

4 GARY HOLLIS: Good evening. { My name is
5 Gary Hollis. I'm chairman of the Nye County Board of
6 Commissioners in Nye County, Nevada. As you are well
7 aware, Nye County or Nye is the site county for the
8 proposed repository at Yucca Mountain.

9 As commissioners, we are responsible for
10 developing county policy as it relates to this project,
11 then communicating that policy to our Nuclear Waste
12 Repository Office to implement.

13 I appreciate DOE for scheduling these
14 hearings. Nye is a cooperating agency on the
15 Supplemental to the EIS and is pleased to have had the
16 opportunity to work with DOE to ensure that our
17 interests and our concerns are included in that
18 document. But we reserve the right to make additional
19 comments and anticipate on doing so. As the rail line
20 EIS, Nye County will submit formal comments for the
21 record on or before January 10, 2008.

22 First, let me say that Nye County is the site
23 county for the repository. That decision was made long
24 ago by others. Nye County was not consulted, and we had
25 no say in that selection. But regardless of being
1 excluded from the decision-making process, as elected
2 officials, we have chosen to engage DOE in this process.

3 We are firm in our resolve concerning this,
4 and until the law changes and, if it ever does, we
5 believe that we need to do everything in our power to
6 represent the citizens by providing the oversight needed

7 to protect the health, safety, economic well-being, and
8 quality of life for our residents, protect the
9 environment, ensure that the repository operates safely,
10 and ensure that whatever transportation system is put in
11 place operates safely and serves to advance
12 opportunities for economic development throughout our
13 county.

14 The Nuclear Waste Policy Act was signed into
15 law in 1982. It was amended in 1987 to make
16 Yucca Mountain the only site characterized. And
17 Congress formally designated this site in 2002.

18 My colleagues and I refuse to ignore this law
19 and lazily assume that the site -- that the State of
20 Nevada will prevail in its opposition to this project.
21 It would be dangerous and irresponsible not to
22 constructively engage DOE during this process when we
23 have so much to lose by not doing so.

24 The various political leaders of both parties
25 insist that decisions about Yucca Mountain should be
1 based on sound science. Through our independent
2 scientific oversight program, Nye County has produced
3 approximately \$30 million worth of studies. And what we
4 have observed is that this is not only a technically
5 feasible project, but that it can be done safely.

6 In fact, we have reason to believe that the
7 environmental impact of nuclear weapons testing at the
8 Nevada Test Site, which I'd like to point out is solely
9 encompassed within Nye County, upgradient from
10 Yucca Mountain, puts Nye County citizens at least at a

11 related term at greater risk than the repository ever
12 will.

13 I firmly believe that as long as this is a
14 retrievable repository as opposed to a dump that it's
15 commonly referred to, we would all be better served if
16 it was viewed as a National Energy Reserve and its
17 contents viewed as a resource.

18 I know -- as I noted previously, Nye County is
19 a cooperative agency in the Supplemental EIS. Of
20 particular note, in our display in this room is a news
21 release that announces the result of a rail economic
22 study suggesting that west central Nevada could realize
23 significant economic benefit from the construction of a
24 railroad designed to serve the repository.

25 Also included is a position prepared by the
1 Savannah River Site Community Organization that sets
2 forth their views of how important Yucca Mountain is to
3 them in the context of energy independence, energy
4 sufficiency, and energy policy in general.

5 As can be seen, Yucca Mountain does not stand
6 alone in the arena for energy policy and economic
7 growth. Many reputable experts and experienced managers
8 and planners from other communities similar to ours see
9 and understand the value of this project. At the end --
10 in the end, Nye County expects that people who live in
11 Nye County and work at Yucca Mountain would live in
12 Nye County.

13 Finally, consider that at one point in time

14 Nevada political leaders actually endorsed this project
15 and even attempted to segregate the Yucca Mountain site
16 in a separate county, Bullfrog County, with Carson City
17 as the county seat, an effort intended to exclude
18 Nye County from any potential benefit of that particular
19 project.

20 In the context of contemporary policy where
21 responsible government would have us find solutions as
22 opposed to political opportunities, it can certainly be
23 said that we were for it before we were against it. As
24 I said earlier, the law is what it is. And until the
25 law changes or the State prevails in court, we intend to
1 remain actively and constructively engaged with DOE
2 until the end. } I thank you for the opportunity to
3 speak.