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OCT 21 1999

20 MR. CHAPUT: The establishment of a national
21 repository for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel
22 and high-level radioactive waste is an important
23 national priority, and it's my pleasure to comment
24 on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. My
25 name is Ernie Chaput; I represent the Economic

1 Development Partnership of Aiken, South Carolina.
2 The Department of Energy Savannah River site is
3 located in Aiken County, South Carolina. For the
4 past several years, my organization, the
5 Partnership, has evaluated DOE programs for
6 consistency with community expectations, and it's
7 in that context I address my comments tonight.
8 The establishment and operation of a national
9 repository by the federal government fulfills a
10 critical commitment to the citizens of South
11 Carolina, Georgia and the nation. The federal
12 government has the obligation to the nation to
13 close the back end of the nuclear commercial fuel
14 cycle by providing a final repository for spent
15 nuclear fuel. The federal government also has a
16 special obligation to the citizens of states which
17 host the DOE defense activities by providing a
18 final repository for radioactive wastes which were
19 generated as we fought and won the cold war.
20 South Carolina has over 30 million gallons of
21 high-level liquid waste which resulted from the
22 production of plutonium and tritium for national
23 defense purposes. These wastes are currently
24 being vitrified and stored on an interim basis at
25 the Savannah River site pending transfer to a

1 national repository. Fulfilling these commitments
2 by establishing and operating a national
1... 3 repository is long overdue, and we support the
4 expeditious approval of Yucca Mountain as the
5 nation's geologic repository for spent nuclear
6 fuel and high-level waste.
2... 7 The analysis that was included in the Draft
8 EIS also supports approval of the Yucca Mountain
9 repository. There's been a lot of discussion
10 about health effects. And when you look in the
11 EIS, when compared to the no-action alternative
12 there is a greatly reduced, reduced impact upon
13 the combination of worker and public health and
14 safety and the environment if you implement the
15 proposed action of establishing a national
16 repository than when compared to the no-action
17 alternative. The no-action alternative has more
18 impact on worker health, more impact on public
19 health, more action on the environment. And from
20 listening to everybody here, I think that's what
21 we all want to do is reduce those impacts. The
22 way to reduce those impacts is to approve Yucca
23 Mountain. If you don't agree with the analysis in
24 the EIS -- and I have heard nobody argue about the
25 numbers that are in the appendices -- if you

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2 cont.

1 believe those numbers, you've got to come to the
2 conclusion you approve Yucca Mountain.
3 At some point, somebody mentioned it, you've
4 got to do something with the waste. The time to do
5 it is now, when you can approach it in a planned,
6 methodical manner as opposed to reacting to a
7 crisis later. The option of not taking action now
8 and creating a significant health, safety and
9 environmental hazard for future generations is
10 totally unacceptable.

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11 We note with concern that the proposed Yucca
12 Mountain capacity is less than projected
13 requirements for long-term geologic storage. We
14 believe that this sufficiency should be also
15 addressed now, and we recommend that the
16 Department of Energy expedite efforts to develop
17 and implement the promising accelerator
18 transmutation of waste concepts. While ATW is not
19 a viable option in the near term and is not a
20 replacement for Yucca Mountain, we do believe that
21 successful development will provide the
22 opportunity for eliminating expansions of Yucca
23 Mountain or the modules for additional geologic
24 repositories. It can reduce the long-term fission
25 products and significantly reduce the volume of

1 wastes that need to be stored in a post-Yucca
2 Mountain environment.
3 In summary, we believe the federal government
4 has a responsibility to the American people to
5 1 close the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle and
cont.
6 has a particular responsibility to the citizens of
7 South Carolina and Georgia to establish a
8 permanent repository for high-level waste
9 generated in support of our national defense.
10 Yucca Mountain can safely meet both of these
11 needs. We support approval of Yucca Mountain as
12 the nation's repository and recommend its
13 completion at the earliest possible date. We also
14 recommend that DOE aggressively proceed with
15 development of the ATW concept, accelerator
16 transmutation of waste concept, in order to
17 establish in the longer term an alternate means
18 for safely treating and disposing of spent nuclear
19 fuel and high-level radioactive waste. Thank you
20 for the opportunity to comment on this important
21 matter.

22 MR. LAWSON: Thank you. Our next speaker is
23 Susan Alzner, to be followed by Mary Olsen and
24 Valerie Sipp.

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