Savannah River Area have always been supportive of the mission at Savannah River site. We believe it is imperative that this Commission address a timely pathway for disposal of SRS defense high-level waste.

Technology currently exists to recycle used commercial nuclear reactor fuels. Our allies across the globe are doing this. Developing effort have identified several alternate used fuel recycling processes which reduce the amount and toxicity of waste requiring disposal in a geologic repository, and address nuclear nonproliferation concerns. We believe that the Commission's report must include a recommendation for a technology- and engineering-development program to develop and deploy the next-generation fuel-cycle program. Such a program would minimize the need for a

geologic disposal of waste products, SRS is a leader in this area and currently recycles some materials from research reactors.

And finally, on this region, the Central Savannah River Area. Any recommendation by the Commission on policies for managing the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle must include the many parameters which will enable success in this endeavor. SRS and the CSRA demonstrate a number of these elements of success. We reside in a region where energy demand is growing faster then any other parts of the country. We are a hub of transportation. Our government leaders on the federal, state and local level speak as one voice when advocating for increased missions at SRS and recognize the need to preserve our national security, improve our energy security, and continue our environmental stewardship.

Thank you again for allowing me to share the views of both Senator Isakson and

Senator Chambliss. They both recognize the difficult task you have been handed and stand ready to assist in any way.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Ms. Chastain. We appreciate it.

Next we will have a statement from Congressman John Barrow of Georgia. The statement will be read by Cynthia Ross.

Is Ms. Ross in the audience? If not, our next statement is from Congressman Paul Broun, and the statement is to be read by Reagan Williams.

Mr. Williams, you have the podium.

MR. WILLIAMS: Well, good morning.

I'd like to join in with my colleagues as representatives from our congressional delegation from Georgia and South Carolina in welcoming you here today to Augusta, Georgia.

I have a statement that I'd like to read from U.S. Representative Paul Broun of Georgia's 10th Congressional District.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the Commission and its staff for taking the time to come to Georgia and South Carolina and tour the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site yesterday, and for holding a public meeting here today. I welcome the Commissioners and staff and hope you'll find these meetings and briefings informative and useful as you assess and make recommendations to the future of spent nuclear fuel disposal.

Today you will hear from many experts on this issue, but I would like to add my voice to those who will share with you the necessity of building Yucca Mountain, or some final repository for used fuel and high-level radioactive waste. Having a permanent storage solution is vital to this region and the nation as a whole. I would like to share four key factors that demonstrate the need for a permanent storage solution.

First, and in Georgia alone,

almost a quarter of its electricity generation comes from nuclear energy. Two power stations, Hatch and Vogtle, have the capacity to generate over 4,000 megawatts of emission-free energy. Despite the recent downturn in the economy, over the long run Georgia's economy is expected to grow, as will the demand for energy.

Second, there's already a significant amount, more than 2400 metric tons of commercial used nuclear fuel currently stored in Georgia awaiting disposition. Georgia ranks ninth in the nation in this category, while the neighboring states of Alabama, Florida, South Carolina and North Carolina are also among the top ten.

Third, the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site is very important to the region economically and environmentally. Significant amounts of DOE high-level radioactive waste and used fuel, most of it produced in support of America's nuclear

weapons programs, will remain stored at that site until a repository is available. It is estimated that the amount of high-level radioactive waste at the Savannah River Site is the radioactive equivalent of approximately another 3,000 metric tons of used nuclear fuel.

Finally, electricity consumers in Georgia have contributed a significant amount of money to the Nuclear Waste Fund since the 1983, $716 million to date. Nationally, Georgia places tenth in this category. These funds have contributed towards the nearly $10 billion that DOE has already spent on Yucca Mountain, and the additional $20 billion unspent balance in the Nuclear Waste Fund. In 1998 DOE began to default on its contracts to begin removing used fuel from reactor sites. As a result, nuclear plant operators were forced to purchase and load dry cask storage systems on their sites as space inside the reactor's used fuel pools began to fill up.

Some have estimated that Georgia consumers have also spent well over $50 million in additional dry storage costs because of this default, and these costs continue to mount.

I appreciate the complexity of this issue and difficult job ahead for the Commission. I would like to reiterate just how vital and necessary it is to have a permanent resolution of the spent nuclear fuel disposal issue.

As a member of the House Committee of Science and Technology, I know great advances are being made each day on technological advancements in recycling and storage. However, this does not negate the need for Yucca Mountain, which is still the best option. No scientific rationale has been provided to justify the closure of Yucca Mountain, despite over 25 years of scientific study and review. This is contrary to the President's promise that science will inform policy.

Closure of Yucca Mountain will delay the safe disposition of spent fuel for decades, leave the federal government open to billions of dollars liability, and wasted billions more in sunk costs.

At the President has stated in 2009, science and the scientific process must inform and guide any decision of my administration on a wide range of issues. Unfortunately in the case of Yucca Mountain, it appears at least initially that this principle was ignored in order to appease a political constituency.

Not only should DOE do what is necessary to preserve the progress made there by maintaining the resources and knowledge-base, but I urge the Commission to keep Yucca Mountain on the table. Regardless of elections and different priorities for different administrations, a stable long-term spent nuclear fuel policy must be achieved. And the funds that have already been collected

and continue to be collected should be made available for their intended purpose.

I will do my part in Congress, and hope this Commission and the current and future administrations do the same.

Thank you again for giving me an opportunity to share my views and for taking the time to come to Georgia and South Carolina.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Williams. And please thank the Congressman for us.

We will now recess until 10:15, when we will return for a panel discussion on environmental perspectives. And we will move the rest of the agenda ahead one-half hour.

We're now recessed.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 9:46 a.m. and resumed at 10:16 a.m.)

MR. FRAZIER: Okay, I see the last few Commissioners coming up to the table.

General, I will turn it over to you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: All right. If we could please get started?

We now have the representative of Congressman John Barrow with us, so we will begin prior to our panel discussion with a statement by Lynthia Ross.

Ms. Ross?

MS. ROSS: Good morning. The statement from Congressman Barrow is very brief and I'll read it. It reads as follows.

To the Blue Ribbon Commission, meeting participants, and attendees, the importance of the civilian and defense nuclear industries in this area cannot be understated. Thousands of families rely on these facilities for good jobs. Millions more rely on these facilities for energy and security purposes.

The best way to ensure the continued vitality of these local and national interests is to ensure that we have an

effective plan for the storage and disposal of used nuclear fuel and nuclear waste.

I commend you for your good efforts to that end. The Commission is wise to take advantage of the abundance of experience, knowledge, resources, and infrastructure available in the central Savannah River area.

Thank you again for your interest in this area and I wish you a very productive meeting.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Lynthia. We appreciate your comment.

Now we have, as I said before, the panel on environmental perspectives.

The panelists are: for Friends of the Earth, Tom Clements; Georgia Women's Action for New Directions, Dianne Valentin; Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board, Manuel Bettencourt; Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness, Clint Wolfe; and Blue

Ridge Environmental Defense League, Charles Utley.

We'll begin in that order.

Mr. Clements, you may begin.

MR. FRAZIER: I might just add, each of you will get 10 minutes. We're using a lighting system. The light will be green. It will start blinking when you have two minutes left. It will go yellow when you have one minute left. And you'll know when your time is up.

MR. CLEMENTS: Thank you.

Good morning to everyone and to the Blue Ribbon Commission. Thank you very much for having me here.

My name is Tom Clements and I'm the Southeastern Nuclear Campaign Coordinator for Friends of the Earth, which is an organization based in Washington but I live in Columbia, South Carolina.

I would like to add that I used to live in Waynesboro, Georgia. My father was

the principal of the segregated high schools, the black high school and the white high school. But when Brown v. Board of Education came down in 1954 and he wanted to integrate, my father was harassed out of the county.

So I was not there to watch the Vogel plants being constructed. But I did watch them from other points in Georgia when I saw the price tag went from $900 million to $9 billion. I was born in Savannah, so I am from this region.

I'm going to run through a bunch of slides. And bear with me, I'm going to have to go pretty fast. But I'm going to add a dose of reality, I think, to some of the discussion here.

My main point is there's really no rush concerning high-level waste. The path forward is medium, and the medium term is secure on-site storage. It's not recycling or reprocessing.

As we've already heard, the NRC's

Waste Confidence decision, very recently the NRC instructed the staff to now look at storage for 120 years or more, on-site dry cask storage. There's some controversy about that but this is what's happening.

Also, according to the DOE, and you saw the storage buildings yesterday, they're looking at an estimated useful life of 100 years.

So there's time to make the right decisions now. I don't want you to feel rushed as you go forward.

Unfortunately, there's been some misinformation about the vitrified high-level waste at Savannah River Site. It's been presented that all of it was going to be taken to Yucca Mountain.

But in fact, according to the environmental impact statement from Yucca Mountain, only 8,315 canisters -- there was only room for that amount in the Yucca Mountain repository. About 20,000 canisters

are going to be produced, primarily at Savannah River Site and Hanford.

So it appears to me that some of the waste was actually going to be orphaned, given the Yucca Mountain process that was before us.

The environmental community has known not only about the risks of military reprocessing but also about commercial reprocessing.

We're very familiar with the Barnwell plant. I'm sorry you didn't get to visit it, but it's right on the other side of the Savannah River Site. That's a picture I took recently. The Barnwell reprocessing plant, Allied General Nuclear Services, still sits as a monument to the failed attempt to reprocess in the United States.

In sum, we don't want to end up like West Valley. Thank goodness Barnwell did not operate or we would have a massive amount of high-level waste on our hands here in South

Carolina. That plant is still being cleaned up 40 years after it stopped operation and it's cost billions of dollars.

After the termination of the Barnwell project there was still a desire in this area to proceed to reprocessing.

This is a cover page of a report by Westinghouse which looked at the F- and H-Canyons for reprocessing and on-site storage for spent nuclear fuel. Luckily this didn't go anywhere.

But, now, as you're hearing, the H-Canyon is being presented as a R&D facility for reprocessing. But the H-Canyon is in trouble for budgetary reasons. I won't go into details. You can ask me about that.

Reprocessing may be on the way out. Alternatives for storage of the research reactor fuel are being discussed.

This is a paper from November which looks at continued wet storage and dry storage, and dry cask of the research reactor

fuel.

I ask you, are people looking to you, the Commission, to basically rescue the H-Canyon?

That's what it's sounding like to me. I don't think that's part of your mission.

In 2006 we were faced with a Global Nuclear Energy Partnership here in South Carolina and two proposals came forward for reprocessing.

One, to use the old AGNS or Barnwell site which I just showed you, and another for reprocessing on the Savannah River Site itself. But as you know, the GNEP process was canceled in June 2009 by the Obama Administration.

In that same year the South Carolina legislature spoke about what they think about reprocessing when the environmental community and public interest groups defeated legislation which would have

defined nuclear fuel reprocessing as a renewable energy resource. That was stripped out of the bill.

So the legislature here is not necessarily going to be supportive of any move towards reprocessing in South Carolina.

South Carolina is tired of being dumped on. As you know, the low-level facility which is right on the other side of the Savannah River Site was the nation's low-level waste dump until June 2008. It was closed in 2007.

We have a long experience of people bringing nuclear waste here and we don't want it to happen again with reprocessing.

But what's happening now, the Department of Energy has proposed a so-called energy park. In April 2009 they actually started an environmental assessment to look at leasing land at Savannah River Site for an energy park.

This environmental assessment was canceled under pressure, but part of what they were looking at was reprocessing at the site already, without public input and discussion.

I point this out because -- this is a slide from an Environmental Management presentation where EM itself presented spent nuclear fuel storage for Savannah River Site with no discussion from the public.

So it's Environmental Management which has been driving some of the reprocessing and spent fuel storage. They backed away from it some but there needs to be more public participation in that process.

In my opinion, the Office of Environmental Management is being distracted by a look at reprocessing and spent fuel storage at the site. Their mission is cleanup and they have been terribly distracted by trying to find a way forward towards an energy park at the site.

They need to get back to their

mission dealing with the cleanup of all the high-level waste you've heard about. It needs to be containerized and gotten out of the tanks.

This is the budget for Environmental Management, about $1.4 or $1.5 billion dollars. It's about 75 percent of the budget of the site and it's the king of funding.

The energy park idea has been taken up by the main site contractor, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions. This is a presentation to the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board in September.

And, in that, they presented Small Modular Reactors as part of a potential alternative to Yucca Mountain and also said that the idea of reprocessing fuel could be the disposition path for used nuclear fuel in South Carolina.

The environmental groups have not been involved in this discussion

unfortunately. They presented this perhaps with discussion of some of the contractors but not the environmental community.

Your charter, and I think part of the appeal here today by many people, is to watch out for jobs and future missions at the site. That's not your role. Although we're all concerned about future use of the site and jobs, I advise you to stay away from this whole issue of energy parks and what's going to happen in the future at the site.

This is a little bit of an aside but in parallel. This is from a FOIA document where there is already discussion about the need to make fast reactor fuel for the first core of what they call advanced recycle reactor at the MOX plant.

That's not the mission of the MOX plant. The people are already thinking ahead where they're going to have fast reactors here, breeder reactors, small reactors with reprocessing.

The pledge for the MOX plant was never to use it for other purposes. I feel they violated that.

What is the motivation for pushing for reprocessing when we've seen it proved wrong here in South Carolina time after time and in the country?

I think it's more about money to special interests than anything else. And to keep future missions financed at the site. I think you should consider that in your deliberations.

Reprocessing has failed in other countries. The Rokkasho Plant in Japan has not been able to start up after two years. None of the plutonium from the British reprocessing plant is being used. None of the plutonium from the Russian plant is being used. It's only the French program that's still going forward. All the European countries have pulled out of reprocessing in France.

But here, geology may be what decides what's going to happen at Savannah River Site. We're about here. This is the coastal plain, the fall line of South Carolina.

The Savannah River Site is in sandy soils that have a high water table. It's not a place to store radioactive waste, spent fuel, or conduct reprocessing. That's why the waste needs to be gotten out of the tank.

So this may actually dictate what happens here and not politics; geology.

I'm almost finished here.

The environmental community has already come out against reprocessing at the site. There is going to be a grand battle if there is an effort to push forward with reprocessing.

Here's just an example of some of the advertising that we've done for the community. Actually this is an ad in the

Metro Spirit, the weekly paper here in Augusta, this week. This was a forum with Frank Von Hippel and others a couple of years ago in Columbia with sponsorship by a number of groups.

You've heard this quote before. Dick Riley, the former Governor of South Carolina, said, "There is a basic law of political physics often overlooked, that waste tends to stay where it is first put."

We're worried that the waste would come here for temporary interim storage and stay here, and it would be a wedge into reprocessing. We don't want that to happen. We don't want South Carolina to become the new Yucca Mountain and we're going to fight it.

I've got a bunch of recommendations here. I've written a longer paper that I'm submitting and a fact sheet about the risks of reprocessing. You have my overhead presentation.

I appreciate your attention and

time. I'd be glad to answer any questions later.

If anybody wants a copy of the paper on the use of F- and H-Canyons that was produced in 1995, I'd be glad to get you a copy later.

Thank you so much.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Clements.

Ms. Valentin?

MS. VALENTIN: Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to be here to speak before you. Georgia WAND welcomes the opportunity to speak on behalf of our membership and our constituency throughout Georgia and the Southeast. Thank you.

A question: who carries the cumulative health and environmental burden of nuclear waste?

Answer: the American people living near nuclear waste producers.

Though we work with and know a

number of people who simply want to know -- who simply want someone to answer the question, "Am I dying because of radioactive contamination of my ground, water, and land? Is my family dying around me because we live near nuclear waste contamination?" -- I have been personally touched by two families, one in South Carolina.

One South Carolina family directly and traceably impacted by radioactive contamination at Savannah River Site, and a Georgia family in limbo questioning the deaths of family member after family member from horrible cancers.

My words and my thoughts are to honor them, the Lindsey family and the Howard family, the concerns of those of them who live, and the memory of those who have passed on to the next life.

My words and my thoughts honor all who suffer living in the wake of those radioactive and toxic nuclear waste polluters.

Those who breathe the air, drink the water, harvest the leafy greens, and fish the waterways as acts of generational familial survival, not having known, or understood in some cases, that they were condemning themselves and their families that they had fed and raised on the land and waterways for years to the ravages of horrible and painful cancers and other adverse health-related issues.

I honor them with my words today in this place.

Families in this community that are not only dealing with the physical health issues related to contamination, but the emotional health and psychological health issues that they face day in and day out.

The stress of struggling financially, only to find themselves further burdened by the financial costs related to the family members' medical bills and hospitalization costs mounting.

The psychological stress of knowing that if you spoke up or spoke out about your concerns related to nuclear waste contamination you may face reprisals, or someone in your family may feel backlash from those who think short-term construction jobs and an increased tax base are more valuable to the community at large than your family's health struggles.

Because history, time, and personal experience has taught you that as a minority and/or poor person living in your community, you'd be better off being quiet.

People living near toxic and radioactive nuclear waste deal with the adverse health and environmental impacts of that waste as a matter of course.

Georgia WAND and its organizational partners work with and in communities as they identify what they themselves consider deficits in information surrounding their health and how their

environment is affected.

They seek data in order to make informed decisions surrounding the cumulative environmental burdens that they carry as a result of living near toxic radioactive nuclear waste producers and other large polluters.

We find it more than coincidental that as we saw the rise and talk of the so-called nuclear renaissance there was also a decline in, and in at least one case the elimination of, comprehensive monitoring of the environmental impact and effects of nuclear-related pollution and toxic contamination around nuclear facilities.

We have experienced that the SRS Environmental Management Team has chosen to place politics before human health concerns.

The budget for what had been a robust comprehensive monitoring program in Georgia around the Savannah River Site had been slashed over what could have been no more

than personalities or an inability to communicate effectively.

But that is not as egregious as SRS Environmental Management not fully restoring and adequately funding the robust, comprehensive, and now real-time environmental monitoring in Georgia, when that program is supported by the Washington Office of Department of Energy's Environmental Management Office and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, which has submitted comprehensive plans to move forward.

My question is simply, which community and what stakeholders were SRS representatives and Southern Nuclear presenters referring to when they stated that they were concerned about meeting the needs and concerns of the community and their stakeholders?

Question: who suffers as a result of the indifference to human health and well-being shown by radioactive and toxic nuclear

waste producers, major polluters, and their enablers?

Answer: poor, minority, and disenfranchised American people.

Promoting self-determination and empowerment through information sharing and legislative action in affected low-income, marginalized, and disenfranchised communities situated near and around radioactive and toxic nuclear waste allows people who have felt at a loss to effect change in their lives and communities to begin to move in the direction of change.

Communications networks developed by grassroots activists who are affected in some way by having to deal with the cumulative health and environmental pollution burdens created by nuclear waste producers and other polluters work within their communities to further their goal of social change as it relates to the environmental injustice they face, the elimination of nuclear waste

proliferation, and monitoring the effects of these things on health and natural resources.

People who have been marginalized by society at large because they are poor and do not feel that they can make a difference in any process are beginning to come together by seeing that they have common concerns and their voices can be heard.

With the right tools, the community will be empowered to act in its own behalf.

We are convinced that by being provided with as much information as possible, communities that have been marginalized by racial, economic, cultural, and social barriers will be able to think critically about these high-cumulative environmental pollution burdens and issues that present themselves.

We are also convinced that if together we can inform an even wider circle of communities who are adversely affected and

impacted by these negative environmental and health issues, such as tritium in water, more people will be empowered to generate change in how these polluting entities see them, hear them, and respond to them.

Because some are small communities who are primarily poor, minority, marginalized, and disenfranchised, large polluters think that they do not matter.

We know that they do matter and that, armed with information and organization, they will be effective in their efforts.

We know that the communities that we have referenced are not receiving fair treatment relative to having to deal with these cumulative health and environmental pollution burdens.

We can make sure that there is access to available information that will allow them to speak on their own behalf or to have us available to do so at their request.

The communities that we serve

benefit by being informed and engaged. They are empowered to act in their own behalf when they see their environment and their health being adversely affected, as it is by the toxic and radioactive nuclear waste produced in this geographic area every day.

I thank you for your time and this opportunity to speak. I bid you peace and blessings.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Ms. Valentin.

MS. VALENTIN: Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Mr. Bettencourt?

MR. BETTENCOURT: Thank you. Well, let's go back. Thank you.

First, I want to agree with Tom that it's not EM's mission to create energy parks. There's limited federal legislation that allows communities to be involved in such things, but there needs to be additional legislation to allow for energy parks.

South Carolina has the regulatory

mechanisms to have the authority over the ultimate cleanup at Savannah River Site. High-level waste being at the site would affect the state's cleanup decisions.

Number two, Department of Energy has an affirmative obligation to South Carolina under Public Law 107-107 to plan, remove, and dispose of plutonium-laced high level waste. Plutonium has been added to high-level waste, it can't be segregated.

The plan must address the disposal of all high-level waste. DOE has failed to revise its disposition plan to reflect the termination of Yucca Mountain licensing proceedings.

The reprocessing of nuclear fuel is in the national interest, we believe. We believe it has been demonstrated. The enhancement of proven and pursuit of transitional technology in the fuel cycle should be a national goal.

The H-Canyon facility is the only

large operational reprocessing facility in the United States. The National Academy of Sciences has identified H-Canyon as a national resource.

We recommend the Blue Ribbon Commission identify H-Canyon as a significant resource for reprocessing research and development in the United States.

We are very concerned about the utility tax which has been paid by citizens and already spent to create an underground repository.

And that previous efforts at creating an underground repository could be used to accommodate defense waste segregated from commercial waste.

Specifically, we have 3,000 canisters of defense waste, processing facility waste which are ready to go. We do not wish them to remain in South Carolina any more than they need to.

Finally, given the Blue Ribbon

Commission's mandate for open, transparent, and broad participation, the CAB is puzzled as to why the public has been asked to participate in this process without being privy to why the previous efforts to create an underground repository was not technically or politically feasible.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Bettencourt. We appreciate your comments.

Mr. Wolfe?

MR. WOLFE: Good morning. My name is Clint Wolfe. I have been a resident of Aiken for 22 years. I'm the Executive Director of Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness and I'm the Chairperson of the Public Policy Task Force for the Carolinas' Nuclear Cluster.

I retired a few years ago from the Savannah River National Laboratory where I served as what is now called an associate director in charge of research and development

support for actinide chemistry, including plutonium and uranium fuel, and target recycling, tritium-related defense programs' missions, strategic materials, and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative.

In the late 1990s I served as the chairperson of the Technical Advisory Panel to the Department of Energy's plutonium focus area.

It was my privilege to address your subcommittee on Reactor and Fuel Cycle Technology in August in Washington. At that time I made a case for the utilization of the tremendous assets that exist not only in Aiken but in the central Savannah River area and in the three states of South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia.

I would like to incorporate those comments by reference in today's proceedings and also an opinion editorial that I wrote for the state newspaper a couple of months ago on the economics of reprocessing. I believe

those are both in the record now on your Web site.

With those remarks on the record, I'd like to expand today's remarks to what I believe must be the energy future of the nation.

What will be our energy policy?

If we had one, would it survive the next election cycle?

How will we provide energy to our nation in a way that provides a reliable, safe, and secure energy future?

The policy must encourage the production of safe, clean, affordable energy. The policy must be one that sets an example for the entire world.

This country justifiably puts great faith in the ability of free markets to implement policy, but they cannot be expected to define that policy.

Our energy policy must deal with how to effectively implement the choice or

choices that we ultimately make.

For many of us with technical backgrounds, that means we have to do our homework. Or in this case, research, development, and demonstration.

Technology maturity will vary with the options that we consider. And with it, the need for research, development, and demonstration if it is needed at all.

Currently the only mature energy sources that we could employ in a discretionary manner for powering the nation's grid are fossil fuels and nuclear energy.

Hydroelectric power is important. But it is where you find it, and we have found about all that we have.

Many would argue that we should use more wind and solar power. After all, it has been calculated that there is more energy in a Category 5 hurricane than in all of the thermonuclear weapons that have ever been detonated. And the enormous energy striking

the Earth's surface everyday from the sun is unquestioned.

These arguments do not take into account the thermodynamic difficulties of harvesting energy from such widely dispersed sources.

By analogy, consider the oceans of the world which contain more precious metals and more minerals than have ever been mined but do not represent a realistic source of these treasures because of the dilute nature of the resource.

So investments in wind, solar, and other alternative energies are appropriate for niche applications. But we should not be seduced by the wishful thinking that they represent a significant part of the answer to powering the grid of the future.

In order to have realistic energy sources, those sources must be concentrated. You heard Mr. Miller refer to that earlier.

Fossil fuels met that test for

hundreds of years, and the energy of combustion from those fuels provided by the breaking and formation of chemical bonds powered the developing world.

But the indiscriminate dumping of the waste from this combustion into the biosphere has imperiled the planet, increased the acidity of the oceans, and led to premature death for millions of people. And the resources are finite.

If we now contrast that situation with nuclear energy, we find that nuclear energy meets the test of being concentrated as the fissioning of one uranium atom is millions of times more energetic than the combustion of the carbon atom.

It is truly ironic that one of the main concerns expressed by opponents of nuclear energy is that we don't know what to do with the waste. Remember this country knows where all of its nuclear waste is located. It is protected, it's monitored,

it's guarded, and it's never killed anybody. The characterization of nuclear waste being in a dump is incredibly inappropriate.

Since our energy policy must address waste management issues, let's look at some nuclear waste.

I'm holding in my hand a mock-up of a section of a nuclear fuel rod. I've removed a pellet that represents a mock-up of a nuclear fuel pellet.

I apologize to all those in the back who can't see that because it's really not a very good prop; it's very small. It's about the size of a pencil or eraser.

Four or five of these pellets provide all the electricity that a household needs for one year.

A successful recycling protocol would enable four or five of these pellets to provide all of the electricity for an individual's lifetime requirements. Surely our nation can deal with the issue of what to

do with those four pellets for a person at the end of that person's life.

After we've recycled all we can, our energy policy needs to provide for a repository for what is left.

Likewise, a repository will be needed for defense high-level waste. I understand that you visited that facility where it's stored yesterday. This repository may or may not be the same repository for each use. But we'll need it, so let's get on with it.

I emphasize a recycling protocol because it will be imperative that our energy policy as a matter of national security avoid tight supplies of uranium as many countries of the world turn to their only logical choice for electrical energy.

Hundreds of new nuclear plants are in the planning stage worldwide. A 1993 treaty with Russia has provided high-enriched uranium from former Soviet weapons for blend-

down to make fuel that has produced 50 percent of our recently nuclear generated electricity. This treaty expires in 2013.

It is therefore a requirement for our national security that we become leaders in reactor technology and recycling technology.

We wouldn't buy 20 gallons of gasoline, put one gallon in the car, and pour the rest into the ground. But our current nuclear fuel policy is tantamount to doing the same thing.

So our energy policy must support extracting maximum energy from our nuclear fuel.

I'm not here to advocate for a particular recycling protocol. I am here to advocate for this country to urgently examine the potential options with a thorough research and development and demonstration program so that we understand what opportunities exist. Such a program will inform our future

decisions as we aggressively pursue the best current technology to begin replacement of fossil fuel.

This nation has a single facility capable of conducting such a program. That facility is H-Canyon and the associated assets existing at the Savannah River Site.

Small Modular Reactors, or SMRs, fast reactors, and new reactor technology will supplement the current worldwide fleet of nuclear power stations and those currently being constructed or proposed as the world comes to realize the necessity of producing electricity with nuclear power.

SMRs will provide the ability to right-size electricity production to meet the needs of developing nations, defense bases, and as replacements for hundreds of coal-fired generating stations of less than 300 megawatts.

The latter application is particularly attractive as the SMR would

simply replace the current carbon-emitting generation technology easily connecting to the grid through established infrastructure. This application of SMRs should become a cornerstone of our energy policy.

We have previously spoken about the wisdom of establishing an energy park at the Savannah River Site to evaluate SMRs and recycling protocols.

Concerns over safeguarding fissionable materials to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands are important considerations. But one must ask, are we safer as a nation and a world if the US leads or follows in responsible nuclear materials management?

We cannot withdraw from technological leadership in nuclear energy and still expect to be defining the rules of the game with respect to nonproliferation. This question bears directly on our national security and the security of the world.

We simply cannot afford to be less than number one in nuclear technology. And yet we are slipping further behind as we allow our investment to wither and others aggressively pursue a nuclear future.

We now have two compelling facets of national security which are both served by leadership and the emerging nuclear technology fields: a secure energy supply and an effective nonproliferation protocol. Our energy policy must address both of these requirements.

If you'll bear with me for 10 more seconds.

With nearly one-third of the world's population without electricity, we can expect a growing demand for services requiring more and more energy.

These people have the right to expect their lot to improve, and we cannot help them achieve that improved quality of life without helping them get the only energy

that makes sense. We certainly don't want them to burn fossil fuels to get their energy.

Earlier I said I was not here to advocate for a particular recycling protocol. But I want to emphasize again that we must have a national policy of thoroughly understanding what all of the options are.

Much of the investment and such an approach is already in place at the Savannah River Site. Please use it.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Wolfe. We appreciate your comments.

Mr. Utley?

Yes. If you wish.

MR. UTLEY: Good morning to each of you. Thank you for this opportunity to share from what I consider is Ground Zero. I'm here to speak on behalf of those who live at Ground Zero.

One thing that I want to make real

clear to you this morning and to the Blue Ribbon Commission is that we feel that there is a need for a non-American nuclear-free future. It can be achieved.

When I look at your statement as what you were charged with and the things that you were given by President Obama, it talks about the importance of technological. Also that alternatives should be looked at and all the things that you are looking at now. I commend you for that.

But I say that there are better alternatives.

I know some of them have said that there is a lot that we'll not achieve by solar. But I say to you, solar is one that if we look at it in 2050 will take away the need or dependency on oil.

I say that because we find that they are carbon-free and they are nuclear-free, according to Arjun Makihijani, who is with the Institute for Energy and

Environmental Research, IEER.

I want to also say that there is a potential in wind. If we look at wind we realize that even at its 30 percent capabilities it will produce 750 kilowatts of electricity, producing some 2 billion.

I say that there is an opportunity. There is an opportunity for us to go forward and do some of the things that are needed.

But we must be good stewards also. We must realize that energy conservation is a need. We must realize that we need to change our patterns and look at energy and our land use, as well as our conservation of what we are doing even as we speak today. There is an opportunity to build green buildings and we must heed to that.

I say that to you because when we look at renewable energy and all that we can do, we must fit the puzzle together. We have a lot of great minds out there that can put

the puzzle together so that we'll be able to see what is needed to make our energy parks as we talk about efficient and effective.

I'll tell you, even David Flanagan, PhD who has learned nuclear energy has also made this same statement.

You say that nuclear power plants are safe. But I say to you, 27 of the 104 leak some type of tritium and radioactive waste.

We realize that there are carcinogens all around us all the time. I know and I have attended many funerals of those who work at some of these so-called safe plants. They die, what we say is much too young.

I say that to you because Richard M. Moss, a professor of epidemiology at Harvard School of Public Health, reports that there is no safe threshold. There is no intention and there will never be where ionized radioactive energy will not affect a

person. There is no such threshold that will be safe.

I'm talking about those at Ground Zero who live in these communities, those that live at EJ communities who suffer from being in the proximity of such plants. These EJ communities are one and we look at all that they do.

When we just think about -- there's a lot of talk about Yucca Mountain. We talk about it because we realize that 30 percent of the uranium was mined and the polluted drinking waters it left behind. We talk about it because US EPA and the Navajo population have a case where there is still unsafe drinking water.

I'm saying that because around Savannah River Site and around Plant Vogel is only a snapshot of what will happen to the communities like Shell Bluff and those that live in Barnwell and other areas, in the rural areas where they are still on well water.

The potential for catastrophic accidents and terrorism? Yes, it is alive. It is well whether we admit it or not.

We must realize that even as we sit here today we have the most sophisticated technology folks and they talk all over the world. It's here right in our midst.

We have SRS known more so as the bomb plant and it's right in our door. We have with us now with Plant Vogel setting up two new reactors, two new reactors, giving four. I wonder all the population that will be impacted.

I say impacted because we say that we have this good technology. But yet when we realize the AP1000 is in its 18th revision, to me that's some bad science going on somewhere. If anything takes that long to develop, there must be something wrong with it.

I'm looking back because there is no change in climate change when we talk about what nuclear waste is going to do. It will

not change climate control. The climate will not be affected by it.

When we look at our health and we think about it, our health is being impacted. I say that because when we look at what is even in our day-to-day lives, how the impact has been on even Barnwell, even with Aiken, we find that there is an increase.

In 1997 they looked at the health effects. The majority of those, out of 1,000, 10.1 in one area and 9.1 in another area.

I'm talking about it because where it's been found that there are nuclear plants. I'm looking at it because I understand there are some sad stories out there, young 13-year-olds who have been exposed and have brain cancer simply because of their locale and being around nuclear plants.

We say that because there is a difference that we must make.

I say that because we look at it and we say everything has an impact on our

economics. Yes, it does. It does have an impact on our economics. But whose economics?

When we look at it and we look at -- I want to bring it a little closer to you. Because when we think about it, when we go to buy a piece of land the banks will not give you money to buy land. They say that's a bad investment. But what they will do is give you money to buy a new automobile, something that will depreciate the moment you drive it off the lot.

I say that because when I look at nuclear power plants, nobody wants to invest their money in nuclear power plants because the default rate is so high. They want to take your dollars. They want to use other dollars to influence.

They are the best at using others. They get legislation to pass bills that will pay it. They get the PSC to give them increases.

And yet when they go into default,

which is approximately 50 percent, who picks up the bill?

The taxpayers. And according to Ray Alexander, President of Taxpayers for Common Sense, who also makes that statement.

I say unto you, it's just as bad a policy as those who practice giving money for buying a new car that's headed to the junk yard as giving to those who build power plants that are headed for default.

I want to say this morning that we have an obligation. It would be none to me if I didn't say anything, but I must say it. I must say it because I am a steward of this land.

I must say it because we all have been given an obligation that we must look back. And we can look forward to what it is that we can develop.

I see my light is flashing so I need to put it in fast-forward.

We need to realize that when we go

and -- what we need to do -- we need to look at the cookie cutter for trying to put everything into one cookie.

We don't need the NRC trying to run everything, realizing that 59 of its permits have been approved and another 37 pending and they have yet to deny one. I say to you, we need somebody else looking over their shoulders.

I say to you, because it is an effective thing that we must care for our neighbor. We must care for all of those who are seeking justice and injustice is being done to them.

I know my time is out but I want you to realize you have an awesome responsibility, not only to this country but to our President. I realize that he has given you an awesome task.

But we stand ready to help you, to help make those right decisions. Because those right decisions will create jobs; they

will create a child who can grow and develop to its fullest potential, not having to worry about where he lives at.

And it will give us an opportunity that we can work together cohesively and solve America's energy problem.

I tell you, we can do it. We just have to take the time and do what's needed.

God bless you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Utley.

Are there questions from the Commissioners?

Allison?

MEMBER MacFARLANE: Thank you very much this morning, panelists.

I have two questions, mostly for Tom Clements. But I wonder if Clint wouldn't also chime in on the second question.

The first question is, Tom, what is your plan for dealing with the high-level waste that's removed from the tanks and put

into glass? Do we need a repository; where would that repository be?

MR. CLEMENTS: I discuss this more in the paper that I will either email or hand to someone.

I do think there may well need to be a new repository sited. I personally don't think that Yucca Mountain could have been licensed and it had problems.

I agree that there should be some path off the site at some point in time but there's no rush to get those logs off the site, the 3,000 that have already been filled.

The focus has to be on getting the waste out of the tanks now and getting it out of a liquid form. I think where it goes next is of lower priority.

MEMBER MacFARLANE: Okay. The second question for you, and then if maybe wants to say something -- I realize you guys aren't officials of anything. Well, what you work for right now. But you're not officials

of the federal government.

Nonetheless, it occurs to me that there's a lot of discussion about H-Canyon. We weren't, or I personally wasn't aware of a lot of these issues until we got here yesterday. So it was very useful to go on the tour.

But I'm kind of struck because everybody seems to be looking for a new mission for H-Canyon, but there was one that seemed to be passed up. And that was with the MOX facility.

So you have this new MOX facility which requires a cleanup line for a lot of that plutonium. And that cleanup work it seems to me could have been easily done by H-Canyon if it's so flexible, as it was described to us yesterday.

So why wasn't it used? Why are they building an entirely separate new facility to clean up the plutonium?

MR. CLEMENTS: Yes. I don't think

I'm necessarily one to ask.

But there is a plan to build in the K reactor area a facility that would process plutonium, in addition to the pit disassembly building, that would -- I think it's called the plutonium -- I can't quite remember what it's called -- to go to the MOX plant.

So there is another facility there. I think it's to convert it to oxide that would feed the MOX plant.

But the role of the H-Canyon had been to -- and they've already processed -- and somebody from Environmental Management should answer this and really not me. They've already processed some of the dirtier plutonium through the H-Canyon into the sludge preparation tank into DWPF for direct vitrification.

So they are looking at using the H-Canyon for vitrifying several tons of plutonium that wouldn't go to MOX. It's the

dirtier material.

The question would be, what happens if the H-Canyon's not there to vitrify that into high-level waste?

DOE has been looking at direct disposal in the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.

But if H-Canyon's not there for that vitrification they still could make glass pucks, which they have looked at. Plutonium pucks, not the ceramic, which was the first choice years ago. Which they should have pursued and put those in the high-level waste canisters, and the H-Canyon wouldn't be necessary, in my opinion.

But let me add -- I'm sorry, Clint.

I touched on it. But I think the H-Canyon is in search of a mission. Really cutting to the chase -- I don't exactly know how much it brings in a year, $250 million -- I think in large part it's a monetary issue to keep work at the site.

I'm very sensitive about the jobs issue. But we shouldn't continue expensive programs if they're just looking for a mission.

The continuing resolution as I understand it is not going to allow the restart of the H-Canyon for reprocessing the highly enriched research reactor fuel because it's considered a new project under the continuing resolution.

The continuing resolution is now until March 18. We're not going to get a decision about that. And if it continues the rest of the year, a new project is not going to be allowed.

I think OMB is concerned about these annual costs for that facility. So there's a lot of complicated things going on, mostly related to the budget.

But if it's not there -- all of a sudden in the last several weeks we're hearing more about finding another mission for R&D for

commercial spent fuel.

I think the facility is looking for justification and I'm really uncomfortable with that. So tread carefully.

MR. WOLFE: First of all, I would not want to represent myself as understanding what DOE thinks is the basis for why they made various decisions.

MEMBER MacFARLANE: Yes. I just find your viewpoint helpful.

MR. WOLFE: But I can recall conversations that we had as participants and the thought processes that went on many years ago.

Certainly, using H-Canyon to prepare material for MOX is kind of like using a sledgehammer on a tack. Because the MOX facility just needed primarily a polishing kind of operation because they're starting with relatively pure plutonium.

H-Canyon is designed to separate uranium and plutonium from a more varied

matrix. It is the only such facility that we have that would be applicable to recycling fuel or reprocessing fuel.

In fact, the mission for that originally was to not only deal with the material that was made on-site, but to deal with the foreign research reactor fuel and domestic reactor fuel that was returned through treaty obligations.

Good thing we did, but we retrieved all that fuel from abroad and treated it in H-Canyon; a very crucial mission for H-Canyon.

I suppose Tom is correct to a certain extent that the parent missions for H-Canyon have -- in my view the urgency of those missions has diminished, at least politically.

So the question is, are we going to let the only facility that this country has to deal with materials of that nature simply close?

By the way, shutting down, it's --

many of you are familiar with once you shut something down it's very, very difficult to bring it back.

So the question is, is there a legitimate need that that facility can provide?

Many of us who are familiar with reprocessing nuclear fuel look at that and say it's obvious; we need to do that program in H-Canyon. We've got a facility for it.

If we don't do it and we decide later we're going to, it's going to cost this country several billion dollars to get back to the same capability that we currently have out there.

It's not make work. It is let's do something very important with a resource we've already invested in, that the taxpayer has already invested in. It represents a tremendous resource.

That's why we would propose that H-Canyon be considered for a research,

development, and demonstration program to compare various protocols of recycling.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Phil?

MEMBER SHARP: Yes. I wanted to turn to a set of issues that we've heard various places.

That is, what procedures might be put in place to help assure citizens in a local area can get information; how procedures can assure them to have some kind of input prior to decisions being made; and then finally, how citizens can have some participation in the environmental monitoring that goes on.

We're focused not on the power plants, but we're focused on any of the waste disposal options kind of thing.

I wondered if you could speak to that, Ms. Valentin?

You started out in yours

indicating that something has changed here, which I'm not familiar with on the environmental monitoring side. But this affects citizens of multiple points of view and there is obviously intense interest by people who live in these areas.

MS. VALENTIN: Well, I would like to start off saying that when you are functioning in a community that -- if you would like to go back in history to what we knew as the Jim Crow era, where you have people in authority who are making decisions about the general community without every stakeholder's consideration, you might consider that this is a version of that.

You have people making broad decisions about the vast community without getting input or giving consideration to every one of the stakeholders.

I heard that one of the speakers said that every person was asked and every person was in favor of Vogel bringing on two

more reactors. That's not the case. And even in the best of circumstances, everybody wouldn't have been asked and everybody wouldn't have given a positive response.

But in a situation that we find ourselves in now, you have people who are simply not even considered. They're not asked. No one goes to their communities.

And when you find that we're at a public hearing or in a public meeting and representatives from our federal government say that, we've asked the stakeholders, and I say, what stakeholders did you ask?

They say, we asked the mayor, or, we asked the city council, or, we asked the Better Business Bureau. We asked, we asked, we asked.

But members of the community who are flushing their toilets, or when the bell rings at Vogel and there's a flushing going on, the water rises and lowers in their commodes then comes back up a different,

cloudy color.

You can't imagine people who you meet who are just robust and are interesting and have a lot of history in their community. And you meet them and in less than a year you visit them in the hospital with tubes and having had suffered considerably through health issues.

When you find that you have to sit and listen to people say that they have the community's interest at heart but they have not asked all of the constituencies that they're supposed to be representing, it's disheartening to find that we are still living in that situation in this day and time in certain communities.

But it is the reality that many people are living in in these communities around the sites. And it's not only happening here but it's happening in other communities across the country.

So it's really not something that

is new. But when you are a member of a community that has been marginalized and disenfranchised, you know that it's a continuum that has occurred.

MEMBER SHARP: Ms. Valentin, obviously you are a very effective spokesperson on behalf of the folks that you're describing here.

What I'm also looking for though, and want everybody else to think, is we have to or we should set up some kind of procedure, some kind of organizational technique that helps assure that -- in other words, it's --

MS. VALENTIN: If you are a member of a community that has very poor even cell reception, you have no internet connection, and you are not in a financial position to take the paper everyday, when a public service commission or a CAB or some other entity says they're having a public hearing, you may never know about it.

So you go through your life not

knowing that these conversations are going on.

And if no one has the consideration enough to seek you out and tell you, did you know that there was a hearing over in Augusta, or Aiken or up in Waynesboro, about these two new reactors that Vogel is planning, or, the releases of tritium from Savannah River Site, they say to you, what reactors? Or, what's tritium?

So it is a matter of a group of people, a significant group of people living in a situation that is pretty much a shadow situation.

We take a lot of things for granted. We think we take our methods of communication for granted. Everybody is not there.

There are people who are living in the wake of these things who do not even have decent cell reception. They are on dirt roads that are flooded in the rain and that school buses can't go down to pick up their children.

This is supposedly in a community that has been positively impacted by all of these things coming into their communities.

So when you have government entities telling -- withholding tablets from people because they're making that patriarchal or master-servant decision that, we're not going to offer you these things because we don't want you to panic, because you just can't possibly think through these things on your own, what you would need.

Or you have a government entity that's telling you that, yes, we do have a place for you to come in the case of emergency. We've given you this radio and we're going to announce it that you're supposed to go to this safe place. And that safe place is far enough away from you for you to have been totally damaged by whatever this catastrophic event is by the time you get from where you live to that safe place.

So there are issues of

communication between what could be considered those in authority and those who are affected by some of these things that we're dealing with.

MR. CLEMENTS: Let me just -- I know Manuel wants to say something. I'll give you an example of what Friends of the Earth and the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club did besides running ads in the local papers, Columbia weekly papers, and Augusta.

We ran ads talking about the minority community about this meeting on the local gospel station. I know the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League ran some ads. We also ran them on the rock and roll station. I got calls from people and I could hear the gospel station in the background.

So I'm going to put the question back to the Blue Ribbon Commission and DOE. Did you run ads to do outreach of any sort?

Because we took it on ourselves because we thought it was important enough to

do the very thing you're talking about, to reach out to people that might not necessarily get the word.

What you're seeing at the site and here is DOE has defined stakeholders in the large sense as contractors. You can see that.

Those of us who are not in the contractors circle or didn't work at the site are kind of mentally excluded by DOE. We have to think of ways to break through.

We did that in this case, the public interest groups who don't have a $5 million budget. So I would encourage you guys to think of ways to do this as well.

I think what Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, Friends of the Earth, and Sierra Club did in this case is perhaps a good example to follow.

MR. UTLEY: I would like to also add to that that there are organizations within communities that are being left out.

There are ways that even through

churches and organizations that they can be a part of getting the news to the congregations or to those who are living in those neighborhoods. That is another way that we have used to get the word out.

I advise those that are holding meetings, there's nothing wrong with calling on those who are going to be influenced. They are going to somebody's church. And if we send a message to the missionaries of that area, your word would get out because they would make sure it gets out.

Those are the types of links that I think are missing from getting the information out that those in the grassroots area and those in the impacted areas are missing.

I want to ditto; there is no web site. There is no what we call email. Email is -- you use it day to day. But those in those rural areas, it's likely foreign to them. That's one of the keys that's missing.

MR. BETTENCOURT: Thank you.

Just one comment. I believe the issue is marginalized communities.

I believe that the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy through its environmental impact statement process has a very robust public publication process. The issue is the marginalized community being reached.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: I would just like to add one thing. I think this is a serious problem. It is not a problem of nuclear waste. It's a problem of participatory democracy.

It's a real problem and it's one that we have to grapple with, but it is not our primary mission. Our primary mission is what to do about nuclear waste.

So all these well-meaning statements about we have to reach out to the community is not our mission. We're reaching out to the extent we can.

But the problem fundamentally is a problem of participatory democracy, in which the United States is not as far along maybe as it should be.

MR. BETTENCOURT: Yes, sir. There's a program called the Environmental Justice Program, which if you're not aware of it, you need to look into it.

MS. VALENTIN: Regarding that issue of dealing with nuclear waste right now, I think that from my perspective, until we have a handle on what we're going to be doing with the nuclear waste that we have, the response and the answer to that, because of the adverse effects that it has on the people that we're referring to, should be that we stop making it for the reasons that we've given when we have such great alternatives.

The gentleman talked about America leading and following. I am a political scientist focusing on international affairs and national defense, but I mostly introduced

myself as a peace and environmental activist.

When I think of all of the ways in our past that we have led, this is a wonderful opportunity for us through science and technology for us to move forward past this particular dinosaur that we keep throwing money after, and move us into a smart grid and a way of using energy resources that take us into a wonderful future.

I don't think when we have these discussions that it's fair to people who are adversely affected to not consider the whole nuclear waste stream.

We're here now talking about the back end and I appreciate that. But there were some speakers who presented, and they made comments that sounded very odd to be coming from technical people who are professionals when they totally dismissed our nuclear generation waste issues from cradle to grave. I just find that very disingenuous.

I think dealing with this waste

that we find ourselves here ending up with, we really need to be mature and futuristic and find ways to deal with it.

And in the meantime also develop our technologies and our sciences to move us into ways of finding energy production that does not leave this legacy of waste.

I think that our national security is impacted by our continuation of the development of nuclear power and this nuclear industry. Because we are not in as much control of it as we seem to want to lead people to believe.

The primary stakeholders -- some of the primary stakeholders in our own nuclear industry are the French government and Japanese business.

I can't imagine, being a political scientist, having foreign entities being in such control of such a sensitive area of our national security which is our nuclear industry. It amazes me that we've allowed

foreign entities in so deep to that particular industry.

Regarding comments made about helping poor people around the world find their energy source without using fossil fuel, it amazes me, and I've commented on it in other venues, that all of a sudden everybody is interested in how poor people get their energy when now that there is money flush in the nuclear industry when they weren't very interested in how poor people were securing their energy needs before.

I suggest that we use our scientific and engineering expertise to maybe teach those poor people around the world how to harness some of the solar capacities that they have.

We find a lot of those -- and I use terms that some of our presenters have used -- poor people tend to live in some of the places where solar energy would be wonderful.

We really need to move forward and stop continuously looking back on these old things that have harmed us.

MEMBER SHARP: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the divergent views on the panel about some of these issues.

Not to further pursue it at this moment, but something that I think we're going to be pursuing on the Commission is figuring out some of the procedures that ought to be engaged in if we decide we need an interim long-term storage facility.

That means siting someplace. We're not going to pick that place. But what we may be recommending is how you go about picking that.

In that process what we would want to be sure is there are some procedures in place that help assure private citizens can get access to information, have access to specialized information -- which most of us as

private citizens, we don't engage in these nuclear issues on a day-to-day basis.

So who to believe is the problem. And you want to be able to get some expert opinion on it.

Various techniques after many local fights, court suits, and everything else have been developed at various sites around the country. I think it's useful for us to pull those examples together and talk to people like yourselves to see which ones are effective.

I'll just indicate one to you that was done in 1987. This is not sufficient to everything.

It was we established in Congress the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board because claims had, I think legitimately, been made by many people that perhaps the science was being perverted in the decision-making process at the Department of Energy and elsewhere in the country. And that somebody

ought to have a more independent place to do it.

So this was set up outside of the Department of Energy. It was set up where the National Academy of Sciences gave the President a preliminary list of people he could appoint -- he couldn't go beyond the list -- who were viewed as experts.

Then citizens, internal people in the Department of Energy and others, could bring to their attention questions that they said need to be addressed.

I'm not claiming it's operated perfectly. I don't know; I haven't followed it closely. But it clearly was one of the kinds of techniques designed to try to get more independent voice and analysis in there.

Obviously we know in Nevada we have several different techniques we've used around Yucca Mountain for local citizen boards and things like that where they are assured some kind of access. Again, I'm not claiming

it's adequate.

But it is those kinds of techniques that I think it's particularly important for us to at least get that inventory together for whomever will make these decisions to recognize, you start out with that stuff. You don't end up doing it after you've blown your credibility.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Yes, please.

MS. VALENTIN: Regarding that type of situation, if you had community involvement in the way that you refer to, based on technical and scientific advice from independent people, I think that we would not be 25 years in on trying to force Yucca Mountain to be exactly what we need it to be when in fact geologically it can't be.

It is what it is. It's on a fault line. It leaks into the water table.

So if what you are describing had taken place or was in place, we would have moved on from that maybe after two or three

years, maybe even five years, instead of 25 years.

And we would have used that other 20 years. We probably would have found someplace more appropriate by now.

So we tend to waste time and money looking back on things that don't work and trying to force them to be what we need them to be. We really need to stop doing that.

MR. UTLEY: I would like to also say that we have a lot of engineers. We have a lot of people who can help make those decisions and create those lists when we look at all of those that are at the school of Harvard and people like Makihijani who can give us those sciences that we need to make such a decision.

I agree with Dianne that we need to stop spinning our wheels and go forward with the technology and things that are pertinent to today's society as well as today's learning ability for those who are

working in the industry.

So I would say that to our President and to this Board, let us use those types of energies. Those experts are out there. Just corral them together and see if we can come up with a solution.

We cannot keep making something that we can't get rid of. We need to come up with something that's going to deplete and stop America in its tracks.

I commend you for your efforts.

MR. BETTENCOURT: Just a final reminder. This is a national problem. This is not a local community problem.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Are there other comments, questions?

I'd like to thank the panel for their participation. We appreciate your views. It has been very valuable to us to have them presented to us. Thank you very much.

We will now have a recess for

lunch and resume at 12:30.

The meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record at 11:35 a.m. and resumed at 12:32 p.m.)

A-F-T-E-R-N-O-O-N S-E-S-S-I-O-N

12:32 p.m.

MR. FRAZIER: We're going to go ahead and get started. And in the interest of time, we have a lot of people who have signed up to make comments and we're going to try to maximize the amount of time. We're going to go ahead and get started.

General?

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Tim. Our afternoon resumes with a statement by Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council, Karen Patterson.

The floor is yours.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you, General Scowcroft.

General Scowcroft and members of the Commission, the South Carolina Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council appreciates the opportunity to speak to you regarding nuclear waste. Mr. Ben Rusche, who is Chairman of the Council and is sitting right behind Ms.

Bailey, has asked me to provide your remarks today.

I'm Karen Patterson, a member of the Council and a resident of Aiken for almost 40 years.

First, let me describe the Council to you so you can put our comments in context. The Council was created by statute to provide advice and recommendations to the governor for the use, handling, and management of transportation, storage, and disposal of nuclear materials and regarding the various programs of the U.S. Department of Energy pertaining to nuclear waste.

The statute prescribes the composition of the Council. One member each from the state Senate and the state House of Representatives, two members involved in environmental protection, two scientists or engineers from state universities, one member with experience in nuclear power generation, one with experience in nuclear activities

other than power generation, and one member of the public at large.

We appreciate the fact that the Commission on America's Nuclear Future is charged with recommending ways to manage the back end of the fuel cycle. We firmly believe that the single thing impeding our nuclear future is the effective handling of nuclear waste.

In South Carolina, we have a unique perspective on civilian defense used nuclear fuel and defense high-level waste. We have seven commercial reactors at four sites, all storing used fuel. Defense waste has been generated at the SRS since 1954, resulting in 36 million gallons of liquid high-level waste waiting for vitrification prior to disposal in a geologic repository.

We have the only operating reprocessing facility in America, as you've already heard. We also have foreign and domestic research reactor used fuel, the

nation's excess plutonium, and commercial and defense low-level waste disposal facilities.

Construction on two new commercial reactors has begun, with two more planned. We have a commercial fuel fabrication facility.

Few states can match our inventory of nuclear materials. So when we think about nuclear waste disposal, we tend to circle back to two points.

The first is that the liquid defense waste at Savannah River Site must be disposed in a geologic repository. For one thing, it's required by law. For another, as you know, the decision to dispose of it in a geologic repository was made after exploring all the options under the Sun, including, I think, sending it to the Sun.

Finally, the waste currently is being vitrified into a form that meets the Waste Acceptance Criteria for a deep geologic repository with the characteristics consistent with Yucca Mountain.

Our second point is that current U.S. recycling generates too much waste. We agree with the critics on that point. However, we do not believe that reprocessing is a reason to dismiss the nuclear future out of hand. We understand that recycling has challenges but our experience is that the technology exists to solve those problems.

With these points as our basis, we identify four broad challenges to successfully managing nuclear waste. The first, and in some ways the easiest to address, are the technical challenges. Since the end of World War II, we have developed the capabilities to safely manufacture, use, and dispose of nuclear materials.

I reiterate that we believe that reprocessing should be part of our nuclear future. However, in addition to developing a more efficient recycling process, we would also encourage research programs that focus on fuel production and reactor technology with

the goal of creating a more efficient way to burn nuclear fuel.

The second challenge is the economics of nuclear energy and one that I believe has both direct and indirect implications. I will address only the indirect implications.

Tourism is a very large economic driver for South Carolina. Now, consider that many people have an inaccurate understanding of nuclear energy, leading to unfounded but very real fears about their health and safety. People will not vacation in South Carolina or retire here if they believe that nuclear waste is going to harm them. The state will not embrace any project that threatens its largest industry.

I will point out that contrary to what many critics of nuclear energy believe, local communities support nuclear facilities not only because they are economic engines but mostly because they are clean, safe, and well-

run industries.

The third challenge is political. And I can't improve on Senator Graham but I'm going to give it a shot. For any national policy to succeed, there has to be commitment and continuity by the federal government, as Senator Graham said. Even though the Council looks forward to South Carolina's role in the nation's nuclear future, we are very sensitive to the fact that the government has not always met its obligations regarding nuclear materials in South Carolina.

We are prepared to work with the federal decisionmakers to ensure that changing politics do not unduly effect the forward progress of waste disposition. However, we expect better alignment between the federal government's plans and the execution of those plans.

My fourth point gets to Mr. Sharp's question before lunch. The fourth challenge is building public acceptance.

Nuclear power is more accepted now than ever before. However, without almost universal acceptance, I think it is unlikely that any recommendations that the Committee makes will not come to fruition because any Administration's willingness to commit to an action appears to be directly related to its degree of public acceptance.

I personally believe that the root cause of the failure of Yucca Mountain was the lack of true public participation in the decision process. The country has demonstrated a reasonable and responsible solution to the disposal of highly radioactive materials and the failure of Yucca Mountain is not due to technical inadequacies.

This happens to be my soapbox issue, but I'm not going to belabor the point. Suffice to say that the National Academies of Sciences has concluded that better decisions are generated when the public is fully involved in every phase of the decision

process.

Other countries have successfully involved the public in making decisions. And the United States should follow their example. And it is -- there is a National Academies' publication 2008.

Okay, having named all of these challenges, I think it is only fair that we offer you our thoughts on some solutions.

So the Council feels that any national nuclear waste policy must be multi-pronged and have, at a minimum, these six elements.

First, flexibility. Different waste configurations and the environmental characteristics of potential disposal sites influence disposal options. One size will not fit all. Perhaps the approach of putting all commercial and defense waste in one facility or even one state is flawed and should be reevaluated.

Two, regulatory certainty. As I

mentioned, the vitrified waste at SRS is designed to be disposed in a facility that looks and acts like Yucca Mountain and we cannot reconfigure that waste nor reengineer the vitrification process to meet every new Administration's new ideas about how to manage waste.

Based on public law, the industry sized their used fuel storage and probably based their economic models on the expectation that they would not need to store, manage, or provide security for a reactor's lifetime's worth of spent fuel. There should be reasonable expectations that the rules will not change.

Third, a repository or repositories. Even with improved recycling, a repository will be needed to dispose of commercial used fuel. We've already talked about the need for a repository for the defense waste.

Fourth, recycling. The

technological basis for cost-effective recycling exists using lessons learned from DOE and the programs of other nations such as France. We believe that recycling must be a significant component of any policy. We also believe that the technology can be improved from its current inefficiencies.

Fifth, interim storage for used fuel. We offer that an effective way to identify potential sites for interim storage is to ask for volunteer communities. This method worked in Sweden and there's no reason it can't work here.

Sixth, funding for a rigorous R&D program to improve the repositories, recycling, and interim storage.

So our final point. No solution is perfect or pleases everyone. Even if some people consider our current solutions for nuclear waste disposal as flawed in some ways, we should not delay implementing them.

South Carolina has the benefit of

more than 50 years of lessons learned regarding nuclear materials. From that vantage point, we well understand the risks.

We also know that current technologies provide for the safe and secure management of nuclear materials. We support the country's need to be energy-independent and recognize nuclear technology as an important component.

We believe that the storage and disposal of nuclear waste is not yet a crisis, that there are multiple paths to resolution. That being said, it's time for the government to make some decisions and begin.

So I want to thank the Commission very much for visiting SRS. I hope that the visit was productive and pleasant, that you have benefitted from meeting some of us, and that when you leave, you will have a better idea of how the people in these communities think about nuclear waste.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very

much, Ms. Patterson, for a very well organized presentation.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: We appreciate it.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Are there comments or questions?

MS. PATTERSON: I should say, General, that I'm an editor so I don't take credit for it.

MEMBER SHARP: Yes, thank you very much. And it certainly has been an informative time here for all of us. I think some of our members have been here before. I have not.

And one of the things that I hope other people can recognize, it is obvious if you've visited here, is the sophisticated understanding of issues, the economics and management of these questions that resides beyond the people who are directly involved in

the industry itself, including its critics. I mean it is just amazing. And that's another sign for why it is important to have participation by the public as these decisions go forward.

But I got on my soapbox now. So let me get off for a minute and ask you a question. You understand we raised the recommendation which one of our subcommittees, that I don't happen to be on, is looking at. And that is for the ultimate disposal site or -- well, it would be the same for the interim site, is the volunteer community that you would seek.

The question that always arises in that as we begin to define what we mean by that is how far does community -- what about the state government and also to what degree do you have surrounding states or surrounding communities? I mean obviously here we are right on the state border. And so what interest do they have? And how do we define

what constitutes a voluntary community?

MS. PATTERSON: Well, one size doesn't fit all for waste disposal. And it probably wouldn't fit all for picking a community.

And when you write a NEPA document, when you do a safety analysis, you've got a 50-mile radius around the site. So --

MEMBER SHARP: That's a starting point, right.

MS. PATTERSON: -- and I'm talking off the top of my head. At some point, somebody with some knowledge would have to narrow down who the effected, impacted communities would be. And then go from there. And you may identify more as you go through the process.

MEMBER SHARP: And I assume you presume the state government would have to be cooperative in this, I mean, because we have had situations where we have a community that

stepped up, not for ultimate disposal, but -- and the state government has stepped in and said not here.

MS. PATTERSON: Well, I think as Tom said this morning, or somebody said, DHEC has a lot of regulatory authority over the tanks at the waste site and what's going on a Savannah River Site.

The reason there is a South Carolina Governor's Nuclear Advisory Council is because the Department of Energy of the federal government tried to move plutonium here without getting an input from us. So the result is the state took a greater interest.

I know that just as an aside, Governor Haley is -- Governor-elect Haley is much more interested in Savannah River issues than Governor Sanford was. Yes, the state definitely got to be -- and tribal nations, they have definitely got to be an important stakeholder.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Per?

MEMBER PETERSON: You mentioned a number of important changes in the process to try to move forward towards developing disposal technologies, storage, the other elements that are needed for a functional back into the fuel cycle.

One of the things that is discussed frequently and that, of course, we've had an opportunity to look at also is the idea that things might work better if these responsibilities were transferred from the Department of Energy to a new entity that would have greater independence, direct access to fee revenues, better continuity of leadership, the flexibility to actually take into account local, community, and state concerns, and respond to them and so on.

Have you thought about that within your Council? And do you have any recommendations?

MS. PATTERSON: No. The Council has not thought about it. Me, personally, I

have like thought about it a little bit.

My bottom line is I think that whatever we do -- and I mean a private entity is one option -- we have got, as Senator Graham said, we have got to get the politics out of this because the politics -- every four years an Administration can change. And that slows this process down tremendously. And we keep reinventing the rule which, for the people who live here, nobody needs to reinvent the wheel and it frustrates us.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Other comments?

(No response.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Ms. Patterson. We appreciate it.

MS. PATTERSON: Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presentation is Savannah River Site Superfund Job Training Initiative will be give by Brendolyn Jenkins.

Ms. Jenkins?

MS. JENKINS: Good afternoon,

ladies and gentlemen. And certainly welcome again to our community. We are delighted to have you with us.

Again, I'm Brendolyn Jenkins. I'm the Executive Director of the Imani Group. It is a community-based nonprofit organization that's located in Aiken, South Carolina.

I'd like to talk with as has been said the Superfund Job Training Initiative and much has been said today and during your time about disposition and remediation and clean up. And I think that with this job training initiative, there was created true synergy within the community and with the site.

It was a win-win situation. We've coined a term called full-term or full-circle activism. That includes educating and empowering. But also in these economic times, employment. And so we were delighted to serve as the community partner for the Superfund Job Training Initiative.

What is the Superfund Job Training

Initiative? It is certainly a job-readiness program. Everybody is training in employment opportunities for under-employed, unemployed, and under-served communities.

It is offered by EPA in what's called a task grant. There are technical assistance services for communities. The communities that were impacted and recruited heavily from were those communities that are immediate neighboring communities to Savannah River Site and also here in Augusta, communities in the CSRA.

And certainly we don't need to remind ourselves of these economic climes and times but these communities were certainly severely impacted with joblessness. Allendale County, for instance, is a community that has 25 percent unemployment. And to be a community that oft-time had been told that they would not, could not ever work at the Savannah River Site, for whatever reasons, we were delighted that this program came into

existence.

How does the Superfund Job Training Initiative work? Each of these points will be explained in further detail. But it's about relationships and collaborations and partnerships built on a local level with businesses, community organizations, and federal agencies.

We conducted candidate recruitment, training, and post-graduation follow up for the participants -- well, we call them scholars -- for our scholars.

This pilot was initiated at the Savannah River Site. We were the first federal nuclear facility to have sponsored by the EPA TASC program a job training program.

The first cycle was based in Aiken, South Carolina, and our recruitment period ran from January through May of 2009. Over 350 people attended the orientations, 113 people were eligible for the tryouts. That was a two-day program of team building and

leadership. Twenty were selected for the program, five weeks of training, May through June of 2010. They went to work at the Savannah River Site in July 2010.

In the five weeks of training, they were offered pre-employment technical assistance. It's one thing to give folks a job, it's another thing for them to understand what a career means and being on a professional path. Not just having a job but what does it mean in terms of financial security. What does it mean to be responsible to your community as a good taxpaying citizen?

They received 40 hours of HAZWOPER training. They were CPR certified. They gained math and computer skills.

Our local partners for the first cycle was, in addition to the Imani Group, Aiken Technical College. Dr. Winsor, I think, is one of the Board members of this organization. And then the Savannah River Nuclear Solutions was the contractor that did

the hire.

The demographics, there were -- let me back up for one second -- out of the -- you see the age range, the trainee demographics, many of them were in their 20s. We had some range from 19 years old up until I think 58 years old. There were 18 African Americans, one Caucasian, one Native American, seven female, and 14 male participated in the program.

All of them that graduated from the program successfully work now with the contractor, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions. Seventeen graduates began to work as nuclear production operators and material handlers. The positions were full-time, permanent, with full benefits.

And just as an aside, one of the young ladies that participated in the program had worked for 11 years at one of the local factories and her highest salary that she made was nine dollars and 75 cents. And certainly

to be employed in a profession, a career track, was just life changing and transformative for her.

We want to thank Mr. Garry Flowers and any of the SRNS team that may be in the room for their participation.

After their completion, we conduct a 12-month follow up with all of them. On a monthly basis, we meet face to face. We do phone conferences. We got involved in children's honor roll exercises, graduation exercises, children being born, weddings, funerals, and in the photos that you see here of many of the scholars, this was in the first day of tryouts, the building there was also a local partner. It was a community church in Aiken that opened their doors and allowed for part of the training program to take place.

In the second photo here, we see where EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson visited with the scholars out at the Savannah River Site in addition to Representative Clyburn.

And they were featured in newsletters, billboards, and vans in the area.

In the tryouts, we had physical activity and we started the mornings with a vigorous workout and we continued it most mornings throughout the program.

Again, in Cycle 2, our second cycle, we were delighted to have the second cycle of the program. Our recruitment period was March through April of 2010. Two hundred and ninety-eight persons attended five orientations. One hundred and seventy-three people were eligible for tryouts. Forty-two were selected for the program.

This was an eight week program because our contractor was Savannah River Remediation. And so they received their preemployment technical assistance. Math and physics were taught to them, heat transfer, fluid flow.

The local partners for the Cycle 2 was the Imani Group, Denmark Technical

College, Savannah River Remediation, and Allendale Department of Social Services.

The demographics, as you see, for that program in age, the age range, those that -- the age range shows there. And it shows the counties where the recruits came from. And we were delighted to have such a diverse group with us for Cycle 2.

It was twice as large as the first. And it came with twice as many headaches as the first. But it was very successful. And we're delighted to have had SRR as our contractor.

The young man that you see here in this picture was a young man who had graduated with a bachelor's degree in engineering and was languishing in his community, unable to find a job.

And so 11 of the 39 that -- of the 42, I'm sorry, that entered our program, 11 of those trainees had college degrees. They were pulled out early and were fast-tracked

somewhat at Savannah River Remediation. And they are going through their training for radiological control inspectors. And they are becoming world class employees.

Of the others, the positions that they hired were for maintenance mechanics, nuclear production operators, and material handlers.

Again, we commend the SRR team, Mr. Jim French and certainly Ms. Michelle Mems and the entire SRR team. And the continued commitment, though, the partnership between the site, the EPA Region IV, Rob Pope and his team, certainly, certainly, I think some of them may be in the audience today, certainly bent over backwards to support this program.

And it's ongoing. Six of our graduates from Cycle 2 were employed temporarily until they passed a certain amount of testing that is required. And EPA Region IV is supporting that by sending staff to help them with tutorials and to prepare them for

future testing.

The benefits of the Superfund Job Training Initiative were so many. It increased the understand for the community of the cleanup effort at Savannah River Site. It provided the scholars with marketable skills and enhanced their employment potential.

It allowed them to play an active role in the protection and restoration of their homes. Certainly as remediation and cleanup at the site becomes more and more important, they were able to find themselves in making that happen.

It provided job opportunities for qualified residents and increased the labor pool and increased local taxes. And for EPA removed communication barriers between making community members more aware of the environmental issues. And it builds trust between the community and the agency.

The partnership opportunity for the Superfund Job Training Initiative and the

Department of Energy, it replicates programs at other DOE sites. Hopefully other sites would pick up this pilot and conduct similar job training initiatives on those sites, to those communities that are directly impacted, that would have an opportunity to work on those sites and improve the relationships between the community and the Department of Energy and the EPA.

Greater interagency partnership, these partnerships are very diverse. We had local faith community involved, business community, and the education community involved in this process.

These are the many partners that you see, the various governmental agencies, community agencies, and organizations that were involved to make this program the success that it is and the success then that it was.

This is the contact information that we can provide for you. Melissa Friedland is the new Program Manager for

Headquarters EPA. She has taken over the reigns for Ms. Karen Martin, who very, very successfully managed the program and then our information as the community partner stakeholder.

Thank you so much for your time and your attention. If there are any questions, I'd love to entertain them.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Ms. Jenkins. We certainly appreciate it.

Are there comments, questions?

MEMBER BAILEY: I would just like to say how exciting it is to hear about this program, Ms. Jenkins. You know this is part of what we want to do from the standpoint of energy and America's energy future. Whether it's nuclear or whatever it is, is the issue that the path for training and education for young people and older citizens as well in the science, technology, the engineering, the math, of energy. And that is what is so

exciting about what you're doing and what you are working with these individuals in.

The money for this, tell me a little bit more about the Superfund. How this is funded. Tell me about that.

MS. JENKINS: It is funded through a program that exists with the Environmental Protection Agency. It's called the TASC Program. They have conducted Superfund job trainings at other industries around the country.

MEMBER BAILEY: Okay.

MS. JENKINS: But this one at the DOE Savannah River Site was the first at a federal nuclear facility. So it is a long-term program. It's not a new program.

MEMBER BAILEY: Yes.

MS. JENKINS: It was just new to the Savannah River Site. And as a caveat to that, my work in environment justice, as I said at the outset, it became full circle in that the site is there, not going anywhere.

And how do we empower people.

You know we may feel one way or the other --

MEMBER BAILEY: Right.

MS. JENKINS: -- about the nuclear cycle. But at the end of the day, families have to be fed, children have to be raised. And it is our contention that if we pour an expectation and an awareness and an activist and then give them the technical skills, they will become world-class employees with a conscience.

MEMBER BAILEY: Yes. Will this be at other sites? I don't know if some of my other panelists -- Commissioners here know but do you know will this be replicated at other sites?

MS. JENKINS: It is our hope. It is our dream that it would be replicated at the other sites in the complex. Certainly it is a valuable program. And it was piloted here.

And I think it bodes well to say that it was one cycle expected. And to come back and have a second cycle done at the Savannah River Site certainly should indicate that it is a program worth replicating at other DOE sites.

MEMBER BAILEY: Thank you.

MS. JENKINS: Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Ms. Jenkins. We appreciate your participation.

MS. JENKINS: Thank you. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Now we will turn to our second panel on economic and other considerations. And would ask the representatives who are serving on the panel to come up. They are Aiken County Council Chairman Ronnie Young, Community Reuse Organization, David Jameson, CSRA Chambers of Commerce, Brian Tucker, Economic Development Organizations, Danny

Black, and Aiken Technical College, Dr. Susan Winsor.

I thank you all very much for participating. And we will begin in order with Mr. Young.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Certainly on behalf of our County Council in Aiken, we welcome you folks to Aiken County. It's the county that I am privileged to serve, have served for 20 years. I've been their Chairman since `94, so 16 years.

I have a great relationship with the site, a lot of inside information out there, and just a wonderful relationship. And a majority of the facilities at the Savannah River Site are in Aiken County and we have a special interest in the things that effect SRS.

The purpose of your Commission and of particular interest to me and my

constituents, since the mid-1980s, we have been assured and have expected a timely availability of a deep geologic repository for the permanent disposal of high-level radioactive waste resulting from SRS's Cold War defense activities.

With encouragement of the citizens of South Carolina, the Department of Energy has been very aggressively preparing our considerable inventory of high-level waste for geological disposal. Their efforts are truly a success story with one half of the waste canisters already processed and ready for final disposition.

I hope you can appreciate our concern with the Administration and the Department of Energy made their decision to terminate the nation's only Congressionally-designated permanent repository for high-level waste defense waste. If this determination is allowed by the courts, the defense waste at Savannah River Site and elsewhere within the

DOE complex would be orphaned and no approved pathway for final disposition.

Let me state clearly for the record, Aiken County believes DOE's decision is contrary to the mandates under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. In any event, we believe a deep geological repository is necessary.

But my objective today is to discuss the interests of Aiken County and the nation in light of DOE's decision. No one has suggested any final disposition options for these processed defense wastes other than a deep geologic repository.

And it is my request that your Commission recommend at an early date the establishment of a geological repository for defense waste. It is interesting to note that even here, the DOE has acknowledged in testimony before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the selected site is unsafe or has flaws. But that, in their terminology it is, "is not a workable option."

Defense waste are only one half of the story. Planning for high-level waste resulting from commercial nuclear operations have been similarly disrupted with uncertainty being introduced just when our nation's energy security is even more dependent upon abundant supplies of economical and reliable nuclear power.

Many of the options being presented for the back end of the commercial nuclear cycle have attractive features such as number one, recovering the unused energy value in used nuclear fuel, and number two, reducing the quantity and toxicity of nuclear waste requiring isolation from the public. I believe they are objectives worth pursing in concert with a geological repository.

Many of the specialized facilities, which would be required to investigate and develop these options, are uniquely available at the Savannah River Site. As in the past, the vast majority of citizens

surrounding the Savannah River Site will step forward and support the program to meet this critical and national energy security need and clearly these back end commercial nuclear fuel cycle features.

However, resolving the back end of the commercial nuclear fuel cycle will not resolve our concerns regarding the disposition of high-level waste. These are two separate questions and each must be addressed separately.

Again, I want to thank you for your patience in listening to me. And I would be more than happy to answer your questions later on.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Young.

Next we'd be happy to hear from David Jameson.

MR. JAMESON: Good afternoon. I'm David Jameson, President of the Greater Aiken Chamber of Commerce. And I also serve as the

current Chairman of the Savannah River Site Community Reuse Organization. And it is that capacity that I will speak here today.

First let me welcome you to the Central Savannah River Area of Georgia and South Carolina. You have an important job to do on behalf of our nation and we appreciate you taking the time to visit our region.

I have had the pleasure of living in this community twice. I was here for the first time for six years and left in early 1990 for career advancement. I jumped at the chance to return a second time and have been back for an additional five years.

To paraphrase my favorite saying about my own city of Aiken, if you're lucky enough to live in our region, you're lucky enough.

Today you are meeting in what might be the most friendly, nuclear-friendly area in the entire United States. For six decades, our residents have been neighbors of

the Savannah River Site. Though we are separated by a fence and hundreds of square miles of buffer, we consider SRS to be a good neighbor, one that has excelled in its unique national security mission, holding America's secrets while introducing innovative new technology and creating thousands of well-paying jobs for the people of this region.

Those employed at SRS are the best in their respective fields. Whether they are engineers, operators, health physicists, chemists, or dozens of other nuclear specialties, they exemplify the highest standards of professionalism and expertise. And they stand ready to meet any national challenge.

For nearly 60 years, the Savannah River Site and the citizens of our region have played a key role in the security of this nation. We have done so willingly and proudly and as partners in a great undertaking that saw us successfully into the Cold War and

until the shock of 9/11, an unprecedented period of peace and prosperity.

As a community, we are proud of the impressive safety record compiled by our region's largest employer. SRS is one of the safest sites in the DOE complex and one of the safest major industrial sites in the world.

The SRS' outstanding safety performance has not gone unnoticed. Both the operations and construction contractors have received numerous safety awards from the National Safety Council, the South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance, and the South Carolina Labor Licensing and Review Board to name a few.

In addition, the Savannah River National Laboratory is considered the safest national lab in the complex.

We hope that while you are here you have gained a fuller appreciation of our regional capabilities and our commitment to helping the federal government find permanent

solutions for the pressing energy and defense challenges of the day.

The SRS CRO is the Department of Energy's designated Community Reuse Organization. The group was created in 1993 in the wake of the first traumatic downsizing of the Savannah River Site following the end of the Cold War.

As a nonprofit regional organization, our primary mission is to facilitate economic development opportunities associated with Savannah River Site technology, capabilities, and missions, and to serve as an informed, unified voice for the five-county, two-state region.

Our coverage area includes Aiken, Allendale, and Barnwell Counties in South Carolina, and Richmond and Columbia Counties in Georgia.

Our group believes that it is important for you to recognize that SRS is not a closure site but a vibrant, active

contributor to the nation's nuclear security. The Savannah River Site is one of the crown jewels of America's quest for national security, innovative technology, and new energy resources.

In the near term, SRS is playing a critical role in the tritium production, solidification of liquid waste into vitrified glass form for permanent storage and disposition of excess weapons plutonium by converting it into mixed oxide fuels suitable for use in nuclear power reactors.

In the long horizon, we are confident SRS can lead national efforts in nuclear nonproliferation and in resolving complex issues related to closing the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle through reprocessing.

At the same time, however, even as we actively promote the unique capabilities of SRS, we are not without concerns. As a group of communities throughout the region, we have

come together in the unified voice through the SRS CRO to study the issues and express our viewpoint.

We are on record concerning our opposition of the government's position to halt work on Yucca Mountain. We also understand the Yucca Mountain is not specifically under your charter, therefore we will respect your time and not focus our discussion on this topic today.

However, ultimately this nation will need some type of permanent repository. If recycling and reprocessing is identified as an alternative for managing commercial spent fuel, a permanent repository will still be required.

However, recycling and reprocessing is not an option for vitrified glass logs that you saw yesterday at SRS. They need a permanent home. Having said that, I want to make it clear that the Savannah River Site and the regional community are

willing to be part of the solution, just as we have been for the last half century.

SRS knowledge and capabilities in reprocessing of nuclear fuel are unsurpassed. SRS has a proven track record as the go-to facility within the DOE complex when it comes to handling spent nuclear fuel.

In our view, as a nuclear community, H-Canyon is a particularly impressive facility with a one-of-a-kind capability that should be preserved and exploited for the good of this nation. In a reprocessing option, H-Canyon can play a critical role in the research and demonstration and testing of technologies to minimize the volume of spent fuel that otherwise must be stored in a repository.

Likewise, Savannah River National Laboratory is a unique and vital resource that can contribute immensely to solving nuclear waste issues. With its slogan, We Put Science to Work, SRNL's 50-year heritage of applying

science to meet the needs of DOE and the nation distinguishes it from the other DOE national laboratories.

This unique position will enable SRNL to lead the nation in translating basic research into practical application. The lab's near-term objective is to aggressively expand the application of SRNL expertise and technologies to solve critical national issues, especially in national security and secure sustainable energy.

These talents and capabilities can be readily trained on the national dilemma this Commission is now addressing. How can we resolve the pressing issue of spent fuel storage and nuclear storage disposition?

So in closing, I'll leave this Commission with two thoughts that I hope you will consider the essence of my input. First, we continue to believe that the failure to complete Yucca Mountain is a monumental mistake. If not Yucca Mountain, a permanent

repository is needed somewhere for the federal government to fulfill its obligation to our community.

SRS was never envisioned as the permanent home for the defense waste. We are not willing to become the de facto permanent repository. Let me repeat that. We are not willing to become the de facto permanent repository.

Second, the Savannah River Site and our communities are willing to be proactive contributors to solutions utilizing unique SRS capabilities and experience and the unsurpassed community support that exists in this region. You need to use these capabilities and support as a resource to help the Commission meet its objective of finding solutions for America's nuclear waste.

We firmly believe SRS is the key site for the nuclear future of our country -- the key site for the nuclear future of our country.

Again, thank you for being here. We look forward to continuing our dialogue with you as this work progresses.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Jameson.

Our next presenter would be Brian Tucker.

MR. TUCKER: Good afternoon. I'm Brian Tucker. I'm the President of the North Augusta Chamber of Commerce. We appreciate your interest in our region and for taking time to listen to what we have to say today.

I've called this area home for more than ten years and I've been invited here today to represent four Chambers of Commerce located in our three-county, two-state region. In addition to the businesses and organizations that are members of the North Augusta Chamber, I'm also speaking here today for the members of the Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Aiken Chamber of Commerce, and the Columbia County Chamber of

Commerce.

Collectively our membership represents thousands of small, medium, and large businesses who depend on the economic strength of this region for their survival. These businesses support hundreds of thousands of employees and their families who also call our local communities home.

Despite very uncertain economic conditions, our region's economy has remained relatively stable due to its significant diversification and the resiliency of our employers. Our stability can be attributed, in part, to the significant nuclear presence of the Savannah River Site and Plant Vogtle.

But beyond that, the CSRA region has notable depth in other high growth and extremely sophisticated sectors. We are home to one of the largest healthcare clusters in the southeast, including an academic and research medical center.

Our region includes a significant

military installation with a population of 26,000 personnel used for communications training, intelligence gathering, medical training and deployment, and we have a high concentration of manufacturing and industry, many of which are unique to this part of the country.

Together with a burgeoning tourism economy, a rapidly expanding service sector, and an ever-increasing demand for higher education offerings, we are attracting jobs and population. This is a course we do not want to see change.

We are proud to be the home of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site. SRS has played a major role in our national security for 60 years and continues to serve America in the important areas of nuclear nonproliferation and spent fuel reprocessing.

As a region that also serves as a home to the Southern Company's Vogtle Nuclear Power Plant, we have an enduring commitment to

nuclear energy and we fully support its expanded use and development.

We are also proud of the work being done in support of homeland security by the Savannah River National Laboratory, the Medical College of Georgia, as well as the national security role being carried out so effectively at Fort Gordon.

All four of our Chambers of Commerce consider our primary mission to be the promotion of the economic vitality and the entrepreneurial spirit of the communities we serve. We strive to create fertile ground and an encouraging attitude where existing businesses can thrive and new ventures can grow and root.

We also serve as their leading advocates on matters of public policy as we strive to balance their needs with an ever-changing legislative landscape. As such, I must include in my remarks that the federal government's decision to abandon Yucca

Mountain has sent a very alarming message to all of our members.

To them, the context of this decision appears to have been made absent any interest in studying economic impact or economic disparity. Our communities' effort to continue maximizing our region's growth based on what we know to be our strengths and weaknesses has now been marginalized without a clear explanation. This decision has made our decisions infinitely more difficult.

We had an ironclad deal, sealed by the force of law. It was a deal that required the government to take high-level defense waste from the Savannah River Site and move it to a permanent repository at Yucca Mountain.

This time last year the Department of Energy said the deal was off. Not only that, they offered no immediate alternative, making SRS the de facto permanent repository for the waste now stored here.

We are troubled by the

government's decision to halt work on Yucca Mountain and we will continue to view this measure as a serious and unfair impediment that is counterproductive to the character and strength of our region for as long as this is a matter of debate.

At the same time, like you, we are interested in a solution-focused discussion. We are very aware that beyond the merits of a permanent geologic repository, this Commission is charged with exploring any and all options that will reduce waste, expand our energy independence while preserving our national safety and our national security.

For this reason, we are very pleased that you have made the decision to visit SRS so that you are able to understand firsthand the unique capabilities of the infrastructure and its workforce.

Let me share for a moment just a few of these facts. With respect to handling spent fuel and high-level waste, the Savannah

River Site has been a problem solver for more than a half century. Tens of thousands of tons of radioactive material were reprocessed at the Savannah River Site from the mid-1950s through the beginning of this decade.

Over the years, SRS personnel have established an enviable safety record in receiving and storing a wide variety of spent nuclear fuel assemblies from both domestic and foreign research reactors.

And to reiterate David's point, SRS has a long track history of being the safest site in the DOE complex and one of the safest industrial operations in the world. As a community, we are convinced that SRS management is committed to protecting workers, the public, and the environment as well as our national security interest.

As you have heard today, H-Canyon remains the only hardened nuclear chemical separations plant in operation in the United States. Due to its unique capabilities, H-

Canyon can support both DOE environmental clean up and nuclear nonproliferation goals while helping to expand our available uranium fuel supplies.

Part of H-Canyon's mission has been to blend down weapons-grade uranium into low enriched uranium suitable for fuel in commercial power reactors. Through its use in Tennessee Valley Authority reactors, this material is now providing electricity to homes throughout the southeast.

It's this kind of well-executed, innovative, problem-solving technology that we believe can be brought to bear, helping to resolve the pressing issues being addressed by your Commission.

Technology currently exists to recycle used commercial reactor fuel. We believe this Commission's report to the President should include a recommendation for a robust, well-funded technology and engineering development program aimed at

deploying the next generation fuel cycle program.

The proven capabilities and outstanding expertise of the Savannah River Site, including those at the Savannah River National Lab, should play a key role in helping us meet this challenge.

A key goal of any fuel cycle program should be to minimize the need for a geologic disposal of waste products. At the same time, we must all recognize that regardless of the best minimization efforts, a permanent repository of some kind will still be needed, even if it's not Yucca Mountain.

Accordingly, we strongly urge this Commission to recommend that a geologic repository be provided. We further urge you to establish Yucca Mountain, which has been called the most studied piece of real estate on Earth, as the required reference point unless and until a technically equal alternative has been identified and approved

by the NRC.

We also request that this Commission recommend that the Nuclear Waste Fund be utilized as the source of funding for any program designed to close the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle and for the disposition of defense waste.

As ratepayers and taxpayers, our citizens have provided billions of dollars in funds with the expectation that this money would be used to dispose of commercial and defense waste. Use of the Waste Fund will allow this work to continue, even in the face of unprecedented strains on the federal budget.

In closing, let me underscore the tremendous importance the Savannah River Site plays in the economy of our region. With an annual budget of two billion dollars and yearly payroll of more than 900 million dollars, the economic impact of SRS is tremendous and irreplaceable.

Because of SRS, we are proud to have a disproportionate number of well-educated, highly-trained scientists and engineers among our population. As cleanup is completed and existing missions are satisfied, we should not allow these individuals to be scattered to the four winds. They are needed by our country and are ready to use their talents and skills to meet any pressing national need including solving the challenge of closing the nuclear fuel cycle.

In crafting your recommendations to the President, we urge this Commission to recognize the unique blends of talents and capabilities that exist at Savannah River Site and our broader region and to leverage these tremendous assets and this supportive community for the nation's benefit in the years ahead.

We thank you for your work. We appreciate that. And I will be available for questions afterwards. Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Tucker. We appreciate your comments.

Our next presenter is Danny Black.

MR. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know this is very taxing on you guys and it's very taxing on us. If you don't mind, I'm a little bit older than these fellows. I'm going to stay here.

First of all, good afternoon. My name is Danny Black and I'm the President of the SouthernCarolina Alliance. I would like to add my welcome to this Commission and we appreciate you being here and hope you find your visit very useful.

I have been invited here today to represent the economic development entities in our region. These groups include the Development Authority of Richmond County and the Development Authority of Columbia County in Georgia as well as Aiken/Edgefield Economic

Development Partnership in South Carolina and my own organization, the SouthernCarolina Alliance.

First I have some brief remarks about my own organization. The SouthernCarolina Alliance represents four South Carolina counties around the Savannah River Site, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, and Hampton. Our relationship with SRS extends across the entire 60-year history of the Savannah River Site.

In fact, more than two-thirds of the 310 square miles on which the Savannah River Site is situated lies in two of our counties, Allendale and Barnwell. This land was acquired by the government in the early 1950s. In the process, several communities and thousands of farm families were displaced under imminent domain to make way for construction of the site.

Since the construction, thousands of residents in our four counties have been

employed at the site. Employment peaked in 1995 when an estimated 4,000 residents of the four-county Southern Carolina region were employed either on the site or by industries related to the site and its missions.

While the people of Southern Carolina region have been dedicated employees and supporters of the site, the region as been challenged by the reduced tax base resulting from the acquisition of those thousands of acres 60 years ago.

Unlike other parts of the broader region, our counties are currently experiencing some of the highest unemployment levels in South Carolina, indeed probably the entire nation. In Allendale and Barnwell counties alone, unemployment is now approaching 20 percent, which is more than the figures this morning, twice the national average.

Now speaking for all of my colleagues in the business of job creation in

our region, I want to clearly state that we fully support the Savannah River Site. We appreciate the contributions SRS has made to our region and our nation and we are confident that its best years lie ahead as SRS continues to meet critical national challenges.

And I agree with all the others here today who have stated that the federal government has shirked its responsibility by failing to provide a permanent repository for commercial spent fuel and high-level defense waste. Regardless of waste management option is chosen, a repository will still be necessary and should be pursued without further delay.

The absence of a permanent waste storage solution is a potential impediment to economic development as many worry that SRS will become a de facto permanent repository. We are concerned that this negative image will impact our ability to attract industry and create new jobs, creating a chilling effect on

future economic development throughout the region.

We do not worry about immediate safety concerns. The safety of short-term storage of high-level nuclear waste has been assured. However, additional studies are needed to confirm that the waste would remain safe for significant additional periods such as hundreds or even thousands of years required for permanent storage until radioactivity in the waste decays to safe levels.

At the same time, we support full utilization of the Savannah River Site's impressive capabilities in helping your Commission and this country meet the current challenge.

For more than half a century, the Savannah River Site has possessed outstanding capabilities in spent fuel processing. In that time, SRS has assembled an unequaled team of experts and has built an enviable record of

performance and safety that exceeds any other facility in the DOE complex.

Those same proven capabilities and that same unparalleled expertise can now be redirected to meeting national needs identified by your Commission. We are confident SRS can play a major role in helping to close the fuel cycle, minimize the volume of waste, and put the country back on track with respect to ultimate disposal.

All of the local knowledge and expertise does not reside on the Savannah River Site. My own home county of Barnwell was home to what was to become America's first reprocessing plant for commercial spent fuel. Known as the Allied General Nuclear Services Facility, this 300 million dollar plant was completed in the `70s but never operated due to a change in U.S. policy prohibiting reprocessing.

Five hundred anticipated permanent jobs never materialized. The fully completed

facility was shuttered and stood dormant for decades until it was decommissioned and decontaminated and the land was dedicated to a new industrial site.

We believed then and we believe now that the government's decision to abandon reprocessing was wrong-headed. It denied the country a valuable fuel resource. It created the bulk of the storage problems we face today. And it put the U.S. behind other countries in the expanded use of nuclear energy.

We support reprocessing. However, supporting reprocessing does not mean we favor long-term centralized storage of spent fuel. This would violate one of our community's guiding principles. No waste or excess materials shall be brought into South Carolina unless an approved and funding pathway exists for its processing and shipment to either a customer or an out-of-state waste disposal facility.

But we do not believe Savannah River Site -- I'm sorry -- but we do believe the Savannah River Site and the Savannah River National Laboratory, along with the commercial partners and communities of this region, can be key players in implementing a highly successful reprocessing program that would go a long way towards solving the issues that are on your agenda today.

There are many critical and unique facilities and infrastructure at DOE sites which can be used in alternate fuel cycle programs. H-Canyon and the SRNL hot cells are two examples of such facilities, as you've heard.

Many of these one-of-a-kind facilities will be lost during the next decade because of inadequate funding and maintenance and capability readiness. We strongly suggest the Commission's report identify the types of programs and facilities needed to address the back end of the fuel cycle and require that

these necessary capabilities be preserved.

As stated, it remains essential that a permanent repository is provided for those commercial and defense wastes that cannot be eliminated through alternate fuel cycle programs such as reprocessing.

Let me encourage you to recognize and appreciate the value the Savannah River Site continues to bring to America's national security and the key role it can play in resolving our waste management dilemma. On behalf of all economic developers in our region, I ask you to urge the Secretary and the President to make sure all unique SRS fuel-handling capabilities are funded and preserved, that the exceptional capabilities of Savannah River National Laboratory are invoked, that the world class SRS talent pool is utilized, and that the unequaled community support that exists here for things nuclear is leveraged for the good of the entire country.

Again, welcome Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for coming. We look forward to your report. Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Black.

Our final presenter will be Dr. Susan Winsor. You may proceed.

DR. WINSOR: I am Dr. Susan Winsor and I am the President of Aiken Technical College. I am a resident of Aiken. Although it it not my place of birth, it is my place of choice and has been for the last 11 years. I'm sure after you've had the pleasure of visiting our community, you can understand why. Welcome so much to our fine community.

I'm here today to represent the region's institutions of higher education and specifically this includes two technical colleges, two state universities, a two-year branch of a state university, and a major medical university in the counties of South Carolina and Aiken surrounding the site. This network of educators are actively involved in

training craftsmen, technicians, professionals, and specialists for the workforce of the future, including the nuclear workforce.

And I might add that they do so from settings that are very urban to very rural. This programmatic and geographic diversity allows all of our citizens of the region to have local educational opportunities.

A large percentage of our collective students are native to this region. They attend school locally and are employed locally. And to provide an example from my institution, 72 percent of the students at my college are residents of Aiken County. And 85 percent stay in the region to work. Nearly all other students of our network of colleges are South Carolina or Georgia residents and are from the counties neighboring those institutions.

Many of our colleges are

specifically now involved in preparing the nuclear workforce. And I will speak specifically to our college. Aiken Technical College began its radiation protection associate degree program in 2008. It started at the request of local nuclear employers.

With their generous support as well as grant support from the NRC, our program has quickly grown to be one of the largest in the United States, with 150 students currently enrolled. This program has been designed to instruct both to NEI and DOE radiation protection standards, making it a unique program in the United States.

I'm pleased to say that after just a few short years, we currently have 21 students who have graduated from the associate degree and nearly all are working in the local area.

The college is also pursing NEI approval under the Nuclear Uniform Curriculum Program with final approval anticipated very

shortly. The college's utility partner is Southern Electric & Gas, through V.C. Summer Nuclear Plant. And our graduates will be eligible for employment at any nuclear utility, DOE site, or medical facility.

In a similar approach, Augusta Technical College began offering an associate degree in nuclear engineering technology this past fall and is also in the process of pursuing NEI approval for its curriculum in partnership with Southern Company's Plant Vogtle.

I mention this because NEI approval is a very rigorous process to national standards. And both colleges have committed to the process of pursuing approval under NEI, which will give our graduates a portable certificate recognized by any utility in the United States. That speaks to our commitment to quality and excellence in our programming and to the quality of our local nuclear workforce.

I'm also here to speak in the role as Chair of the Nuclear Workforce Initiative, a forward-thinking program developed by the SRS Community Reuse Organization to assess the future needs of regional employers and ensure that those needs are met.

In 2009, the SRS CRO conducted an extensive and independent study of eight area nuclear employers through a contract with Booze Allen Hamilton. The study concluded that more than 10,000 workers will be needed in the next decade in this region alone to support the expansion of nuclear energy in our two-state region and to replace retirees.

With about 50 percent of the nuclear industry's staffers nearing retirement, this is a very critical issue. In addition, new jobs will be created that must be filled.

Our vision for our region is that as many people as possible locally are prepared for these jobs. In other words, we

want our citizens to have the option to receive their education locally and go to work locally for our nuclear employers. This includes workers who will fill the needed positions at the Savannah River Site as well as those in the area commercial nuclear plants.

We are implementing a unified strategy to address present and future workforce needs in our collaboration of the institutions that I mentioned. Working closely with partners in business, academia, economic development, state and local governments, we are focused on ensuring that people of our region have an opportunity to develop the skills they need to fill regional nuclear energy jobs.

We call this effort growing our own through collaboration. Together we are building a collaborative of local programs at local colleges that prepare graduates for a variety of needed professions to support

nuclear employment across all spectrums of job categories and support opportunities for economic growth.

The work we are doing here has been recognized as cutting edge. A group of local colleges and universities working together to provide an array of unduplicated programs within a region. This approach is now being duplicated in other areas of the country as we all prepare for an expected nuclear renaissance to support nuclear power as an expanding source of our nation's electricity.

In order to fully recognize that renaissance, we do believe it is essential for our country to reach consensus on the best way to close the fuel cycle. This is the great unanswered question about nuclear energy. And just as the resurgence of nuclear energy could be threatened by a lack of qualified workers, it can also be slowed or even derailed by our failure to satisfactorily spell out how we

handle waste materials.

We know nuclear energy is safe. We know it is reliable. We know it is scalable, that it can grow from its current 20 percent share to produce even larger quantities of electricity to meet most of our future needs.

What we don't know at this moment is how the spent fuel from these plants and the higher level defense waste from government facilities like the Savannah River Site will be managed long term. We thought we had the answer. We thought the answer would be a place called Yucca Mountain in the Nevada desert where these materials could be stored safely and permanently.

But that solution has been taken off the table. We believe that's a serious mistake and now we are back to the drawing board without ready answers.

I don't envy your job, the job of this Commission that you have been given to

recommend a long-term management solution of the spent fuel and nuclear waste. But I do know that finding the answer is important and that it is an essential step in increasing the role of nuclear power as an energy workhorse for our country.

Like other speakers today, we are concerned about the billions of dollars that have been paid into the Nuclear Waste Fund with no apparent benefit to date. As you well know, the Nuclear Waste Fund was created to pay for permanent storage of commercial spent fuel. And we strongly believe those dollars in that fund should be applied directly to the task of closing the fuel cycle, whatever form that eventually takes.

For our part, we will do what is necessary to make sure that the workforce is trained and ready for current and future jobs in the nuclear industry. As educators, we work with our partners to make sure that there are enough scientists, engineers, health

physicists, welders, technicians, and other skills and specialties needed to meet the industry's needs.

With these talents, we can expand our horizons to encompass new nuclear technology, such as small nuclear reactors, to create even more jobs, increase the export of U.S. goods and services, be even a better friend to the environment, and enhance our national security and energy policy.

For your part, we trust you will objectively examine the alternatives available for closing the fuel cycle and aggressively advocating what you believe will solve this challenge while engendering trust and confidence amongst the American public. In doing so, we believe you will find the Savannah River Site site and the region's educators are educating a skilled workforce to be willing and valuable allies.

Your success is critical if nuclear energy is to become more fully

supportive of our energy future. And we thank you for your service and participation. Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Dr. Winsor.

We appreciate the comments of all the panelists.

Are there comments or questions for the panel from the Commission?

Yes? Dick?

MEMBER MESERVE: I'd like to thank you all for your presentation.

I think there was consensus or at least near consensus across all of you on two propositions. One was that that Yucca Mountain decision was a mistake. We should have a repository as soon as possible.

And you want the waste that has accumulated at the Savannah River Site to leave and you don't want any more to come here. You want to have the material handled.

And then you also said that you

think that the site could contribute at least its research on reprocessing. And that there is a way in which -- there's great capacity here technically. There's facilities here. There is a skilled workforce and so forth, all of which make that attractive as an opportunity for this site to contribute to the nation in yet other ways than what was done in the past.

It seems to me there is at least, in the near term, there is an inconsistency between those two propositions. That if you are going to be a site for research for reprocessing, there are going to be materials that are going to be here. And probably materials that have to be brought here to be stored for at least a time and used for that research.

I mean how should I reconcile what I see at least for the term until a repository is created this inconsistency between what I perceive to be at least the two consistent

elements in your comments?

MR. BLACK: I'll answer it this way. There's not an inconsistency as we see it. You're talking about storing everything at one location with no activities or missions going on. That's one thing. If you're talking about reprocessing or researching or looking at other alternative ways to take care of the waste issue for the country, that's something else.

I'm not the governor, obviously, of South Carolina. And I certainly would never put myself in that position of answering for the state. But if you bring research, development, demonstration, and jobs, you would think you would have to have some materials to propose that to do that on them.

That has not been proposed to anyone that I know of. If that's what this Commission would propose, I think you would have some more consistent answers along the way.

This site, in our opinion, is smart enough to handle anything that you throw at them. And probably have the brain power at this site to do anything that anyone else in the world can do.

Give us the opportunity to do that. And there may be some surprising results from it.

But in our opinion again, to answer your question, I don't see the inconsistency as long as there is a dual role to be played.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Per?

MEMBER PETERSON: Yes. I co-chair one of the subcommittees of the Commission, the Reactor and Fuel Cycle Technology Subcommittee, which, of course, is looking in its independent meetings at the topics that relate to the potential role that advanced fuel cycles could play in changing the nature of the waste disposal problem.

One of the issues with those

technologies is the fact that we need to have additional investment to develop them if we want to bring them to fruition. When we look at the contracts that utilities have with the Department of Energy, an important point about those contracts is that legislation cannot change them. They are binding. And Congress cannot go and change them through legislation.

This means that the various elements of the contracts, we have to develop a strategy and a framework that works within the context of those limitations, one of them being that the use of the funds is actually prescribed in the contracts and limited in certain ways that does not, at least when I've looked at it, permit those funds to be used for fuel cycle research and development or demonstration.

So this puts us in the position of needing to identify alternative approaches to generating the resources needed to do this work. And I'm just curious if people have

thought about this question, particularly in the current context of how we can move forward to develop these technologies but where do we get the money for that purpose, too?

(Laughter.)

MR. JAMESON: My guess is that the answer to that is above our paygrade. We don't know the answer. And we can't wait to hear your solution.

(Laughter.)

MEMBER PETERSON: I'll do my best. Thanks.

MEMBER SHARP: Yes, I wondered if I might ask you a similar question that I asked the previous panel. In a sense, what advice you would give us and/or we might pass on to the federal government about its relations with the local communities and the citizens, private citizens of the area as to how to manage those relations.

Let me be clear. We heard loud and clearly across the board keep your word is

the first piece of advice. But beyond that, I don't know if you have anything to add to help us understand what is the smartest way to proceed forward because some waste facilities may well be in brand new areas and at least there is a chance to start out with a clean slate.

MR. JAMESON: Well, I'll take a stab at that. And it is probably what Senator Graham might have said this morning.

We have to have a nonpolitical solution. And then once a solution is -- a decision is made, we have to stay the course. We, as a community of chambers and business and civic and government leaders, go to Washington on a frequent basis. And we talk to our elected officials. We talk to the folks at the DOE and the other agencies that have responsibility that interests us in this part of the country.

And it is amazing one year we get one answer, one year we get another answer.

It changes on a whim with Congress. It changes -- it can change on the whim of a committee chairman in Congress. And that's very frustrating.

So we have lots of stops and starts. We never know what the solid direction that we're going to follow. The community is -- its support erodes when we make an announcement that we're going in one direction and everybody believes that to be true. And then we move in another direction. And we move in a third direction. And a decade later, the announcement is made back to Direction A.

We need to get the politics out of it. You need to figure out somehow to get the politics out of it and give us a clear solution that does not change with every Administration and every Congress and every chairman of a Congressional committee.

DR. WINSOR: If I might add to that because I believe the second part of your

question is how do you engage the communities, every community has some sort of an educational system in it. And I would suggest that that perhaps might be a gathering place.

These issues are incredibly complex and difficult. And even those of us who have had the opportunity to learn more about them in recent years, it is still very, very complex.

So to be able to articulate the issues in a manner that is understandable to those who have not had the opportunity to work in the industry is a very big challenge, regardless of education level I might add. This isn't necessarily that those who have a college education automatically know these things. So it is a challenge across the board, regardless of that.

So I would suggest that partnering with the local education entities, the local chambers, and other institutions that are well known and have the network within the

communities, in all communities not just kind of the standard chamber kind of communities, I guess, but across all communities.

And that's where your educational institutions can be helpful because they do touch all communities. So that might be something to consider.

And then even considering how do you relate the issues of this industry in this particular sector of energy as it relates to other sectors of energy that perhaps we're more familiar with and don't necessarily consider to hold the same risks, although they often might and do. I mean we clearly have had a very visible demonstration of that in the Gulf just last year in what could happen.

So I think it is interesting that I've been hearing in the news that the oil industry is now looking to an NRC-type of approach to control its safety.

So other industries are actually looking to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

model as a way of managing its safety. And I'm not sure that the general public is aware of how much effort has been put into maintaining safety regulations within the nuclear environment that simply are not necessarily in place with other sectors of energy. So perhaps a comparison and putting it in context would be helpful as well.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Other comments?

(No response.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: I'd like to thank the panel for your participation. We appreciate your comments very, very much. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: And now we will proceed to the public comment period and here we have a serious problem. There are 57 people who have signed up to make comments. So I'm going to have to behave in a very draconian way.

We will use our green orange, and red lights. I would ask if the red light and the buzzer sounds, you complete the sentence you are on and stop.

I will also, as I call the presenters, I will call then next two names. And I would ask you to come up and stand here so that we don't waste any time in between speakers. And I ask you all to cooperate in the order that your fellow citizens will all get a chance to express themselves.

Our first presenter will be -- oh, yes, and the time limit will be two minutes -- two minutes each. Our first presenter will be Stephen Stegall, representing NA-YGN, followed by Keith Graham and David Zigelman.

Mr. Stegall?

MR. STEGALL: My name is Stephen Stegall and I am an engineer at Southern Nuclear's Vogtle Electric Generating Plant. I was born and raised in the Augusta area and I've seen firsthand the benefits of having the

Savannah River Site and Vogtle in this community my entire life.

I'm here today to give you a few perspectives as a citizen, taxpayer, and nuclear worker. Nuclear energy is safe and provides sustainable jobs but it is still received cautiously by the average citizen.

Even though I grew up in this area, I, myself, knew little about it before working at Vogtle. And in the few years that I have worked in the industry, I've come to learn not only about the redundant safety systems and procedures that are in place to protect against an accident at a nuclear facility, there is also an ingrained attitude that the safety and health of the public is priority, above all else.

Not only that, but the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics says that 90 percent of the incident rate -- excuse me, it is 90 percent safer at a nuclear power plant than at any other manufacturing facility. And it is

because of this proven safety record and safety culture that I believe nuclear energy should be a part of this nation's future.

Another part of this nation's future is the next generation of nuclear workers. I represent the 6,000 young professionals across this country in an organization known as North American Young Generation in Nuclear.

Today we ask the Commission to recommend a timely pathway for recycling and storing of both SRS defense high-level waste and commercial used nuclear fuel at a permanent repository and to honor the federal government's commitments to 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 with a management and financial structure capable of withstanding political change.

These requests will ensure sustained growth for an industry that is on the brink of a true renaissance.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Stegall, for your comments and your time.

Next presenter is Keith Graham from Regulatory Technology Services, followed by David Zigelman, Charles Munns.

MR. GRAHAM: Yes, I'm Keith Graham from Regulatory Technology Services in Evans, Georgia. And I'm just here to help the Commission determine that SRS is the best choice for a national headquarters for managing spent nuclear fuel and waste.

I have over 30 years experience in the commercial nuclear power industry. I've worked at 15 nuclear power plants, seven years at Savannah River Site, part of the time at DWPA up at the Canyons' tank farms.

The state of the union that we have between the nuclear power industry and

the U.S. government is not good. Mr. Obama is working on his. I've already got mine. It's not good.

And, you know, we -- the commercial industry entered into covenant agreements with the U.S. government under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. President Carter's plans to bury spent nuclear fuel, they are outdated. They no longer make sense.

Reprocessing makes sense. The existing staff at Savannah River Site is the staff to do the reprocessing. We should make use of the talent skill sets that we have out there that already exist.

We all know that each day we're reducing our supplies of fossil fuels. We're running out every day. And they're going to get higher and higher.

We have to give proper attention to nuclear power. The public and most politicians don't know that over the past four decades, there has been 62,500 metric tons of

nuclear waste generated. That waste will fit on a football field, stacked 21 feet deep. That's all we're talking about folks from the commercial waste stream.

There's 104 power plants in the United States that produce 20 percent of the power. They preclude almost 700 million metric tons of pollution from entering the atmosphere.

The public doesn't have a comprehension of the size of the waste stream that we're talking about. Most of the public does not know that you get 100 times more radiation coming out of a coal-fired power plant than you do a nuclear plant. If you're scared about radiation, there's a lot of other things to be scared about besides what happens at a nuclear power plant.

My final comment is we ought to think a little bit more like the Russians. In Russia, they treat their nuclear waste as a national treasure. We should do the same

thing.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Graham.

Next commenter, David Zigelman, followed by Charles Munns and Ernest Chaput.

PARTICIPANT: Zigelman is not here.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Oh, okay. All right.

MR. MUNNS: So I'm the fourth speaker.

General, Commissioners, welcome to our home. And thanks for listening.

My motivation here is to have a strong and free nation. My desire is that my grandchildren will have as good a life as I have. And so that's why I'm here making these comments.

I have certain experiences which pertain to the comments. I am a three-star admiral in the United States Navy. I ran the U.S. Submarine Force with its 74 nuclear power

plants. I was CEO of the local company that worked for the Department of Energy and ran the Savannah River Site.

And I'm now a special government employee, like you, although I'm working for a strategic command without compensation. And we're working on nuclear arms control and the health of our stockpile.

I'd like to leave you with three imperatives, three comments. One, the nation needs nuclear energy. Two, we need a comprehensive policy for us all to follow. And three, there is a magic formula here in the CSRA which you might try to replicate other places.

Nuclear energy is needed in this nation for the base load supply of our country. Without it, we will diminish the resources needed for growth and quality of life.

The policy is needed and that policy should include removing the uncertainty

in storage and it should include a path for reuse. It makes no sense to throw away 90 percent of the energy in that fuel.

And lastly, the magic formula. It's geography, geology, engaged groups, effective government, a nuclear culture, and a great safety record.

Geography, we have an area where energy is needed. And we have 300 square miles that is unencumbered for use at the Savannah River Site.

Geology, one of the best studied and monitored areas in the country.

Engaged groups, have you seen from last night and today that want the best for our country?

Effective government, nuclear culture, CEO Miller talked about that this morning. It is crucial. You don't find that just everywhere.

And lastly, a record of safety.

Thank you for listening.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Admiral. Appreciate it.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: The next speaker is Ernest Chaput of Economic Development Partnership, followed by Donald Bridges and John Demko.

MR. CHAPUT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I am Ernest Chaput. I'm with the Economic Development Partnership. It's a group that's involved with investment and job creation in Aiken and Edgefield Counties, South Carolina. The Savannah River Site is part of our existing industrial base. And we're looking forward to continue to provide good jobs for -- quality jobs for the people in our area.

I think it is important to note that the nuclear industry in South Carolina involves about 28,000 jobs and over three billion dollars of economic activity. It is

a big part of not only the local industrial base -- economic base but also the state's industrial base.

We have a series of recommendations. And I'll leave a copy of those with you, sir.

One with regard to greatly upset with the Administrator's action on Yucca Mountain. It basically negated 20 years of planning and expectations on the part of our local community.

It is our understanding that there's no alternative other than geologic disposition of the Savannah River defense waste. And so I hope you understand the nature of our concern on that previous decision.

We recommend your panel endorse the early availability of a geologic repository. We also recommend that Yucca Mountain remain the primary geologic repository unless a more suitable option is

authorized and is authorized in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, the law of the land.

We welcome your charter to review the back end of the fuel cycle. This is long overdue. Our current policies are based upon 30-year-old dogma and deserve to be reexamined in light of today's circumstances and technology. Savannah River Site can be part of that solution.

We recommend that your Commission propose not only a research and development program but also an aggressive demonstration program. The people and facilities are available for this work here at Savannah River and elsewhere. H-Canyon has been talked about many times as being key to that.

The ratepayers of not only South Carolina but the nation have paid billions into the Nuclear Waste Fund. And it's time for them to get a return for their investment.

That's basically a summation of my

remarks. I've been asked to just provide a statement from George Fletcher of the South Caroline Council on Competitiveness. I will provide that to you for the record.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter is Donald Bridges, representing Savannah River Site CAB, followed by John Demko and Christine Ridgeway.

MR. BRIDGES: I am Don Bridges and I'm speaking as an individual. I am a member of the CAB but I want to reflect my own views.

I will provide more expanded comments so I'll make a very concise summary. I want to make four points. One on the high-level waste and the low grade plutonium at Savannah River. I think that the decision to cancel Yucca Mountain has undermined confidence in DOE and the federal government to manage nuclear waste.

So I would ask this panel to take

an action to deal with the removal of the high-level waste from Savannah River Site in a prompt and efficient manner with a certain degree of urgency. Point number one.

Point number two is Yucca Mountain. It's difficult to imagine how Yucca Mountain could be -- a site as well qualified as that could be canceled with so little technical basis and so little nuclear industry support. So I would ask that you reconsider in some manner, even use of Yucca Mountain in a temporary manner, perhaps as a storage area for a matter of decades instead of millennia.

The third point I would make is relative to the reprocessing of nuclear fuel. I do think that reprocessing would be vital to the nation and would be a very useful area for this committee to look at and go into in further depth. So there are a lot of facilities at SRS. You've heard them, H-Canyon and the like, so I submit you have the facilities there.

And the fourth one I'll make is nuclear friendly community. I think the regulatory aspects of dealing with any activity will be much easier in this area probably than any other place in the U.S.

Thank you. And I'll provide written comments.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Bridges.

Next is John Demko, representing himself, followed by Christine Ridgeway and then Kerry Ridgeway.

MR. DEMKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

There has been a lot of discussion today about reprocessing the nuclear waste as a method to get rid of some of our nuclear fuel waste. At present, only a minuscule part of the spent fuel waste can be used.

Presently the MOX facility has no customers for its reprocessed nuclear material. This includes CEO Miller's Southern

Company who refused the government's offer for this material.

Before pursuing waste fuel reprocessing and burdening the American taxpayers with the billions of dollars for such a facility, perhaps we should first find uses for the MOX fuel that is now being manufactured at SRS. It appears this processed plutonium will now be permanently sited at SRS. We should not send further nuclear waste to SRS until they get rid of what they already have.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Demko.

Next presenter is Christine Ridgeway from the Sierra Club followed by Kerry Ridgeway and Chris Hall.

MR. RIDGEWAY: I'm obviously not Christine. She's chosen to let me just go ahead and make a statement --

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Okay. Fine.

MR. RIDGEWAY: -- in view of the number of people that you're dealing with.

I'm Kerry Ridgeway. I'm a veterinarian in Aiken. And speaking as a private citizen, but yes, I am a member of the Sierra Club as well, and I think Dianne Valentin spoke very, very well to much of what I wanted to address.

And I think a significant portion of this audience is pretty anti-nuclear. And I think a lot of that stems from fear. And we all do have fear about nuclear radiation. The people in Bamberg, that she spoke of, how many of you want to go and move your homes to Bamberg would be one of the questions I might ask.

And, you know, we have good reason to have distrust. The openness of our government has been pretty well exposed in recent months as well. And we have a lot of issues with industry and health issues and thinking back to Louisiana and all of the

chemicals and so forth.

And we were assured over and over and over that these have nothing -- those industries and including nuclear have nothing to do with the health problems that we are seeing in these communities. We are not convinced.

And what we really need -- and, I think, as part of the function of your Commission and where you go with the future of this is if this stuff is truly safe, safe, safe, as we keep hearing, we need to know with a great deal of openness where that information is coming from and where these studies are being done, how they are being conducted, and are they being conducted by the very people that we are concerned about doing these studies.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter is Chris Hall followed by Mel Buckner and Louis Zeller.

Are any of them here?

PARTICIPANT: Mel Buckner is here.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Okay.

MR. BUCKNER: Well, I appreciate this opportunity to speak to this distinguished panel. My name is Mel Buckner. I'm a 36-year veteran from the Savannah River Site, retired in 2006.

I'm currently an adjunct professor at the University of South Carolina teaching in their nuclear program. And I teach a course on nuclear energy and other energy sources along with a colleague.

I wanted to state some comments regarding the Savannah River Site. As you've all heard, the Savannah River Site has a wealth of experience in processing nuclear materials and has been involved in the development of advanced processing techniques. These technologies can be used to help solve

the nuclear waste problem, which is vitally important to our future use of clear, efficient nuclear energy.

In the case of nuclear waste, the technology for disposal of radioactive waste is well established. And the U.S. government needs to get on with the licensing and opening a federal repository which as been designed for the disposal of waste.

Through the use of recycling technology, which have been designed to reduce the proliferation risk, it is possible to greatly decrease the quantity of nuclear waste by a factor of 100 or more and to reclaim 95 percent of the energy content that remains in the nuclear fuel. In addition, it is possible to reduce the proliferation risk of nuclear energy by providing fuel services to developing countries where over two billion people live with little or no electricity.

Savannah River Site would be an ideal location for a nuclear fuel recycling

facility since the site is well characterized over the years through extensive environmental and ecological studies. And it has extensive experience in handling large projects, including the defense waste processing facility, which is utilizing the technology appropriate for disposal of nuclear waste.

Let me just say that the world markets are favorable to nuclear energy growth. The nuclear renaissance that we're hoping is going to occur in this country is already taking place around the world and the Savannah River Site would be an ideal location for developing the new technologies that will incorporate -- thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter will be Louis Zeller, followed by Bobbie Paul and Mindy Mets.

MR. ZELLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Lou Zeller. And I'm the Science Director with Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. We were founded in 1984 because of Department of Energy's Crystalline Repository Project.

Yucca Mountain was selected because of politics. It was unselected because of science and technology.

(Applause.)

MR. ZELLER: If a decision is made and unmade, made and unmade in a democracy, perhaps it should not be made where the people rule. If there is no front end, there is no back end.

I recommend that the Commission, duly constituted, consider that option within its charter, which would reduce the level of the back end of the problem by phasing out nuclear power in the United States as other advanced industrial nations have done.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next presenter is Bobbie Paul, George Awon, followed by Mindy Mets and Tom Himber.

MS. HILL-ECKINSON: Hi, my name is Amanda Hill-Eckinson. I'm with the Georgia Women's Action for New Direction. I'm standing in for Bobby Paul.

I have a great concern around some of the people who are up here speaking today and I believe were giving a lot of false information. One of the things that we are not taking seriously is the renewable energy because we are saying the nuclear power is safe, clean, and reliable.

Nuclear power is a finite resource. It comes from uranium. You cannot take the mining of uranium out of the picture when you talk about nuclear power.

From cradle to grave --

(Applause.)

MS. HILL-ECKINSON: Thank you. From cradle to grave, there is a radioactive

contamination stream from the mill mining through the conversion plant to the end of the use of the cycle. There is no closed loop. This is a contaminating from beginning to end and every community that is around each of these places has some sort of ground contamination where air contamination is a routine emissions from nuclear power plants.

Now we can talk all day and I heard somebody say that nobody has been killed from nuclear power. Well, it depends on what you define as nuclear power. If you're talking about the nuclear power plant up and running, probably not.

If you're talking about the releases, the waste, the management, the mining, yes, there have been deaths from nuclear power. So it is really upsetting to me that we start down this path of calling it safe and clean.

Then the guy comes up and says oh, I think we should go into the poor countries

and that we should help them get this nuclear power up and running. Poor countries, that if you build nuclear infrastructure, you are 90 percent of the way of a nuclear weapon infrastructure. It is a ridiculous assignment to that for our national security.

If you really want to help the poor countries out there, look at what their natural resources are and how they can develop it from a renewable perspective.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you. I would ask the audience to restrain itself to the extent it can.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presenter is Tom Himber, representing himself, followed by Michelle Wilson and Suzanne Rhodes.

MR. HIMBER: My name is Tom Himber. My background spans 36 years in

commercial in DOE nuclear facilities and I've been interested in this subject for the last 20 years.

Unfortunately, with the exception of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, this issue has been driven ever since by pure politics. The 1982 Policy Act specified that two regional nuclear waste disposal sites would be selected purely on scientific data. The `82 Policy Act directed that no one region, no one state, no one area would be burdened with all this nation's nuclear waste.

Afterwards, political pressure was used to eliminate, one by one, viable disposal locations across this country, including one here in Georgia. In 1987, science was eliminated from the selection process when hidden in the `88 Budget Reconciliation Bill, the Policy Act was amended to direct that Yucca Mountain, Nevada, be the sole repository of this nation's nuclear waste.

This was done without consulting

Nevada congressional leaders. I am sure you have heard and will hear about broken promises and outrageous politics that are responsible for Yucca Mountain being removed from consideration. We would not be in this present position if that widespread outrage had occurred 23 years earlier.

I have no demands and no recommendations. I do not have the experience, the background, or resources to suggest a logical path forward. But this Commission does.

I respectfully request that you resist all political influence as much as humanly possible before making your final recommendations. I would hope that all interested parties, including those that have attended this meeting, urge that your recommendations be based solely on science and fairness, even if they are contrary to regional wants.

In closing, this Commission should

be about science. I'm sure there will be sufficient time afterwards for politics.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Himber.

Our next presenter will be Michelle Wilson, representing South Carolina DHEC, followed by Suzanne Rhodes and Samantha Siegal.

MS. WILSON: Yes. Thank you, General Scowcroft and members of the Commission. And greetings to everyone gathered here.

I'm Shelly Wilson and I'm speaking today for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control or DHEC.

Since the advent of environmental regulations in the `70s, DHEC has overseen reduction of environmental liabilities at the Savannah River Site. These liabilities, mainly legacy waste from the Cold War and various contaminated areas across the site, represent two negatives. One is risk to

people and to the environment and the second is potential long-term stewardship burdens for South Carolina.

Although we have made a great deal of progress in both legacy waste disposition and area clean up at the site, there is still quite a ways to go before all of that risk is mitigated. One of the highest priorities for DHEC is the closure of the high-level waste tanks at SRS -- aging tanks, some of which have leak sites holding 37 million gallons of liquid radioactive toxic waste.

South Carolina currently holds more than its fair share of proportionate risk from the nation's Cold War legacy. Again, DHEC's direction is to reduce that risk and mitigate the long-term stewardship burdens.

If the federal repository at Yucca Mountain is no longer available, the risk reduction in South Carolina becomes uncertain. And may call into the question the previous regulatory decisions that have been made at

SRS.

DHEC has several regulatory mechanisms in place that guide and document the enforceable clean up decisions that have been made so far for the site. And these decisions may no longer be suitable if the risk in South Carolina remains or increases.

Indefinite or long-term management of vitrified waste, commercial spent nuclear fuel, or related waste streams may all impact the clean up decisions that have been and will be made in relation to the magnitude of risk material present in the state.

The main comment is that any potential directional changes should be discussed with effected states, including the environmental agencies, well in advance to engage the state-specific political, technical, and equity considerations.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presenter is Suzanne Rhodes, representing LWVSC, followed by Samantha Siegal and Bill Lawless.

MS. RHODES: Good afternoon. I'm resenting the League of Women Voters of South Carolina. I thought it was interesting that the League of Women Voters of the United States opposed the congressional efforts to designate Yucca Mountain based on the lack of site suitability studies.

Actually, if you've got a twisted sense of humor, you might want to look at the legislative record. It had as much to do with CAF standards as it did with site suitability.

We're delighted that you, a Blue Ribbon Commission, are looking at a permanent solution. We suggest you not pursue a volunteer temporary solution.

We think, although it wasn't part

of the plan, the current waste storage at defense and commercial sites has been workable, transporting spent or defense waste to a temporary storage is unsafe and unnecessary. And politically, although I've got a thought about this for later, but it requires that each effected state and commercial interest maintain financial and technical vigilance in order to solve this problem.

We have heard a lot about the value in spent fuel. We urge you all to do some cost-benefit analyses. What I've done based on studies of French reprocessing indicates it is expensive, not counting the waste management. I think you all are the ones to determine that or to have it determined actually for us all from an independent site.

So unless there is site-specific safety issue, we think high-level waste should remain wherever it is presently until there is

a suitable permanent solution.

And you talked about how to get from where. As near as I can tell, a lot of the political problems have come from Washington, D.C. And with perhaps the exception of Senator Lindsay Graham, I suggest that congressional hands be grossly minimized in the finding of a permanent solution.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter is Samantha Siegal from the Sierra Club, followed by Bill Lawless and Ed Mueller.

MS. SIEGAL: Hello. My name is Samantha Siegal and I'm the Conservation and Development Coordinator for the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The 36,000 gallons of high-level nuclear waste at the Savannah River Site is a huge environmental threat to South Carolina.

We are opposed to any proposal that would bring more nuclear waste to our state, including those for interim spent fuel storage and reprocessing.

Not only does this endanger valuable natural resources, including water, plant, and animal life, but it also endangers the health and safety of citizens in South Carolina. While we recognize that the creation of new jobs is important, they should not come at the cost of the health of the people and the environment of South Carolina.

Reprocessing of nuclear fuel is a dirty and dangerous chemical process that the Savannah River Site is not geologically suited for due to its high water table, moist climate, numerous surface waters, and the soil's inability to prevent the migration of leaking radioactive materials.

I'd like to thank the Blue Ribbon Commission for taking on this important issue and offer my support in helping to find a safe

and responsible way to deal with nuclear waste in our country.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next speaker is Bill Lawless, representing himself, followed by Tom Hallman and Mali Lightfoot.

DR. LAWLESS: Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today.

I worked at the Savannah River Site as a project engineer in 1977 and 1983 at which time I blew the whistle on the Department of Energy for its mismanagement of nuclear waste, for example, using cardboard boxes to dispose of 90 percent of its solid radioactive waste.

In 1992, I went and got a Ph.D. to partly address how a sophisticated, technical organization like the Department of Energy, with many of the top nuclear scientists in the world could make some of the errors that it

did -- technical errors.

After I got my Ph.D., DOE invited me to join the Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board where I have spent about 14 years, including one year as a technical advisor.

DOE had lost public trust, which it recovered surprisingly well by giving the citizens on the Advisory Board full access to unrestricted information at the Savannah River Site, which led to a significant acceleration in clean-up, significant improvement, surprisingly, in the practices of scientists at the Savannah River Site, and strong public support for the WIPP transuranic repository and Yucca Mountain high-level waste repository.

However, since 2005, the Department of Energy has begun to lose the public trust that it had earned on its Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board. And I am concerned that that is linked to the

way that the Department of Energy suffered, and we did, a significant embarrassment at Yucca Mountain.

The Blue Ribbon Commission and the Department of Energy very much want the public to trust it. And the only way that I think that it can do that is to give the public trust in turn, which means, as closing, which means that the citizen boards must be able to choose their own technical advisors and their members and it means that you must be able to give the public the veto power of where the high-level waste repository is sited.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presenter is Tom Hallman from the University of South Carolina Aiken, followed by Mali Lightfoot and Leah Karpen.

MR. HALLMAN: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the panel. I

appreciate the opportunity to talk to you.

I'm Tom Hallman with the University of South Carolina Aiken. I'll be happy to give you a copy of my published remarks.

I just want to reiterate one thing that you've heard several times this afternoon. As an academician, I would encourage you to get the politics out of this decisionmaking process. Academicians are interested in the pure.

As a longtime administrator, I guess I appreciate that's not very likely to happen. And so I can only encourage you to get as much of the politics out of it as is humanly possible.

The decisions that you are looking to give some advice on need to be based in science. They need to be based in the best use of our technology and our resources. I encourage you to do that.

Thank you very much for taking on

this very daunting task. And we, in this community, stand ready to help you in any way we can to make a good decision -- recommendation.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Tom.

Next presenter, Mali Lightfoot from the Helen Caldicott Foundation, followed by Leah Karpen and Lew Patrie.

MS. LIGHTFOOT: I'm just going to dive right in here. Transport of radioactive waste is always dangerous. It should not be undertaken except to move it to permanent storage where it can be isolated and safeguarded for as long as it remains radioactive. This is a very long time. And this facility does not exist.

South Carolina's desire to reprocess waste effects every community on every transport route between the reactor sites and Savannah River. South Carolina does

not have the right to make this decision for Asheville or any of the other communities it will impact.

There are many in Asheville and North Carolina who do not accept or appreciate being volunteered for this against our will. And we will fight it.

Reprocessing may be the worst reason to move waste. It is extremely dangerous, ruinously expensive, and very inefficient. It is a major contaminator of the atmosphere and the oceans and creates an enormous health and environmental hazard.

We stopped reprocessing waste in the 1970s because of safety and security concerns. These concerns are still valid.

The idea that reprocessing eliminates waste is not accurate. A small amount of usable fuel is created but a much larger amount of waste is generated. This waste is actually harder to contain safely than spent fuel rods, were they to be stored

at the reactor sites.

And reprocessing separates out and purifies plutonium with everything that comes with that: proliferation danger, cancer risks, public health risks, environmental risks. And there is nowhere to put it.

So where is this waste from reprocessing going to go? We don't want it to come back to or through North Carolina. If it stays at Savannah River Site, it will pose an eternal health and environmental danger to the surrounding communities, which is unacceptable. They will fight that and we will support them.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Leah --

MS. LIGHTFOOT: Just one last thing. I'd like to say until there is a national waste repository, reactor waste should remain at the sites it was made. This is really for safety reasons but it will serve

as a reminder to the states that chose to retain or build nuclear reactors that the waste problem is not going away until we stop making it. And even then, we and all our descendants will be living with it forever.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presenter is Leah Karpen from PSR, followed by Lew Patrie and Robert Howarth.

MS. KARPEN: My name is Leah Karpen. I came from Asheville, North Carolina, along with about 30 other people because of our concern with this whole radioactivity issue.

Some of the speakers have been dealing with the past, as one of the speakers pointed out. Yucca Mountain is a dead issue. Let's go forward, not backwards.

There are several possible solutions for radioactive waste. Vitrification has been tried. We can leave

the waste in place where it is. And no further generation of waste.

Was construction of nuclear power plants a basic mistake? I believe it was. At the time of construction, they were viewed a s cheap, clean, safe way of generating power for domestic use. The chemistry and danger of radioactivity were not then widely known.

I'll remind you. There is no safe level of radiation. The southeastern United States has 19 nuclear power plants with a total of 33 reactors. So we're certainly concerned about how the spent fuel and radioactive waste will face disposal. And we can be sure there will be leakage of radiation from all of those.

Safety of the public is the first consideration. So transportation of waste should not be considered. Accidents do happen and the contamination could be great. Radioactive released to the public must be prevented.

Transportation through western North Carolina is particularly undesirable, as even our bus driver told us, even hazardous because of the narrow, steep, and winding roads. And building more highways, as some have suggested, is not the answer.

Nor does western North Carolina want to store the radioactive waste. We would not consider that a desirable industry for our region, undesirable and unwanted.

The most desirable move would be no further generation of radioactive waste. It is possible to change our national policies and rely more on renewable sources of energy, solar, wind, and so forth.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next presenter is Lew Patrie from the WNCPSR, followed by Robert Howarth and James Sheeler.

DR. PATRIE: I am Dr. Lew Patrie,

Chair of Western North Carolina Physicians for Social Responsibility.

No one can deny the great economic boon that nuclear activities have contributed to South Carolina. However, considering our nation's current economic distress, how can we justify further billions on reprocessing?

Nuclear has cost the nation -- nuclear actions have cost the nation trillions of dollars over 65 years. Why would our experts suggest that we spend billions more on unproved solutions?

One of the biggest unresolved problems in this nuclear fuel chain is nuclear waste. And it still persists. After 50 years, the nuclear industry has not found any safe method of disposing of or storing this radioactive waste anywhere in the world.

Much has been touted about the French experiment and experiences with radioactive waste reprocessing. People considering the pros and cons of reprocessing

seem unaware that much less than ten percent of spent fuel can be recycled. And that the actual process creates a lot more waste than originally existed.

Also, there has been little airing of the facts that French nuclear reprocessing emits large quantities of radioactive material into the air, endangering undetermined numbers of people and the sea, contaminating the ocean as far as the Arctic Circle.

Some similar experiences have occurred in relation to Sellafields Plant in the United Kingdom where an expert has suggested that people should stop -- 20 more more years ago suggested people should stop having babies if they lived in that area.

There are many other things which I will submit in my written comments. In summary, with the questions I have raised, it is difficult for me to understand rationalizations for billions of dollars more to be invested in such unproved and hazardous

activity as nuclear reprocessing.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next commenter will be Robert Howarth with WNCPSR, followed by James Sheeler and Laura Sorenson.

MR. HOWARTH: Good afternoon. I'm Robert Howarth. I've visiting here from my residence in Asheville, North Carolina.

I'm retired as a career as an electro-optical engineer. And I'm a member of the Western North Carolina Physicians for Social Responsibility and also a member of the Union of Concerned Scientists.

Now why should I be concerned from Asheville? I've got a whole list here, which I'll submit. But I'm not going to go over them all right here with you because I don't have much time.

Transit dangers have already been mentioned. That's one. But my -- and my overriding concern is that we, as citizens,

have been misled by nuclear proponents claiming that nuclear energy is clean and less expensive than other sources of energy.

This is revealed by EROEI analysis. Energy return on energy invested. And I give the source for that in my paper. This illustrates that of 20 feasible energy sources considered, 14 are superior to nuclear and 17 of the 20 have less carbon footprint than nuclear.

EROEI, also known as net energy, has been defined as the energy delivered by an energy-obtaining activity compared to the energy required to get it. This overall efficiency assessment includes a whole system consideration from the extraction at the source, processing, construction, and operation of the delivery plant, and cost of any subsequent waste handling and/or disposal.

This, I believe, is looking at the whole picture in the way it really is. It is, in my opinion, an honest appraisal.

Furthermore, another comparison shows that nuclear as having the third highest carbon footprint among the same 20 candidates, following only conventional coal and tar sands. So the EROEI concept should be applied to all projects, especially those dependent on taxpayer support.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Howarth.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presenter is James Sheeler, followed by Laura Sorenson and Ole Sorenson.

MR. SHEELER: I'm James Sheeler from Asheville, North Carolina. I've got an MBA. I've worked for several major corporations. I've also worked in economic development for local government.

I've spent a half a day coming down here, 250 miles. Your panel has asked what is the area of interest. Who should you talk to? I'm telling you I'm 250 miles away

and I've very concerned about what is happening here.

I live within three miles actually in Interstate 26 in Asheville, near the U.S. 40 intersection. It's kind of a dangerous place to start out with and there's been some talk earlier about the tremendous amount of material that has been processed down here. And a significant amount, if not the majority of that material, has come right by my house.

I don't like it. And I'm going to fight it as much as I can, everywhere I can. So, you know, you guys just keep this stuff out of Asheville and I'll respect your, you know, your jurisdiction, you kind of respect what we like to do up there. And I think you can tell from the group here that there are lot of us that are fired up about it.

Nuclear power is dirty. At least personally I believe that. It's an old-timey thing. It's not the way we ought to go. Ten years from now, if you continue like this,

you're going to have this same conversation. And 25 years from now, you're going to have the same conversation.

If you took some of this energy and money and whatever and put it a little bit more into wind and solar, you know, I think ten or 20 or 25 years from now, we'd be a lot further than we are if we continue this way. In the long term, it's really dirty. It's the dirtiest of all power sources because it basically doesn't go away in the human scale.

There was some question about how the devil do you get feedback and know what is really going on. There's a tremendous amount of anger and angst and resentment in the broader-based community about a lot of things. And nuclear power is not the only thing.

But too often government panels try to take the easy way out and you go to the already organized places like Chambers of Commerce and whatever and these folks are disconnected and even local government, the

leaders are disconnected from their base.

And so if Proctor & Gamble wanted to know about marketing a new laundry detergent here, you know, they're going to go out and use consultants and other resources. And they're going to know what the community really feels like.

And finally, if I was Allendale and Aiken and all, I sure as hell wouldn't want to be identified as a nuclear community.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Sheeler.

The next presenter is Laura Sorenson, followed by Ole Sorenson and Terrence Clark.

MS. SORENSON: For those of you seeing the little hats we're wearing, they're bumper stickers from Students for the Environment who are homeschoolers who actually studied and took the time to look at nuclear power, decided it was dangerous, it's dirty,

it's expensive. That's what is on their bumper stickers. So we're up here supporting them today.

I am Laura. I am a taxpayer, a utility ratepayer, a founder of a small solar company, mother of two, and a recent grandmother. I have so much to be thankful for and yet my heart is so sad to think of the future for our generations to come.

Surely this Commission has taken some time to reflect and search in your hearts, not in your pocketbook, not about the money, not about the fear, but in your heart. And I wonder about that.

How can you call this an energy park? Like it is some kind of fun and fancy playground. To experiment with the lives of hardworking people and their children.

The dessert you serve up is renewable energy as the thin icing on a very dense, dark cake of nuclear reprocessing that is dry, overcooked, and hard to swallow. And

with no bathroom to expel the waste.

Oh, but wait, wait. We have lots of guns and bombs to play with now because reprocessing will give us plutonium and little boys and some little girls now, too, like to play with their weapons. It doesn't matter that mommy and daddy, the taxpayers and ratepayers don't want to pay for the bad toys or let their children play with explosives because little children don't think of the future. Or how the risk of destruction can harm the entire planet.

I think the pretend grownups call this national security. Please, let's get real and stop all the greenwashing with nuclear power. It's dangerous, dirty, expensive. The experimenting you want to do at this part is wasted taxpayer, ratepayer money being squandered to clean up a dirty path.

I've read so many government documents my eyes are crossed, weary,

frightened at the short-sightedness of such well educated people. It's taken me hours to try to keep all these numbers, technologies, and agencies in my head. But two plus two doesn't make four when you read this stuff.

In the end, my heart has spoken. I think we owe our children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, great great grandchildren, and all the generations to come a big apology. We need to say we're so sorry to leave you with all this dangerous waste. And we'll try not to drive it all over creation, expose you to the radiation.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next presenter is Ole Sorenson, followed by Terrence Clark. Ole Sorenson?

MR. SORENSON: Well, who can argue with that? My name is Ole Sorenson. And I had a lot prepared but I guess we're cut a little short today seeing it is public

opinion.

The one thing that bugs me a little bit up there is this is America's nuclear future. I hope you guys realize it is America's human future at stake.

(Applause.)

MR. SORENSON: I thank you for letting me voice my opinion and I respect your position. But I would like to suggest a few things.

Now what happened to our responsibility for the future generations? Where is the courage to make the right decisions for a sustainable lifestyle on this beautiful blue planet? We owe it, like Laura said, to our children not to make this century the age of stupid.

We need to grow up and fast. And we need to make this the age of courage. The courage is the time we finally realize that a sustainable future of our home is all that matters, the sustainability. I don't see

anything in this park that is sustainable.

I implore you to search within your hearts and realize the love and wonder of your human potential. This is possibly our last chance to step up to the plate so make your legacy the one of foresight and compassion.

Our children deserve a healthy future. It is in our hands to ensure that future.

Now I know you were asking a little bit about how to connect with us. And I would say open education, create forums where we can meet and talk about this, and make qualified decisions based on what the people are asking for.

Lastly, I would like to wholeheartedly offer my assistance in solving this dilemma should it be a bit daunting for you. I can be reached anywhere that commonsense folks gather to pool their energies for a sustainable future.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next presenter is Terrence Clark, followed by Tom Coulson and Ellen Thomas.

DR. CLARK: Yes, hi. I'm Terry Clark. And I'm from Asheville, North Carolina. I'm a physician, a psychiatrist, a clinical professor of psychiatry at ETSU.

And you have a very important role. As Ole just said, that this is such an important decision to be made about nuclear issues. Nuclear requires a different mind set than other sort of financial things or whatever.

We are talking about poison that lasts for hundreds of thousands and years. And I think it is insane to pursue nuclear power as the big option.

(Applause.)

DR. CLARK: I think we need energy. I'd love to see an energy park here with an emphasis on solar. It is a bad joke to call it an energy park, quite frankly, when I hear the proportions.

A little bit of comment insight. We saw the NIMBY response on display and one of the gentleman asked the question what in the world is going on here. You want to make the stuff but you don't want the poison.

Nobody wants it. Nobody wants this waste. And you saw it on display earlier today.

We have a crisis in America. Financially we are in great trouble. Early this morning, I heard a speaker say we're going to be importing technology and equipment from China and Japan to build these nuclear facilities. I think that's crazy. We need to put America to work.

We need to use the great minds we have in America with our massive unemployment

problems. Put them to work with creating energy from the nuclear source we have 93 million miles away.

So in summary, my recommendations are stop the subsidies to the nuclear industry. Subsidize development of real clean energy and that is solar.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Clark.

Our next presenter is Tom Coulson, followed by Ellen Thomas and Russell D'Arenbourg.

MR. COULSON: Good afternoon. Thank you for this opportunity to talk to you.

I noticed that you are interested in economic development. I happen to live in the Sandy Mush community in Madison County, North Carolina. But I'd like to talk to you just for a moment about economic development in poor counties, of which Madison is one.

When industry and government come to offer us economic development, what do they give us? Hog farms, garbage, prisoners, and now nuclear waste. Now we don't have the offer to get nuclear waste here in Madison County this time yet.

But I'm concerned because our senators are not highly placed in the Senate. And our state is not an important state for the presidential primary. We're kind of sucking on the hind tit, as we say in the country.

And I'd also like to say this. I'm not an expert on this issue. Unlike Will Rogers, all I know is what I read in the paper. But I read enough to have a little cognitive dissonance.

Today, we've heard presentations from people around Savannah who want to increase the amount of nuclear waste coming here but don't know what to do with the detritus that's equally toxic.

And your Commission was put together to talk about our nuclear future. But we've never solved the problem of neutralizing nuclear waste. And we have all these wonderful scientists who can solve problems, to quote Tevye, that would cross a rabbi's eyes. But they're not working on that.

And I think before we build more nuclear plants, before we do any more reprocessing, figure out what to do to neutralize that waste.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Coulson.

Our next presenter is Ellen Thomas, followed by Russell D'Arenbourg and Mel Jenkins.

MS. THOMAS: For the past 30 years, I have been working nonstop for global nuclear disarmament. In 2009, I traveled the

country visiting radioactive sites along the entire nuclear chain.

In the process, I met down-winders and uranium miners and nuclear power plant workers and nuclear weapons builders from World War II whose colleagues have died young or who, themselves, have suffered from cancers.

There are two highways a few miles from my house in western North Carolina which are used to transport nuclear waste to, from, and between Oak Ridge, Tennessee and Savannah River. As population and traffic increases, so do accidents. I beg you to recognize our shrinking environment cannot afford even one radioactive accident.

To be able to stop this transport, you will need to endorse the following policies. First, keep all existing radioactive waste on site where it is produced. The safest way to do this is to create hardened on-site storage near each

nuclear power plant, far enough away from any lake, river, or ocean to protect the waterway.

Second, stop building new nuclear power plants and phase out the existing nuclear power plants as truly clean and renewable alternatives are actively developed in each community. We have the know-how to use wind, sun, tides, rivers, and geothermal taps to replace nuclear and fossil fuels. We merely need the commitment and the resources.

If the money that is currently going into nuclear power, nuclear weapons, and war were, instead, spent on clean energy, we could solve this problem very quickly.

(Applause.)

MS. THOMAS: Third, continue to research ways to neutralize radiation. Perhaps some day this will actually happen. But in the meantime, for now we have no right to continue with the very bad policies of nuclear expansion, which endanger not only ourselves but all future generations.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next presenter is Russell D'Arenbourg, followed by Mel Jenkins and Andy Yasinsac.

MR. D'ARENBOURG: I have a chicken joke. I knew my phone was going to go off. Thank you.

Why did the chicken cross the Savannah River? To get away from the Savannah River Site. That chicken may be Chicken Little but maybe he isn't.

I'm worried. I have no credentials but I'm worried. I got up this morning and heard about -- read the paper about the PCBs in the fish. We can't eat the fish anymore.

I can remember when we were being told how safe nuclear energy is. I can remember when physicians were making cigarette commercials. So I'm worried.

I'll continue the chicken metaphor. Let's not put all our eggs in one basket. Whose football field are we going to pile it on?

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next presenter if Mel Jenkins, followed by Any Yasinsac and Joe Ortaldo.

MR. JENKINS: I can't believe Russell didn't use all this time. I've never heard him be that short before.

I'd like to thank everybody who came down here. Thirty people from Asheville, congratulations. We brought 12 in from Columbia. This is really good. Thank you.

I'm not going to go too deep. But I will say that I have great qualms about following any Soviet Russian nuclear process. Do I need to say anything more than Chernobyl? Okay.

I was a reporter for a while. And

why am I not a reporter? Well, because I think I was a good reporter and that means you don't keep working.

I learned quickly follow the money. Cui bono? Who benefits? Let's think about that as we evaluate the presentations we've heard today. Who benefits out of these things?

I'm going to take a couple of quick looks at things. One is that I suggest if you really want to get some information, go to the Nuclear Information and Resource Service site, www.nirs.org. Really good research material.

They did a lot of research and evaluation. Good stuff. I'm not going to try to duplicate it here.

The point that General Scowcroft really brought forward about participatory democracy is where all this needs to go. Participatory democracy is something we've tried to get toward in this country a few

times.

It's why Glenn Beck is so upset about the progressives. They were working on this. Anything Glenn Beck is upset about, I'm in favor of.

(Laughter.)

MR. JENKINS: You have all the information, the expertise you need to evaluate to move ahead on this, to understand how to get opinions. You talk about going to the schools. They were in -- the progressives were in the schools with study groups, with information process.

Go back to New England, talk about town meetings and listening to people there. We know how to do this stuff.

I've been at it a long time and so have a lot of other people. And anybody who wants to talk about it, come talk to most of us who are in this room. And my email is greenpalmetto@yahoo.com. And I would love to talk to you.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presenter is Andy Yasinsac, followed by Joe Ortaldo and Charlie Cato.

MR. YASINSAC: Hello. My name is Andy Yasinsac. I'm a retired environmental engineer. I spent a little more than 30 years working for DHEC, permitting industrial waste water.

As a matter of fact, that's one of my bases of my concerns. I permitted an industry to dispose of waste water just downstream of the Savannah River Site on a land application site. So I'm somewhat acquainted with the geology.

I've heard that the geology at Savannah River Site has been thoroughly studied. I think that should frighten us rather than encourage us because what I found at the site immediately below the Savannah

River Site is surface soils are extremely porous sand that allow storm water and contaminants from leakage that does occur at these manufacturing sites, which this will be, to flow into the ground unattenuated. It doesn't capture any of the contaminants.

Underneath that coarse sandy soil is a very permeable sandstone aquifer. And that sandstone aquifer is essentially the sole source of drinking water for the city of Savannah.

The Savannah River Site is a very hazardous place to put a chemical operation. And there should be no consideration at all for storing any waste at the Savannah River Site.

Certainly there are facilities for processing waste. I'm an optimistic person and I'd love to see a well operated and designed recycling. And if it can be done at Savannah River Site, that's a good idea. But there should be no more storage there than is

absolutely necessary to carry out the immediate operation of a waste recycling facility.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next presenter if Joe Ortaldo, followed by Charlie Cato and Delores Williams.

MR. ORTALDO: Good afternoon. Thank you for coming to the CSRA to give us the opportunity to speak to the Commission.

My name is Joe Ortaldo. I'm a 30-year resident of Aiken. And I intend to stay here through my retirement.

I'm also presently the Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Board Waste Management Subcommittee. I'm going to speak as a citizen and not a member of the committee, although I agree with everything Manuel said earlier this morning.

We've heard a lot of comments

today, which on the surface appear to be contradictory. Some of them I agree with, some of them I disagree with. I'm confident that you folks will be able to sort out what is right and what is wrong in your deliberations as you prepare for your final report.

I'm going to ask you to consider two things that may be on the fringe of your charter or maybe outside your charter. One has to do with Yucca Mountain. We've heard a lot about Yucca Mountain.

One thing that would certainly help the credibility and the openness of this Administration is if they would tell the public why was Yucca Mountain dropped. I mean Yucca Mountain has been studied for over two decades. Tens of billions of dollars have been spent on it. And numerous peer review panels have reviewed it.

And up until a few months ago, it was the law of the land. We're going to go

there. And then bingo, an edict comes out and no more Yucca Mountain.

We can't get answers to the question well why was Yucca Mountain dropped. I know that's not in your charter but please consider some way of using your influence to get that information out to the public.

The second area has to do with the resources in this area, the Savannah River Site and the general area. You all were on a tour. I'm sure you were impressed with some of the things you saw, the operating facilities that are there, the things that are under construction, the track record of the site.

We've heard from DHEC and how it cooperates with this area. The site can contribute an awful lot to the well-being, the future well-being of this country. And I would ask that you consider that and some way of bringing that into whatever your final report and your final recommendations are.

One final thing I would ask, to put a little plug in for the Advisory Board, immediately after this meeting, nominally around four o'clock, there will be a joint meeting of the Nuclear Materials Committee and the Waste Management Committee here in this building. It's in one of these rooms. I think it is the Lamar Room.

If you're interested in coming, just check the sign board at the head of the stairs. And that will tell you. I think it is the Lamar Room.

Again, thank you for the opportunity for us to give our presentations.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next speaker is Charlie Cato, followed by Delores Williams and Clare Hanrahan. Are any of them here?

MS. HANRAHAN: What a crowd you are. I'm from Asheville, North Carolina also.

We've heard from the nuclear

industry, the engineers and the academics, the businesses, the Chambers of Commerce, and even the Commander in the Nuclear Navy, all who gain economic benefit and collude in the perpetration of this deadly and dirty industry.

(Applause.)

MS. HANRAHAN: Nuclear power and nuclear weapons are tied together in a criminal co-dependency that we must not allow to continue. Any suggest economic benefits that may accrue to some, even folks with no access to jobs, cannot outweigh the reckless endangerment to the health of our communities and our planet.

Shut down production. Clean up the mess if you can. And make economic reparations to those who have suffered from this insane and short-sighted policy.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very

much.

The next speaker is Clare Hanrahan followed by Ben Rusche --

PARTICIPANT: That was Clare.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: That was Clare? All right.

PARTICIPANT: Want to try Delores Williams again?

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Is Delores Williams here?

(No response.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Then the next speaker is Ben Rusche, followed by Eunice Rusche and Robert Guild.

(No response.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: None of them here? How about Leslie Minerd, Debbie Parker, Elaine Cooper?

MR. GUILD: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission.

My name is Robert Guild. I'm from Columbia, South Carolina. I'm active with the

South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club. And I practice environmental law.

I have a couple of recommendations for you. First is that you state clearly or recommend clearly that no away-from-reactor storage or interim storage of high-level waste or spent fuel take place at the Savannah River Site.

Secondly, that no reprocessing of used or spent fuel be recommended to resume at Savannah River Site. I'd make the point that as others have said, reprocessing does not reduce the volume. But instead increases the volume of high-level waste to be managed by a factor of between seven and ten times.

And finally that no commercial nuclear waste be received at Savannah River Site where there is no assured exit commitment or exit strategy.

We have abundant experience in South Carolina with the failure to live up to that final conditions. That is to assure an

exit strategy or an exit for waste generated within our borders.

And I want to just illustrate with two points briefly. I represented the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Sierra Club, and other conservation groups in litigation against the Department of Energy in 2007 with respect to the efforts by the Department of Energy to renege on their long-standing commitment to remove the legacy waste, the tank waste that we have been discussing, from South Carolina permanently.

And instead with the Section 3.1.1.6 to the 2005 Defense Authorization Bill, we were told that we were to retain over three million curies of the 300-plus million curies of defense waste generated at the site. This represented a breach of trust with South Carolina but one we fear will resume and be repeated should South Carolina be designated as a temporary storage facility.

We recommend a hardened on-site

storage at existing reactor sites as the most secure and scientifically defensible waste management strategy as an interim measure and not transport of such waste to South Carolina.

And lastly I'd close by responding to an earlier question with regard to recommendations with respect to transparency. And would note that as part of the 2007 settlement in the litigation with the Department, there was a requirement that the Department post on its website curie content, inventories of the waste tanks, and of the salt stone processing waste stream so that the public would see precisely what fractions of waste were being glassified and what fractions of waste would likely remain forever in South Carolina.

And we would urge you to require that transparency practice to continue in the future.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr.

Guild.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Next presenter is Leslie Minerd, followed by Debbie Parker and Elaine Cooper.

MS. MINERD: Hi. I'm Leslie Minerd and I've been to so many of these meetings I don't remember how many. And I hate speaking in public. But here I am again.

Anyway, I know that you nice Commissioners are here to help come up with a problem to deal with the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle. And South Carolina has been dealing with the back end of nuclear and other toxic cycles for a really, really long time.

And we're also being unfairly treated on the front end. I don't know if you guys know but we have a law in this state. Basically ratepayers are forced to pay for the nuclear power plants before they're built. They did that in Georgia, too.

So this whole nuclear cycle is funded by the federal government or the taxpayers. It's not a standalone industry.

And I think that I'm starting to hear -- this war cry I've been hearing for reprocessing, it seems like it started eight years ago, which is another ploy for Savannah River Site to feed at the federal trough, which is -- I don't know if anybody has noticed but the government is sort of running out of money.

And I think our money can be way better spent.

(Applause.)

MS. MINERD: For example, we spent four-point-something billion dollars on a MOX plant and it doesn't even -- there's not even a utility that wants the MOX fuel even at the, what I called it yesterday, the blue light special Walmart price that they're offering it.

So we need to quit acting like the

Russians, which, by the way, went broke spending all their money on defense, and I consider the Department of Energy a subsidiary of our Defense Department.

(Applause.)

MS. MINERD: So we need to quit blowing our money on that and finding wiser ways to spend our money. And we do not need reprocessing in South Carolina because that will turn into interim storage. And interim storage will turn into long-term storage.

As Dick Riley said, the first rule of nuclear waste is where you put it, that's where it stays. And the community does not want that here.

Thank you for coming to visit South Carolina.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next speaker is Debbie Parker, followed by Elaine Cooper and Nicolas

Hernandez.

MS. PARKER: Thank you for allowing me to speak. I am Debbie Parker, the Legislative Director for Conservation Voters of South Carolina. We facilitate the common agenda process, which brings together over 36 organizations representing 45,000 South Carolinians who promote a clean, healthy, and economically vibrant South Carolina.

We have a proud tradition of contributing to our national security and making sacrifices for our country. Essential to this legacy has been Savannah River Site and Conservation Voters is grateful for the contributions of SRS and the people who work their to our national defense.

However, as the Blue Ribbon Commission deliberates how to manage the high-level waste nuclear waste accumulating at nuclear plants, please consider that South Carolina's conservation community has grave concerns about any proposals that would bring

more nuclear waste to our state.

Conservation Voters, along with Audubon South Carolina, Coastal Conservation League, South Carolina Sierra Club, Environmental Education Association of South Carolina, the Solar Business Alliance, Upstate Forever, Morning Sun Foundation, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, League of Women Voters of South Carolina, Waccamaw Riverkeeper, and Wildlife Action would like to state, for the record, that we oppose importing waste under any conditions, including under the pretext of interim spent fuel storage and/or reprocessing proposals. These proposals substitute a long-term national solution with a short-term South Carolina problem.

Our country stands at a nuclear-waste crossroads. Leaving aside the environmental and scientific suitability or unsuitability of Yucca Mountain, both its selection and its apparent recent failure were

essentially political in nature.

Rather than pointing fingers over Yucca's demise, elected leaders at every level need to return to the table and hold an intellectually-honest discussion centered exclusively on a long-term solution to our nuclear waste challenge.

This discussion should be guided by policy, not politics, and by science, not special interest. We look forward to participating in this discussion. And we thank the Blue Ribbon Commission for your efforts to help facilitate it.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Elaine Cooper, followed by Nicolas Hernandez and Judy Treichel.

MS. COOPER: Hello. I'm Elaine Cooper from Columbia, South Carolina. I've been in South Carolina for about 32 years and I've never taken a tour of Savannah River

Site. Yesterday was my first time that I took a tour on the bus. And I have a few impressions.

One major impression was the amount of money that was being poured into the place. There was a huge line of contractors and business people all lined up when we first arrived. And as we looked out through our bus windows, we saw a lot of hustling and bustling, a lot of building, et cetera.

So let's be clear. This is trying to move and forward as possible and utilize as much money as this area had for as quick as they can before it disappears.

With that said, I thank my President for creating the Blue Ribbon Commission. I'm proud of President Obama for doing that. And I hope that he will listen to the public, you know, not just the people who are involved in their monies and salaries, et cetera, who are invested in here but the common man who put him in office.

And with that said, I would like to talk about a few major points on reprocessing like I oppose reprocessing as a regular citizen and a member of the Sierra Club.

Reprocessing would mean that the nation's radioactive spent fuel would be shipped to the reprocessing plant for storage and processing. A reprocessing plant is a large facility that cannot be fed with just the spent fuel generated in South Carolina.

I just want to end with just that major point that of course you hear two conflicting statements today. One is that nuclear is safe yet most of the people who came forward were very alarmed at why Yucca Mountain is closed.

Why should they be so concerned about the closing of Yucca Mountain if nuclear energy is so safe? I know that's a simple question but I was just struck with the importance of that.

So therefore it is not safe to store all of this in this area and you can rest assured I think even the South Carolinians and people in Georgia who are asleep would rise up and take notice if there is no other place to send this stuff. And there shouldn't be.

Anyway, that's what I'd like to say.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next speaker is Nicolas Hernandez, followed by Judy Treichel and Rose Hayes.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon. My name is Nicolas Hernandez. I'm originally from El Paso, Texas, but I now live in Greenville, South Carolina.

I'm an employee of Duke Energy. I am a nuclear engineer at their Oconee Nuclear Station, which is located two-and-a-half hours

north of here. And though I am an employee of Duke, I have come here on my day off to speak with you as a citizen.

My background is somewhat varied. I come from the deserts of west Texas. And I went to school at MIT where I got my bachelor's degree. I also became a Senior Reactor Operator at the research reactor there.

But what may interest you is when I started my nuclear engineering degree, I was actually anti-nuclear. I wanted to get into fusion research, find alternatives to fission reactors, which is what we're talking about right now, the waste of that, and the weapons complex.

And it was in the course of learning about that stuff, the facts, the math, the science, the engineering, that my mind was changed. And they say that there is no greater zealot than a convert, well you're looking at a convert right now.

And I just want to invite anybody, particularly my anti-nuclear friends -- and I do consider you my friends because you guys care so much about the environment and about this community and social justice and sustainability. I do, too.

I know that we can disagree about things passionately. But still in the end love and care about each other. And I love and care about you guys. I really support what you're doing.

I think in a strange way -- well, maybe not so strange, that you guys may have actually helped save the nuclear industry at various points in our history by being such good questioners about stuff. And have gotten us to the point where we are right now, where we are operating so safely and so efficiently and so reliably.

So if anybody wants to take a tour of the Oconee Nuclear Station, I'll do my best to get you in. But at the very least, I'd

love to talk to you for hours and hours and hours. I'll be available outside.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: All right. Our next speaker is Judy Treichel, followed by Rose Hayes, and David Penix.

MS. TREICHEL: First I want to thank the Commission and especially the staff for making such a really big effort and a successful effort to hear the people in this area because I was afraid, and many of them were as well, that this was just going to be overwhelmed and there wouldn't be enough time to hear from people. And because of the efforts that you've made, I think just about everybody that wanted to speak is going to be able to do that.

I'm the Executive Director the Nevada Nuclear Waste Task Force. And I need

to put on the record, not particularly your record but for this audience, that the ending of Yucca Mountain was not a mistake. It was not a failure. It was a victory for the public in Nevada.

(Applause.)

MS. TREICHEL: And as for why the site closed, you could ask any local scientist or old-timer that was familiar with the inter-mountain west and they could tell you that Yucca Mountain was a very bad geologic choice. And finally was officially found to be that.

It took us 23 years but the public finally won the battle for our own safety. And we do support the people here in the Southeast in their similar battle for their safety because as far as we are concerned, we have to all win together.

And all of these groups that are around that do really, really care need to be taken seriously. And there has to be an acceptable answer, the best answer we can find

but that is a victory for all of us.

So thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, too. Thank you.

Our next speaker is Rose Hayes, followed by David Penix and Bill Tinley.

MS. HAYES: Good afternoon and thank you for being here.

I recognize that the Commission has been directed by the Secretary of Energy to take off from the table the Yucca Mountain planned repository. However, I would like to urge the Commission in their deliberations to remember that a national repository is a point of law. As a matter of fact, it is a point of several laws.

In 1982, Congress passed the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. And that Act named Deaf Smith County, Texas, Hanford, Washington, and Savannah River Site as potential sites to be selected as a national repository.

In `87, the law was amended to designate that Yucca Mountain would be that repository, followed by billions of dollars spent in studying the mountain and many scientific studies and reports. President Bush even declared it to be scientifically sound for its mission.

The law, the 1982 law, was followed by other laws as well. And one of them specifically covers the rights of the State of South Carolina where nuclear waste is concerned.

Public Law 107-107, Section 31.55(c) and item 4 under that section, first of all, the law calls for the Secretary of Energy to prepare a plan for disposal of the surplus defense plutonium and defense plutonium materials currently located at the Savannah River Site, and for disposal of defense plutonium and defense plutonium materials to be shipped to the Savannah River Site in the future.

Item 4 under that section says a specification of the means by which all such defense plutonium and defense plutonium materials will be removed in a timely manner from the Savannah River Site for storage or disposal elsewhere.

I urge the Commission to review this law and to take it into its deliberations when you file your final report.

Without some eventual compliance with this law, the complex and sophisticated programs that have cost billions of dollars at the Savannah River Site are left with no place to go.

And the community around the Savannah River Site is left in a continual state of expectation that their government will, in fact, move the nuclear materials out of the State of South Carolina and that Savannah River will not become, by default, the national repository.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Ms. Hayes.

The next speaker is David Penix, followed by Bill Tinley and Michael Colatarci.

MR. PENIX: I'm David Penix. I'm a commercial realtor, economic developer, Augusta and Aiken. And my father brought our family to Aiken in 1952. He was a DuPonter.

And I have been familiar with DuPont from that time forward. I can tell you there are two rules for working with DuPont. And I've worked with DuPont in Textile Fibers as well as Savannah River Site.

Safety is first. And the second rule is you don't break the first. And that has been the environment out there forever.

And in my observations here in getting ready to share some thoughts with you come from www.ans.org and www.aboutnuclear.org. 2012, it just so happened that this meeting happened now and 2012 is next year but the nation's annual

demand for fossil fuel, oil, coal, and gas is a curve here. And our demand drops below the curve next year. That's on these sites.

That means we have to have fuel from other sources outside the country or what we provide inside the country.

I have learned to grow to understand and appreciate the brain trust that we have at the Savannah River Site. They continue to amaze me with their brilliance.

And the Savannah River Site saved us from -- saved our freedom from atomic bombs early on in the late `50s and `60s in the Cold War. Today they can save our freedom by giving us our electrical energy by nuclear fuel.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Penix.

Our next speaker is Bill Tinley, followed by Michael Colatarci and Lam Le.

MR. TINLEY: I am Bill Tinley and

I'm not from Asheville but I've been there and it is a beautiful city.

Appreciate you folks coming down to our community to listen to us and to hear what we have to say about nuclear energy. I'm from Waynesboro, Georgia, the county seat of Burke County and I feel compelled -- I wasn't planning on speaking today but I feel compelled to give you guys some information that maybe you didn't exactly catch this morning.

Number one, Burke County is the second largest county in the State of Georgia. We have 832 square miles of territory. And in 1970, in the early 1970s when Plant Vogtle, when they were looking for a place to put a nuclear plant, Burke County had about 20, 22,000 people in it. So with that many miles and that much land, we were sparsely populated.

East Burke County butts the Savannah River. And on the Savannah River

there was a lot of land that was sparsely populated that would be suitable for a nuclear plant. It would be away from population centers and there would be very few people that would have to be displaced. That was how that place was chosen.

The county commission didn't go in some smoke-filled room behind doors. The mayor of the town of Waynesboro did not decide that Plant Vogtle was coming to Waynesboro. It was announced. It was publicly announced. It was publicly announced at a forum in the National Guard Armory with all of the citizens of Burke County invited to come listen to the presentation.

Not only that, but during the construction and during the whole process, the public was continued to be informed. That continues today with 3 and 4.

We've had -- the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has come. We've had public forums. We've had public forums at

school house. We've had public forums all over the community. People know where the decision came from.

Some of the good things that came -- and one other thing, and I'll say it -- I'm sorry, I'm genetically messed up because I come from the South and I don't talk fast.

(Laughter.)

MR. TINLEY: But I hope you'll hear this. Plant Vogtle did not just help people that were rich and people that were connected. It put 12 EMA stations throughout our county, 832 square miles. Nobody lives more than seven miles from an ambulance and a fire truck.

And I don't know of any other place in the State of Georgia or in the United States that might have EMA services that efficient.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next speaker is Michael Colatarci, followed by Lam Le and Denise Traina.

MR. COLATARCI: Good afternoon. My name is Michael Colatarci and I live in Aiken. And I'm here as a private citizen.

I'm a retiree and I'm a refugee from New Jersey. I came to South Carolina for a better life. In many respects, I am a South Carolinian and a happy Aikenite by choice, not by accident of birth.

I've heard a lot of whining today about the need to reopen the Yucca Mountain issue and to move the nuclear waste to Nevada. It is whining. We created it here. We need to store it here. It isn't moving on.

I'm not a scientist. I'm an accountant by profession. But it defies logic to move that stuff across the country and to incur the danger for all of the folks from here to there.

You, as a committee, can help us

to get the funding and the public policy necessary to store that stuff on site and to store it safely.

The second thing I'd like to mention is that this country was built, in many respects, on cheap and abundant energy. Without it, our future is very much in jeopardy.

We need to build nuclear power, not to close it down. The Savannah River Site provides an excellent place. It's an opportunity to build and experiment with good nuclear power.

I would suggest that the Committee consider and look into small, proven nuclear power such is that which powers many of our naval vessels, linked together in order to provide a safe environment and a building environment. Again, funding will be necessary.

The third thing I'd like to leave you with is since coming here, I've met a lot

of folks from France. They've been very good people. And I've enjoyed their company.

They're here on contract. They're engineers and they're scientists. It appalls me that we find ourselves in a situation where as a country we are importing French technical labor when we have abundant intelligent folks here.

This underscores, I believe, the bankruptcy in our educational policy. I ask you as a Committee to address that issue because without that improved educational base, we will not solve our other issues.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, sir.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next speaker is Lam Le, followed by Denise Traina and Barbara Wise.

MS. LE: Hello. My name is Lam Le and I'm 21 years old. And I've lived in Aiken

since I was ten years old and I consider it my home.

So also speaking on behalf of countless other students and youth who aren't here in solidarity with me, you know, we're here to speak about the future of nuclear power in America. But as the future, you know, I can tell you that I don't want this. And I cannot support a project that will create more nuclear waste that will never leave South Carolina.

And my generation is not plagued by blind idealism but I realize that I cannot stand by and watch my policymakers make irresponsible decisions that I have to clean up someday. Nuclear doesn't have much of a future in comparison to solar and wind and other renewable energies.

Nuclear has an infinitely closer end than solar and wind. So we must realize that we are not abstract entities, separate from nature and we can no longer treat nature

as something to be exploited. We know the dangers we are in and we choose to believe that the Earth is not something that we can destroy.

We must also behave in a way that is in line with our morals and our ethical codes. So if you really believe that the future is important and that you have a duty to future generations, I mean I think it is very clear that there is a need to invest in energies that are safe and clean and renewable out of everything we have options for.

And, you know, nuclear is often seen as a source of power to transition us into that. But what we need is long-term solutions.

And I thank you again for your time but I am so nervous.

(Laughter.)

MS. LE: But really thank you so much. And I appreciate everybody that has spoken today.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next speaker is Denise Traina, followed by Barbara Wise and Andy Cwalina.

MS. TRAINA: Barbara Wise is not here.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Okay.

MS. TRAINA: But I'm Denise Traina. And I welcome you to Augusta, Georgia. It's great to have you here and being here listening to us.

One of the things that inspires me, one of the people, my little grandchild is why I'm here. Over the years, I have been to many of these events. And I want to just -- short and sweet because I've listened to some wonderful people with a lot more expertise than I have -- I am a healthcare professional, a parent, and, as I said, grandparent.

I do urge that this Commission look more closely at safer alternatives for

our citizens to find sources of energy. We know there are consequences, both to our air, our water, our soil. Thus our health and our environment.

Therefore, and especially when releases occur, which have happened on a number of occasions in this very town, we know that high-level waste waste management is costly and dangerous. So I'm just urging you to please look further at eliminating funding for nuclear sources of energy and, instead, redirecting those funds.

They're out there. And with our scientists and all the expertise that we've heard, we can do this. Redirect those funds to much safer alternatives. Until then, just keep it in your own backyard.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Andy Cwalina, followed by Fred Cavanaugh and Gabriel Fair.

MR. CWALINA: Chairman Scowcroft and members of the Commission, I welcome the opportunity to address this Commission today.

My name is Andy Cwalina and I'm Vice Chair of the Savannah River Site Retiree Association, the largest chartered retirement organization in the State of South Carolina with a membership of a thousand retired SRS workers.

You have already heard numerous presentations regarding the technical and physical capabilities of SRS. I'd like to tell you today about the existence of a strong public confidence in the Savannah River Site and its people for playing a key role in the treatment, storage, and processing, and disposal of spent nuclear materials.

I recognize that site selection may not be a key part of your mission; however, process selection will inherently narrow the choice of location.

I believe that the position of my

association for which I speak is an excellent proxy, if not the best proxy, for the local public sentiment towards the SRS. Our association represents 30,000-plus worker years of experience at the site, raising our children, grandchildren, as neighbors of the site.

We live here. This is our site. And we will not get on a bus and leave town after this meeting. We are the pulse of the region.

Having worked for most of our careers at Savannah River Site, we have the firsthand knowledge of its physical and technical superiority. And most importantly, its dedication to safety.

We took part in cultivating its safety culture, long before it became fashionable to talk about safety culture. The legacy of that safety culture is enduring. Because of the unprecedented experience with the site, the membership of my association is

uniquely positioned to make judgements about the site's safety. And we believe there is none better across the entire nuclear defense complex.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of our association that the Savannah River Site be given highest priority for conducting work involving the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle.

And we thank the Commission and offer ourselves as a resource to the Commission. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

Our next speaker is Fred Cavanaugh, followed by Gabriel Fair and Holly Garrett.

MR. CAVANAUGH: Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you so much for being with us today. I also want to say thank you to all those folks that are here.

I'm Mayor of the City of Aiken. I've been mayor for 19 years. I've been on Council for 25 years. And I moved to the City of Aiken, when I was 16, 57 years ago I think that is. And I've also been an employee of the Savannah River Site.

And I just want to say I am proud of our community. I'm proud of those who have worked at the site all these years, back during the Cold War. And as Andy Cwalina just said, and I support everything Andy said, I'm proud of all these folks.

They've given their lives and some would say well, they were getting paid. Of course they were. But at times, looking back at history, they couldn't change. They couldn't move. They had to stay at this site and do their job.

On behalf of our community at large, I want to thank the Commissioners for coming to our community and providing information and allowing opportunities for our

citizens to give their comments and thoughts concerning the management policies for the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle.

As we know, the Savannah River Site and its talented and qualified, very qualified workforce, has been a key player in the defense of our country for 60 years. And there has been strong community support for years and years and years.

We certainly want this partnership to continue. And we look forward to future opportunities to be involved in discussions about the future of Savannah River plan.

We know your task is not an easy one. It's very much like City Council meeting. Any time an issue comes up, there's always many sides to the story and the issues. So it is a daunting task that you have. And I thank you for serving on this Commission.

At the point of comprehensive review policies, potential policies, one can only ask that it be an open and transparent

process. And that the outcome be in the best interests of our citizens.

Again, thank you for being here today and serving our country on this Commission. And I do want to add I certainly endorse this group that was up here earlier, Aiken County Council members who I know and work with very closely. I support their comments and I support many of the other very positive comments.

We need to look at the facts. Just like any issue that comes to Council, we need to look at the facts, get down to the facts of each issue, of this particular issue, and what needs to be done in our country.

We know we need the energy. We're now bringing in about 65 percent of our petroleum, I understand, from off -- outside of our country. So something needs to be done.

And to me I think it is a variety of various energy producing elements to do

that job. But I think nuclear is one of the most important at this time.

Thank you.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Our next speaker is Gabriel Fair and our final speaker, Holly Garrett.

MR. FAIR: Hello. My name is Gabriel Fair. I'm co-President of Students for Environmental Action at Clemson University. I'm here today to talk about the future of nuclear waste, specifically in South Carolina.

Clemson University is on the doorstep of Duke Power. And we all know how expensive temporary storage of nuclear waste is. We also know about some of the dangers of nuclear power and also some of the proposed benefits of nuclear power.

The long-term storage of nuclear

waste in South Carolina is not in the best interest of South Carolina. It's also not in the best interest of taxpayer money.

Temporary storage is expensive -- hello, nuclear power is expensive. So it is our recommendation that we hold nuclear waste in the storage site where it is produced, in the nuclear power plant where it is produced temporary indefinitely.

So transportation is expensive and also poses a slight risk. Centralized storage also is expensive and poses a slight risk.

I know the citizens of Aiken and the citizens surrounding Aiken don't want to see nuclear waste come to their town. As a citizen of South Carolina, I respect that.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Mr. Fair.

Our final speaker is Holly Garrett. I didn't know there were going to be

two speakers.

MS. GARRETT: She'll probably just squeal.

My name is Holly Garrett and I'm from Anderson, South Carolina. I'm a student at Clemson University. I'm getting my master's in environmental engineering. And I went to Furman University and studied chemistry there.

So I've lived in Anderson my whole life. And I'm also one of the co-Presidents of Clemson Students for Environmental Action. And this is Caroline. She's my one-year-old daughter.

So I could stand up here and talk about all the reasons why -- well, first of all, growing up I went to the World of Energy up at Keowee-Toxaway for school field trips at least once a year. And I never really had a full understanding of nuclear power.

At least I thought I did but then as I got older and went to college, I realized

that the nuclear power isn't really all it is cracked up to be. So for the purposes of this meeting, I would ask that we please not bring any more nuclear waste to South Carolina.

We've been -- our state has been a repository for nuclear waste for many, many years. And I know that we can come up with ways to store it indefinitely.

And so yes, basically I would ask you please not bring any more nuclear waste to our state. And I'm not really a nuclear scientist so I don't understand reprocessing. So I wouldn't know what to say about should we or should we not reprocessing it.

But I know that many of us have kids here. And I would just ask you guys please think about our future when you think about nuclear waste and that it will be around for 250,000 years.

Because I know we can find safer alternatives. And one thing I would probably -- Caroline, okay, you can touch it -- one

thing I would flag is I think we need to figure out how to store our energy better. I think battery research is really important, novel batteries so we can make solar and wind more effective. And actually, you know, draw off of that battery for a really long time.

So that would be my recommendation.

CHAIR SCOWCROFT: Thank you very much.

I want to thank all of our presenters again for their contributions and for their discipline in keeping us within a reasonable time period.

We are very grateful. We have appreciated our visit here. And this meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled meeting was concluded at 3:53 p.m.)

G