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From: "PHILLIP BARR" <pharb2@msn.com>
To: "LES_EIS" <LES_EIS@nrc.gov>
Date: 3/18/04 10:23PM
Subject: last call

I would like to submit this on the last day of public comment. I believe the citizens locally have been purposely mis-informed by Les and the local Hobbs development office. There has never been a clear-plan for disposal of the waste. I believe the high winds present in this area will carry radioactive and hazardous emissions over Eunice and possibly Hobbs. I believe we will see a rise in the cancer rate locally.

This area is subject to long periods of drought and LES has no plans to adjust their water useage. I asked. The absurd statements from LES about storing waste in an unlicensed mine or shipping it to Kazakastan show that this company will do anything to get a license.

The fact that the NRC would accept them as plausible shows the problems with the process.

This is not a Blue Bell Ice cream factory we are talking about here.

Les has the capability of causing some real environmental and health problems. Long-term.

Domenici asked les to come here. We didn't.

Donenici has never answered one email about les. Not one. All I got from his office was -he didn't have to tell the governor of new mexico anything.

This was never voted on.

I don't think local contractors should get this much say on something this serious.

Phillip Barr
Lea County

Public Citizen Recommends Broad Environmental Review of Proposed Nuclear Fuel Plant

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The government should conduct a broad, thorough analysis of the environmental and public health impacts of a proposed nuclear fuel plant in southeastern New Mexico, Public Citizen said today in formal comments submitted to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the government agency responsible for licensing and regulating nuclear facilities. Today marks the close of the public comment period on the scope of the NRC's forthcoming Environmental Impact Statement, a requirement of federal law. Public Citizen also plans to file a petition to intervene in the NEF licensing proceeding, citing environmental concerns and deficiencies in LES's application.

A multinational group of energy companies called Louisiana Energy Services (LES) -- led by the European consortium Urenco -- has submitted a proposal to the NRC to build and operate a uranium enrichment facility in Lea County, New Mexico. The plant, dubbed the "National Enrichment Facility" (NEF), would produce fuel for nuclear power reactors.

"As demonstrated by the public health crisis and legacy of environmental contamination near plants in Paducah, Kentucky, and Piketon, Ohio, the long-term impacts of large-scale uranium enrichment operations are profound," said Wenonah Hauter, director of Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy and Environment Program. "The NRC should produce a detailed, critical evaluation of the potential impacts of this plant, taking into account public concerns as well as the company's history."

In its comments, Public Citizen urged the NRC to focus particular

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attention on several important areas where the LES application falls short. For example, the company has no concrete plan for the disposal of depleted uranium hexafluoride, a radioactive and toxic byproduct of the enrichment process. Moreover, Public Citizen notes that LES trivializes the proposed plant's massive water consumption, not taking into account the serious water shortage in Lea County, which depends on significantly-depleted aquifers for its water.

This is LES's third attempt to secure a site and license for its nuclear plant. The company withdrew its application to build a similar plant in Louisiana after nearly a decade of intense citizen opposition. LES made another attempt to locate the plant in Tennessee, but was again expelled by local opponents before it had a chance to submit an application to the NRC. Citizens were concerned about the company's misleading statements and lack of a clear plan for the disposal of its waste.

"The citizens of New Mexico deserve an extensive evaluation of the potential impacts of this plant," said Joseph Malherek, policy analyst for Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy and Environment Program. "The history of LES and uranium enrichment is cause for suspicion of this foreign-controlled company, warranting a comprehensive investigation into the effects of the proposed facility."

To read Public Citizen's comments to the NRC, please go to www.citizen.org/leseiscomments

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