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Public Meeting on the EIS

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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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LOUISIANA ENERGY SERVICES

NATIONAL ENRICHMENT FACILITY

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

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THURSDAY,

MARCH 4, 2004

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EUNICE, NEW MEXICO

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The meeting was held at 7:00 p.m. at the Eunice
Community Center, 1115 Avenue I, Eunice, New Mexico,
Chip Cameron, Facilitator, presiding.

PRESENT:

CHIP CAMERON, FACILITATOR

LAWRENCE KOKAJKO

TIM JOHNSON

MELANIE WONG

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

(7:00 p.m.)

FACILITATOR CAMERON: Good evening

everyone. It's nice to be here, and it's nice to see all of you, and thank you for coming out tonight. My name is Chip Cameron, and I'm the special counsel for public liaison at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which you're going to hear called NRC tonight. That's one acronym that we will use, but we'll try not to use a lot of acronyms, and if we do, we'll explain what they are.

But it's my pleasure to be the facilitator for tonight's meeting, and in that role, I'm just going to try to help all of you to have a productive meeting. And our subject tonight is the NRC's environmental review as part of its evaluation of a license application that we received from the Louisiana Enrichment Company -- or Louisiana Enrichment Services, LES -- Energy Services. I knew that the third time would be a charm. I would get that right. But you'll hear LES, and that's another acronym. But they sent an application into us at the NRC to operate an enrichment facility here in the area.

And I just wanted to say a couple of words about what the meeting process would be like tonight

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1 before we get into the substance of the discussion. Our
2 format is going to be basically a two-part format for
3 the meeting, and that matches our objectives tonight.

4 The first part is we want to give you some
5 information about the NRC process that's going to be
6 used to evaluate the LES application and what types of
7 information we look at and how the public can
8 participate in that process and answer any questions
9 that you have about that process. So we're going to
10 have three brief NRC presentations on our process, our
11 evaluation. And then we're going to go out to you for
12 some questions that -- we're not going to be able to get
13 to everybody for their questions, because we do have
14 alot of people who are signed up to speak.

15 In the second part of the meeting, the second
16 part of the meeting is our opportunity to listen to you,
17 to your advice, to your recommendations and concerns
18 that you might have. And we're going to have people
19 come up front and spend a few minutes each and talk to
20 us tonight. We are taking written comments also on the
21 environmental issues that we're going to ask you to talk
22 about tonight, benefits as well as other issues of
23 concern. But we wanted to be here personally with you
24 tonight. I want to assure you that anything you say
25 tonight will carry the same amount of weight as the

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1 written comment.

2 You may hear things tonight from either the NRC
3 staff or others in the audience, in the community that
4 may inform a written comment that you want to submit, or
5 it may stimulate you to send in a written comment. But
6 we are taking whatever is said tonight on the record.
7 Aleta over here is our stenographer. There will be a
8 transcript available of the meeting for whomever wants
9 to look at it.

10 And let me say before I forget, I just want to
11 thank Mayor Brown and the City of Eunice for allowing us
12 to use the Community Center tonight. And also a special
13 thanks to the students from Eunice High School who are
14 with us who are making a videotape of the meeting
15 tonight, and that videotape will be available. So thank
16 you to the students from the high school for doing that.

17 Ground rules for the meeting are fairly simple.
18 When we get to the question period, if you have a
19 question, just signal me, and I'll bring you this
20 cordless microphone. And please give us your name and
21 affiliation, if appropriate. Ask your question, and
22 we'll try to get an answer to the question.

23 When we go to the second part of the meeting
24 where we're going to have you give us your comments, I'm
25 going ask you to come up here. If that is difficult in

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1 some way, I can bring you this cordless mike and you can
2 speak from where you are. But I think it would be nice
3 in most cases for the people to see you speaking.

4 I would ask both in your questions and in your
5 comments to try to use a little brevity. I know that's
6 hard on issues like this, but we have a lot of people
7 who want to talk. So I want to make sure that we get to
8 everybody. So that means that when you make your formal
9 comments, please try to keep it to the five-minute
10 range, and then that way we may get out of here before
11 the sun comes up tomorrow as I'm sure it's going to do.
12 But just try to be brief, and I would ask that only one
13 person -- when we're in discussion, only one person
14 speak at a time, most importantly so that we can give
15 our full attention to whomever has the floor, but that
16 will help Aleta to get a clean transcript so that we'll
17 know who is speaking tonight.

18 I want to introduce our NRC speakers tonight.
19 And first of all, we're going to go to Lawrence Kokajko
20 who is right here. And Lawrence is the senior NRC
21 manager with us today. He's been with the NRC for about
22 15 years; he's been in reactor licensing, nuclear
23 materials issues such as the enrichment issue, and also
24 in risk assessment issues. He has 27 years total in the
25 nuclear industry and nuclear regulation matters. He has

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1 two bachelor's degrees and a master's degree, and he'll
2 be giving you a brief overview.

3 And then after Lawrence is done, we're going to
4 go to Melanie Wong. Is that correct? Or are we going
5 to go to Tim Johnson to describe the safety review process?
6 And Tim is the project manager for the safety review on
7 the LES application. And he's been with the agency for
8 26 years in low-level waste and decommissioning. He has
9 a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in mechanical
10 engineering and nuclear engineering. So Tim brings a
11 lot of experience to the evaluation of this application.

12 Then we're going to go to our specific focus
13 tonight, which is the environmental review. And we have
14 Melanie Wong here who is the project manager on the
15 environmental review of the application. And she's been
16 with the NRC for four years now and specializing in
17 environmental assessment. And she has a master's degree
18 in environmental engineering and chemistry. And before
19 she came to us, and we're lucky to have her I would say,
20 she was with the chemistry technical group of the United
21 States Patent and Trademark Office.

22 And with that, let me stop talking so we can
23 get on with the meeting. And again, thank you for being
24 here. And let's go to Lawrence Kokajko.

25 MR. Kokajko: Good evening. Can everyone

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1 hear me? All right. My name is Lawrence Kokajko. I'm
2 chief of the environmental performance assessment branch
3 of the Division of Waste Management at the U.S. Nuclear
4 Regulatory Commission, and I'd like to welcome you to
5 this meeting tonight. And we do appreciate the turnout
6 because we really like to see a large turnout when we
7 have these meetings.

8 Tonight I'm going to discuss the NRC's role and
9 responsibility. And I'm also going to -- we're going to
10 talk about the safety review process and the
11 environmental review process and discuss how you can
12 participate in that process. And specifically, we want
13 to gather comments on the scope of the environmental
14 review. And as Chip said, we are conducting this
15 meeting because we want to get your comments on record
16 so that we can take them back to the office and evaluate
17 them appropriately.

18 The NRC is an independent executive agency, and
19 our mission is, authorized by Congress, to ensure that
20 there is -- that nuclear materials and facilities are
21 handled in a safe manner. We are also responsible for
22 security and environmental protection. And as
23 authorized by Congress, we are to establish regulations
24 and guidelines; we are to license, inspect, and if
25 necessary, we can take enforcement action against a

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1 facility or licensee or people who use radioactive
2 materials.

3 I would like to point out that it is important
4 to note the NRC does not promote nuclear technology. We
5 maintain an independent view of the use of nuclear
6 materials. And as such, we ensure the safety of the
7 commercial use of radioactive materials by ensuring that
8 the applicants and licensees adhere to regulatory
9 requirements.

10 Just briefly, and you're going to hear more
11 information from Tim and Melanie, but the NRC's license
12 review process is really two steps. There's the safety
13 review and the environmental review. And some of the
14 things that may be covered under the safety review are
15 discussion of the nuclear technology itself, site
16 characteristics, seismology of the site, procedures and
17 administrative controls, security of the facility, and
18 security of the nuclear material.

19 The environmental review encompasses other
20 things. It may look at water resources, the ecology of
21 the site, air quality, noise, waste management, historic
22 and cultural resources, and socioeconomic matters.
23 These are just a few of the things that we will take
24 into consideration during the environmental review.

25 The NRC uses an open licensing process, and

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1 that process is defined in 10 CFR part two, and as such,
2 we're going to briefly mention how you can participate
3 in that licensing process.

4 In terms of licensing, the NRC can do three
5 things. We can authorize a facility and grant the
6 license. We can grant the license with conditions, and
7 those conditions may impact safety, environmental, or
8 security type of reviews. We can also deny the license
9 application, and in fact, the NRC has made denials of
10 license requests for various matters. And primarily,
11 those denials have been the result that the applicant
12 could not meet our regulatory requirements.

13 As I mentioned earlier, inspection is part of
14 our process. We inspect pre- and post-licensing. And
15 in a post-license environment, if we find that there are
16 violations of the regulations or the license conditions,
17 we can take enforcement action and assess civil
18 penalties.

19 Tonight is one such means of having public
20 involvement. This is a scoping meeting for the
21 environmental impact statement or EIS. Tonight we're
22 taking your comments on the scope of that review. We
23 will eventually publish a draft environmental impact
24 statement and have additional public meetings, and you
25 will have an opportunity to comment, not only after the

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1 publication of the draft environmental impact statement,
2 but also at that public meeting itself. We will also
3 issue a final environmental impact statement.

4 We are also providing an opportunity to
5 participate in the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board
6 hearing. And the deadline to file a petition to
7 intervene in that hearing is April 6th, 2004. It's
8 important to note that the hearing covers both safety
9 and environmental issues, and as such, you may bring up
10 an issue to that board, and the board will assess
11 whether or not that contention is part of the licensing
12 process.

13 That's sort of an overview of our regulatory
14 process and who we are. I'd like to turn the meeting
15 now over to Tim Johnson, the senior project manager
16 associated with the NRC safety review.

17 MR. JOHNSON: Can you hear me? Does that
18 work? All right. Thank you very much.

19 What I'd like to talk about is the safety
20 review that we're going to be doing. And first of all,
21 I'd like to talk a little bit about the proposed
22 project. I think a lot of you are familiar with it, but
23 for those who aren't, I'll give you a brief summary of
24 that. I want to talk about how this plant fits in with
25 the overall industry for making nuclear fuel. And then

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1 I want to talk about the safety review, what we're going
2 to do in it, and our schedule.

3 First of all, again, I want to emphasize some
4 of the things that Lawrence just talked about. First of
5 all, we're an independent regulatory agency. We report
6 directly to Congress. We're not an executive branch
7 agency, for example, like the Department of Energy. We
8 really don't have anything to do with the Department of
9 Energy, other than for a couple cases where Congress has
10 specifically told us to license those facilities, and
11 there are only a handful of those cases. But our
12 regulatory jurisdiction is primarily over commercial
13 uses of radioactive materials.

14 So for example, we don't have any jurisdiction
15 over the Waste Isolation Pilot Project down in Carlsbad
16 or the Los Alamos facility, for example. Those are DOE
17 facilities where NRC has no regulatory oversight.

18 Again, we don't promote nuclear projects. And
19 before any entity can get a license, they need to
20 demonstrate to us that they can meet our health and
21 safety requirements.

22 The proposed project, what Louisiana Energy
23 Services is proposing to us in their application that
24 they submitted to us in December is to build an uranium
25 enrichment facility here in Eunice using a process

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1 called gas centrifuge. And where this all fits together
2 is uranium is a naturally occurring mineral, and it's
3 mined all over the world, including there have been some
4 mines in New Mexico. And in nature it consists
5 predominantly of two isotopes, uranium-235 and
6 uranium-238. These isotopes are chemically identical,
7 but the difference is uranium-238 has three more
8 neutrons in its nucleus. And to be used effectively in
9 nuclear power plants that are used in the United States,
10 the concentration of uranium-235 has to be increased
11 from its natural concentration of about .7 percent to
12 about 3 to 5 percent. And these are levels that are
13 well below those that are necessary for a nuclear
14 weapon.

15 And the way that, that concentration is
16 increased is through the enrichment process. In the
17 United States since the late '40s the enrichment of
18 uranium has been done by a process called gaseous
19 diffusion in which uranium hexafluoride as a gas is
20 passed through a series of barriers. And at each
21 barrier the concentration of uranium-235 is gradually
22 increased. And the facilities that involve gaseous
23 diffusion are huge facilities. Thousands of different
24 barriers are needed to be placed in series and in
25 parallel in order to effectively produce enough uranium

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1 to meet enriched material needs.

2 For this facility, Louisiana Energy Services is
3 proposing to use a different type of process called gas
4 centrifuge. And in this process, high-speed rotors are
5 operated where -- through use of centrifugal force, the
6 uranium-235 and 238 isotopes are separated. The
7 uranium-238 isotopes are the heavier ones; they go
8 towards the outer edge of the rotor, and then they're
9 collected. This technology was developed in Europe by a
10 company called Urenco.

11 But how it all fits together, uranium is mined
12 and milled. The uranium is separated from the rest of
13 the material and the ores, and it comes out in the
14 chemical form of oxides, uranium oxides. And from there
15 it goes to another facility where the oxides are
16 chemically converted into a material called uranium
17 hexafluoride, and from there it goes to enrichment,
18 either the gaseous diffusion process in this country, or
19 in other countries either gas centrifuge or gaseous
20 diffusion.

21 And that product is sent to a fuel fabrication
22 facility that reconverts the uranium hexafluoride back
23 into an oxide. The oxides are then formed into pellets;
24 the pellets are put into long rods and these rods into
25 assemblies. And those are the fuel that ends up going

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1 to a power reactor for consumption. And the spent fuel
2 will ultimately go to a federal waste repository.

3 Now, this is a schematic of the centrifuge
4 itself. There's a casing that surrounds the rotor. The
5 rotor inside spins at very high rotational speeds driven
6 by an electric motor. Uranium hexafluoride is fed into
7 the centrifuge and by centrifugal force is separated,
8 and there are scoops that are designed in the rotor that
9 scoops out a fraction that's either depleted or enriched
10 in U-235. And because there's only a small
11 amount of material in each centrifuge, in gram
12 quantities, thousands of these machines are needed to
13 effectively generate enough material for use.

14 In our safety review, our responsibility is to
15 make sure that this facility is operated safely and
16 meets our requirements. What we're going to be doing in
17 our safety review is we're going to be evaluating health
18 and safety impacts for workers and for the public.
19 We're going to evaluate routine operational
20 considerations as well as accident conditions. We're
21 going to be looking at effluent releases, both airborne
22 and liquid, evaluate the criticality and chemical safety
23 and physical security. The results of our review will
24 be documented in what we call a safety evaluation
25 report, which will become part of the public record.

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1 We expect our safety review to take 18 months.
2 We're going to try to beat that schedule. In addition,
3 following the safety review, there will be a hearing.
4 And right now we're expecting the hearing issues to
5 possibly take an additional 12 months.

6 We will plan on having some technical meetings
7 with LES as we go through the review. Normally, these
8 reviews are held in Washington, but for some of our
9 projects we have had some of them in the local community
10 nearby where the facility is being located, and we're
11 going to try to do that here.

12 We're also looking at trying to videoconference
13 some of our meetings in Washington in the local area.
14 And we did try to make a test connection back in
15 December, but that was unsuccessful. But there have
16 been some equipment changes, and we're going to be
17 trying that again. So hopefully, some of these meetings
18 that we have in Washington we will be able to
19 videoconference back here.

20 Again, to reemphasize what Lawrence talked
21 about, our process for review is an open process.
22 Information that we develop and generate becomes part of
23 the public record. A lot of this information will be in
24 our electronic library under our Agency Document Access
25 System; it's called ADAMS. And it's available through

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1 connecting by personal computers. We also have two
2 websites that relate to this project where you can find
3 additional information, including the application.

4 The application is also available in several
5 places locally for you to look at. The Hobbs mayor's
6 office has a copy. The libraries in Eunice and Jal also
7 have copies. So if you're interested in looking at the
8 application, they are available locally here for you to
9 look at it.

10 Again, in conclusion, I want to emphasize again
11 the NRC is an independent regulatory agency. We're not
12 a promoter of any nuclear project. Our goal is to
13 ensure public health and safety for the operation of
14 these facilities. And in order to get a license, an
15 applicant needs to demonstrate to us that they can meet
16 our health and safety requirements. Thank you.

17 MS. WONG: Can y'all hear me? Good
18 evening. I would like to thank you all for being here
19 tonight. My name is Melanie Wong, and I'm environmental
20 project manager for the licensing review of the proposed
21 enrichment facility.

22 Tonight I'll discuss why we're doing an
23 environmental review process and briefly discuss the
24 process and how you can get involved.

25 Enacted in 1969, the National Environmental

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1 Policy Act, NEPA, is one of the most significant pieces
2 of environmental legislation that has ever been passed
3 in this country. NEPA requires that all federal
4 agencies consider the environmental impacts of their
5 actions. NEPA further requires the federal agencies to
6 prepare an environmental impact statement, an EIS, for
7 major federal actions.

8 The NRC considers the licensing review of an
9 enrichment facility to be a major federal action. NEPA
10 further requires that when we prepare the environmental
11 impact statement, that we consider the environmental
12 impacts of the proposed action and also consider
13 mitigation measures. We will also consider alternatives
14 to proposed actions and their impact. And lastly, NEPA
15 requires that we disclose all this information to the
16 public and invite the public to comment.

17 The next slide is a schematic of the
18 environmental review process. And as you will note,
19 there are two areas that highlight opportunities for
20 public involvement. These include the scoping process
21 and the public comment on the draft EIS. As we already
22 stated, we received the license application in December
23 of 2003. We then issued a notice of intent to prepare
24 an EIS on February 4th, 2004. Now we're in the scoping
25 process.

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1 But what is scoping? Scoping is a public
2 process that identifies issues that need to be analyzed,
3 issues that may have been overlooked or peripheral or
4 covers other environmental reviews, that identifies
5 other environmental reviews and consultations that are
6 required. And lastly, it identifies the federal, state,
7 and local agencies and tribes that may play a role in
8 the review.

9 As mentioned by Lawrence, scoping is one of the
10 first opportunities for you to get involved in the
11 NRC process and to provide us with your input. The
12 scoping period ends on March 18th.

13 Continuing with the environmental review
14 process, once we have received your comments, we will
15 then publish a scoping summary report. That will be
16 followed by intensive environmental review resulting in
17 a draft EIS. That's why it's important that we receive
18 your comments by March 18 so that we can consider them
19 in our environmental review process.

20 Once we issue the draft EIS, there will be a
21 public comment period, and that will include a public
22 meeting. Comments received on the draft EIS will be
23 addressed and evaluated in the final EIS.

24 Listed here are some of the sources of
25 information that we will use to prepare the EIS. We

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1 communicate with federal, state, and local agencies,
2 service agencies, and importantly, we communicate with
3 you.

4 This slide indicates some of the environmental
5 disciplines where we will focus our environmental
6 review. This list is not meant to be all inclusive, nor
7 is it a predetermination of potential environmental
8 impacts.

9 Listed here are the NRC points of contact. If
10 you have any questions on the safety review, please feel
11 free to contact Tim Johnson, or if you have any question
12 on the environmental review process, please feel free to
13 call me.

14 This slide identifies other ways in which you
15 can send us your comments besides this meeting. You can
16 send us your comments via mail or in person at the
17 address shown. And the last item that we have created
18 for the express purpose of receiving your comment on the
19 environmental review process is an e-mail address. That
20 e-mail address is LES_EIS@nrc.gov.

21 That completes our presentation. I would like
22 to thank you all for your kind attention, and we look
23 forward to hearing your comments.

24 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Thank you,
25 Lawrence, Tim, and Melanie. And we can take some

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1 questions to clarify anything that you've heard before
2 we go to public comment. And I would just add that
3 there's -- besides the NRC staff that we have here that
4 you have just heard from, we have other NRC staff in the
5 audience. And certainly, after the meeting if you want
6 to talk to them, ask questions or whatever, they'll be
7 here.

8 Are there any questions about what you've heard
9 about the process? Let's go over here, and if you could
10 just give us your name and affiliation if appropriate
11 for the transcript.

12 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Amy Williams.
13 I'm with the Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety. And
14 I'm just wondering, Melanie, if you know the time line
15 of the EIS right now? Do you know when the draft might
16 be available for release?

17 MS. WONG: Our typical environmental
18 review takes about 18 months. I would say towards the
19 end of the year we will have a draft EIS available.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: Thanks.

21 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Thank you,
22 Amy and Melanie.

23 Other questions about schedule, what we're
24 looking at in the review, anything like that? Yes, sir.

25 MR. GROGAN: My name's Ron Grogan, and I'm

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1 not affiliated with anybody. But in the oil field we
2 have all these regulations dealing with navigable water.
3 That means if it's got a slope to it, it's navigable
4 water. Okay. Do the same rules and regulations apply
5 to LES and this facility? And if that's the case, I
6 mean, we have a lot of slopes around here.

7 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. And I'm going
8 to see if one of our speakers can just sort of clarify
9 NRC's responsibility as relates to the responsibilities
10 of other agencies. That may not be -- that may be
11 something that the company has to comply with, but it
12 may -- to get an additional permit, but it may not be
13 part of the NRC review. Does anybody want to try to
14 handle that? Tim?

15 MR. JOHNSON: What Congress has done is
16 they've created a number of different agencies, all with
17 individual responsibilities. Our agency is responsible
18 for the health and safety aspects of the uses of
19 commercial uses of radioactive materials. The
20 Environmental Protection Agency, for example, in some of
21 the states that are authorized to implement those
22 requirements are responsible for things like chemical
23 usage, environmental protection from chemicals.

24 So all of these agencies have roles, and our
25 review is related to the use of the radioactive material

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1 and the chemical safety with respect to the radioactive
2 materials itself, the uranium hexafluoride. For this
3 facility, other permits will have to be obtained by LES
4 from the State or chemical aspects. They're going to
5 have to meet OSHA requirements. That's Occupational
6 Safety and Health Administration requirements. Those
7 are requirements that are not under the jurisdiction of
8 the NRC. So each agency has their own requirements
9 oriented toward their particular responsibilities.

10 FACILITATOR CAMERON: And it may be the
11 Corps of Engineers that has to give the permit. But
12 let's put a finer point on that perhaps to what Tim
13 says, which is entirely correct. Let me ask Melanie in
14 terms of the environmental impact statement part of the
15 NRC review, will we look at navigable waters --
16 so-called navigable waters, wetland, or what's on the
17 site? Will we catalog those? Is that something we look
18 at in the environmental review?

19 MS. WONG: We do. We do look at
20 ecological impacts.

21 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay.

22 MS. WONG: If I may add just a little bit
23 to permits that are required, there is a list that we do
24 include in the environmental impact statement.

25 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Great. And

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1 we'll note that Mr. Grogan with the question, but it's
2 also sort of a comment also that those things might be
3 looked at. Thank you for those answers.

4 Anybody else right now with a question on
5 anything? And we will be here later. I guess I have
6 just one question for Tim.

7 Tim, you mentioned the technical meeting, and
8 you mentioned the website. If people want to know when
9 there will be a technical meeting, what's the easiest
10 way for them to find that out?

11 MR. JOHNSON: The easiest way to find that
12 out is to go to the LES website. And there is a
13 click-on button that provides information on upcoming
14 meetings and the schedules and locations. There's also
15 another click-on button that has summaries of the
16 previous meetings that we've had with LES.

17 But I would say the easiest way to do that is
18 through the LES website.

19 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Great. Thank
20 you.

21 We're going to go to the part of the meeting
22 where we listen to all of you. And we do have a lot of
23 speakers tonight. And I'd like to start out with local
24 officials because they are your local elected officials.
25 And I'm going to try to maintain some of the protocol in

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1 terms of hierarchy, but I apologize in advance if I make
2 a mistake on that. And also I wanted to make sure that
3 our host, Mayor Brown, leads off for us with a welcome.
4 And also I know there's one elected official who's not
5 feeling very well tonight. So I'm going to try to get
6 him on early. But I don't want everybody to be using
7 that excuse.

8 But at any rate, Major Brown, would you like to
9 please welcome us? Thank you.

10 MAYOR BROWN: Believe it or not, I am very
11 glad that they told us to be brief. But I did want to
12 have the opportunity to welcome each of you here. I
13 know some of you have traveled from Andrews and
14 throughout the county to get here. I feel sorry for
15 you, but I'd much rather you do the traveling than me
16 having to do it.

17 It was mentioned that we have a copy of the
18 application in our library. It was delivered to my
19 office initially, and I ordered a backhoe to carry it to
20 the library. So if you have any intention of reading
21 it, please plan on spending a couple of hours anyway.

22 I would like to extend a real thank-you to the
23 NRC. I think that the job that they are doing in
24 reviewing the safety and environmental issues with this
25 application at least will put our minds at ease that if

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1 it is approved, that it is safe for us and safe for our
2 environment. But the other thing that I think is very
3 important in what they are doing for us is they are
4 giving both sides an opportunity to be heard. And we
5 may not agree with each other, but I think debate and
6 disagreement are healthy. And I hope that this will
7 continue to be the format in future meetings. And I
8 would like to welcome you here to Eunice at any
9 opportunity that we have to help support your meetings.
10 Thank you.

11 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you very much,
12 Mayor Brown. We're going to go to Senator Leavell who's
13 going to talk to us.

14 Senator.

15 SENATOR LEAVELL: Thank you very much.
16 Before I make my presentation, I received a telephone
17 call from Mr. Bob Carter with Congressman Steve Pierce's
18 office just as I drove up a few minutes before this
19 meeting started, and he wanted me to give you his very
20 best and tell you that they're sorry that they were not
21 with us tonight but assure you of the strong support of
22 the Congressman.

23 I'm State Senator Carroll Leavell. My home is
24 441 South 6th Street in Jal, about 23 miles south of
25 here. I serve in State Senate District 41, which covers

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1 the southeast corner of New Mexico, the south half of
2 Lea and Eddy Counties, including Lovington, Hobbs,
3 Eunice, Jal, Carlsbad, Loving, and Malaga.

4 I want to give you a bit of history on my
5 relationship with this project. I was first elected to
6 this office in 1996 and began serving January 1, 1997.
7 Senate District 41 includes the waste isolation pilot
8 project. The citizens of southeast New Mexico have had
9 the opportunity to watch this project and found that the
10 Department of Energy, the DOE, Westinghouse, and the
11 other contractors to be good corporate citizens. The
12 jobs pay well, and safety is their first priority.
13 Their safety record is impeccable. To my knowledge,
14 they have never had an employee receive radiation
15 injury. Because of the waste isolation pilot project's
16 long record of safe operation, the citizens of southeast
17 New Mexico are much more comfortable with the type of
18 project we're looking at here tonight.

19 It is critical we diversify the economy of
20 southeast New Mexico. I've looked for development
21 projects that are environmentally clean and safe to
22 diversify the economy. In the latter months of 1998, I
23 became aware that U.S. Enrichment Corporation was
24 conducting a search for a site for a proposed atomic
25 vapor laser isotope separation enrichment facility. For

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1 obvious reasons, the project was known as the AVLIS
2 project.

3 USEC had two facilities operating, one in
4 Portsmouth, Ohio, and the other in Paducah, Kentucky.
5 USEC became interested in a site east of Eunice and did
6 considerable work to characterize that site. In their
7 site selection process, they advised they intended to
8 select a site that yielded the best combination of the
9 following criteria. And this is their criteria:
10 Minimize adverse health and safety, environmental, and
11 socioeconomic impact; minimize the cost of construction
12 and operation; minimize the schedule to license and
13 construct; maximize the community acceptance and
14 support.

15 My understanding was that site crew had to be
16 geographically stable with little or no potable water
17 for some 600 feet. The Red Man site proved to be an
18 ideal location. The Lea County legislators,
19 Representative Whitaker, myself, and others, had
20 continued to stay in contact with the USEC during the
21 1999 legislative session.

22 I introduced and passed legislation that waived
23 certain gross receipts and compensation tax on uranium
24 enrichment processing equipment. That legislation is
25 still law and makes New Mexico an attractive state

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1 tax-wise for this type of development.

2 We later learned that the new laser technology
3 that the USEC was developing did not prove itself to be
4 effective or efficient. To my knowledge, they no longer
5 wanted any interest in the project and lost interest
6 about the spring of 1999.

7 I worked with LES on a state level since I
8 became aware of their interest in New Mexico in early
9 2003. My interest has been not only in jobs and
10 economic development but a safe environment for the
11 employees and for our citizens. LES has furnished me
12 considerable information about their company and the
13 proposed project over this last year. All information
14 has proven LES to be a good corporate citizen and one to
15 provide a safe, clean work environment for their
16 employees, to protect the environment of citizens of
17 southeast New Mexico.

18 I traveled to Almelo, Holland, and have had
19 opportunity to inspect the Urenco facility there, the
20 opportunity to spend time with their employees and the
21 citizens of the community. Their operation has proven
22 safe over the past many years of operation, and Urenco
23 has proved to be a model corporate citizen. I'm sure
24 LES will be the same in Eunice.

25 I appreciate the opportunity to be at this

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1 hearing this evening, and I appreciate all of you that
2 came out to be here also. Thank you so very much.

3 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Senator
4 Leavell. Let's go to the -- from the state level to the
5 federal level for a minute here.

6 And we have Diane Ventura, who is on Senator
7 Bingaman's staff. Diane.

8 MS. VENTURA: Senator Bingaman sends his
9 regrets that he's unable to be here with you today but
10 sends the following message.

11 I wish to thank the Nuclear Regulatory
12 Commission for holding this public scoping hearing
13 today, and I welcome all the participants to this event.
14 I support the LES project because I think it will
15 provide jobs and an economic opportunity for
16 southeastern New Mexico. But the people of New Mexico
17 need to know that the proposed plant will be safe, that
18 it will not pose a threat to their health and safety and
19 it will not harm the environment and that they will not
20 be left with the plant waste.

21 I commend the NRC for holding this meeting to
22 listen to people's concerns and explain how it intends
23 to address them. Only by addressing their concerns and
24 showing the people of New Mexico that the plant will be
25 safe and will work to their advantage will the project

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1 succeed.

2 In that regard, legitimate questions have been
3 raised regarding the safe and secure storage and
4 ultimate removal from New Mexico of the leftover uranium
5 hexafluoride material from the enrichment operation over
6 the lifetime of the plant's operation.

7 I understand that LES's preferred option is to
8 contract with a private firm to convert this to uranium
9 oxide and sell the by-product fluoride gas on the
10 commercial market. I encourage LES to continue along
11 this path and to assure the state and its citizens that
12 the private conversion option is contractually committed
13 by the time the decision is made by LES to begin
14 operation of the enrichment plant.

15 I remain committed to help facilitating where
16 necessary this private conversion option. I wish to
17 commend the LES for their open-door policy with my
18 office, and I continue to look forward to our
19 interaction as this project moves forward. Thank you.
20 US Senator Jeff Bingaman.

21 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Thank you
22 very much, Diane. Thank the Senator for us.

23 I'm going to go a little bit out of the order
24 here, because I'm not sure -- I'd hate to think of
25 someone being uncomfortable out there. And Commissioner

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1 Ross Black from Lea County, Ross, do you want to come up
2 and talk to us and then go home and get better, I guess.

3 COMMISSIONER BLACK: He identified me as
4 the sick one. I hope that those of you whose hands I
5 shook won't be able to attest to the fact that I am that
6 way. I do want to thank the NRC for being here. And I
7 want to thank them for giving me some assurance that I
8 can feel comfortable in feeling comfortable about this
9 facility.

10 I'd like to share a few things about myself in
11 order to give you some understanding of what I'm about
12 to say. For those of you who do not know, I'm a retired
13 educator. I retired from the superintendent of the
14 Lovington Public Schools after serving there for 11
15 years as superintendent. I've been in that education
16 capacity for -- or I was in that capacity for 37 years.

17 I have served now seven years as town
18 commission member. Six of those seven years I was
19 either vice chair or chair of that board. I have one
20 more year to serve, and I hope that I see what we're
21 doing now come to some fruition before that time is out.

22 The reason I say that is to let you know also
23 that I was born and raised in Lea County. I have family
24 from one end of Lea County to the other and have had for
25 many years and hope to for many more. I consider myself

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1 somewhat of an environmentalist. I feel very protective
2 of this environment and of the people in it.

3 When we first started talking about this
4 facility, I had some reservations. So I took it on
5 myself to inform myself about this process, about what
6 all is involved. I too was one of the persons that had
7 the opportunity to go to The Netherlands and see that
8 and talk to people, talk to the people there that lived
9 next door to this facility for 30 years.

10 After this exposure, I have become very
11 comfortable with this technology. Now, we're talking
12 about technology that is not new technology. It's
13 technology that's been proven for 30 years in Europe.
14 We are to be, if we look at this the way we should, the
15 recipients of the proving-up of this technology to a
16 place where we can feel very comfortable about it being
17 safe as far as I am concerned.

18 The thing that I most want to get across here
19 is that it seems that the most concern -- and I think
20 it's the wrong terminology to say tails. That ties a
21 negative connotation to a waste by-product or a product
22 that maybe is not a waste product. But it turns the
23 wrong connotation of that as far as I'm concerned.

24 I think all too often in our society when a
25 situation comes up that looks a little difficult or a

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1 little unpleasant, we call it a problem. Folks, it's
2 not a problem. It's a situation that we can keep from
3 becoming a problem. In fact, it's a situation that can
4 be an opportunity. Daniel Russell -- is Daniel here?
5 Was he here a moment ago? Daniel had an article in the
6 Hobbs paper just last week addressing what I would like
7 to say in my own words. And that is, we have an
8 opportunity here to take this by-product and put a
9 deconversion plant next door, as was mentioned by the
10 speaker earlier, and triple or double the opportunity we
11 have with what's available.

12 I think when we get to the process in this
13 permitting procedure, that this will move very rapidly.
14 There are things happening right now in that direction.
15 I think it's incumbent on all of us -- and I'm speaking
16 of people in Lea County, New Mexico, and in the area --
17 to get onboard and see that this does in fact happen.
18 It's the answer to a situation.

19 As I mentioned, I've lived in Lea County all of
20 my life. And I don't want anything to come here that
21 will in any way endanger our environment or our people.
22 And I feel very comfortable in saying that, that is not
23 going to happen. And I think we need to get behind this
24 and support it in every way that we can, but with this
25 same thought in mind that we are very pleased to know

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1 that we have someone or some agency as the NRC to help
2 protect us, our environment, and make sure that what
3 happens, happens in the right way.

4 And after being to some degree with LES, I
5 think they want exactly the same thing. I feel very
6 comfortable in how they have handled the thing so far.
7 I think they've been up front and very honest and all.
8 And I think it's well that we have those who have
9 concerns about this facility and it coming to Lea
10 County. They need to express those concerns. There may
11 be some things that we don't know about that we need to
12 find out, and we can fix them. But give us the
13 opportunity to fix it.

14 Thanks again for being here, and I will try not
15 to expose any more than I've already exposed.

16 FACILITATOR CAMERON: You have a lot of
17 staying power for someone who's sick. Thank you very
18 much.

19 We're going to go to Representative Don
20 Whitaker and then to Representative Janice Arnold-Jones.
21 Okay. Representative Whitaker.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WHITAKER: Good evening,
23 ladies and gentlemen, staff, and employees of the
24 Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Thank you very much for
25 coming to Eunice to have this meeting. And it's a

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1 pleasure to see such a nice crowd here tonight. Shows
2 lots of interest. Coach Black, I want you to know I
3 shook your hand.

4 I feel extremely safe with the proposed
5 facility that LES has for Lea County. And like the
6 Senator, I've lived here in Lea County since 1935, and
7 we have a situation in our county which comes from our
8 livelihood since in the '20s, and that's natural
9 occurring radioactive material, NORM. We have more NORM
10 out on the -- driving down these lease roads, probably
11 as much as an overseas pilot. And I understand they're
12 the people that get the most exposure from radiation on
13 account of the altitude that they work at.

14 I think it will be a tremendous economic impact
15 on the entire Permian Basin. And like the Senator said,
16 I feel like that -- and the superintendent, that we
17 certainly have an opportunity to acquire the
18 construction of a plant similar to what they have in
19 Europe that are taking the waste materials from the --
20 all of the plants of this particular type are located in
21 Europe.

22 The uranium enhancement facility that several
23 years ago looked at this particular location was part of
24 the Energy Department of the United States Government.
25 And it was spun off and turned into a private-type

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1 business with basically the same employees they had with
2 the Energy Department. And it was unfortunate that the
3 National Lab in California had made an error in what
4 they had told the company that would enhance their
5 uranium.

6 And I wish that we can diversify this part of
7 the country. All my life our basic industry, as you-all
8 well know, has been oil and gas, a little ranching, a
9 little farming here in Lea County, and service work and
10 retail stores. And we need something that pays good
11 wages, which I think this facility would. And I
12 strongly stand in support of this. Thank you very much.

13 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you,
14 Representative Whitaker.

15 And we're going to go to Representative Janice
16 I think I will call you.

17 REPRESENTATIVE ARNOLD-JONES: Hi. Can you
18 hear me? My name is Janice Arnold-Jones. I represent
19 the Northeast Heights of Albuquerque, New Mexico. You
20 might wonder what on earth am I doing here? Well, what
21 I want you to know that not everything happens in
22 Albuquerque, and certainly not everything happens in
23 Santa Fe. There are other parts of the state. They are
24 important parts, and so I came to share a couple of
25 thoughts. And one is that what you want is very

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1 important. But let me back up by way of giving you a
2 little background.

3 I work for a company called Parallax,
4 Incorporated. I don't want to have any -- I work in the
5 DOE environment. I am not afraid of what we're talking
6 about. The reason I'm not afraid of uranium is because
7 I work in an environment of lessons learned. One of the
8 things that the NRC has done and DOE as well as DOD,
9 they have adopted a culture of lessons learned. So the
10 mistakes that we made in the past -- and if you think we
11 didn't make mistakes, let me just -- did y'all make any
12 mistakes in oil and gas? Three or five? Did you get
13 better? Yes. Well, you know, that happens with a lot
14 of things.

15 In fact, I was whining to Representative
16 Whitaker earlier that we need to apply the open-door
17 concept to information technology because it's nothing
18 to be afraid of, but we may make some mistakes. The
19 point is that if we make those mistakes, are you going
20 to be agile; are you going to be able to deal with it?
21 One of the things I like about the LES is that they are
22 actively asking those kinds of questions. Are we going
23 to make a mistake? Can we prevent a mistake? Have we
24 thought about all of the down sides? I like that. I
25 think that is an opportunity for this area.

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1 But then I'm now a legislator. So I have to
2 look at it in one other way. This state is dependent
3 upon state and federal dollars for jobs. This is a
4 remarkable opportunity to start changing that ratio.
5 And how many of you are from New Mexico? Did you know
6 that there are other states in the ratio of jobs --
7 federal and state jobs, that private sector jobs are
8 different? I just want to remind you of it.
9 Because it goes to the health of your economy. This is
10 a vibrant state. This can be a vibrant area if you are
11 willing to look at some of the risks and you carefully
12 assess those risks and go forward.

13 You have a remarkable opportunity. And I think
14 we need to stay open to that opportunity, ask all of the
15 questions, and when you've satisfied yourself, I hope we
16 go forward. Because the down -- what will happen years
17 out -- and let me just go back. You know, I look at
18 this industry, and this is a long-term commitment. You
19 know, I'm sure you have read there was a great deal of
20 fuss being made in the film industry in this state right
21 now. Yes? No? Have y'all heard of it? This is part
22 of my industry. I actually own a business in this
23 industry, but it is short-lived. It does not create
24 jobs where there are benefits. It does not create jobs
25 where generations actually have an opportunity to fill

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1 those jobs.

2 But in this environment, you have that
3 opportunity. So I hope you will give it full and open
4 consideration. I really commend the NRC for its
5 processes. We have great faith in you. We expect you
6 to do your job. And if you have found something that is
7 risky, tell us. But lay that risk open and also let us
8 help you make that evaluation. Thank you very much for
9 inviting me here.

10 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you,
11 Representative.

12 We're next going to go to Mayor Newman of Hobbs
13 and then to Mayor Claiborne of Jal.

14 MAYOR NEWMAN: Ms. Wong, Mr. Johnson,
15 Mr. Kokajko, we are very pleased that you are here this
16 evening. Welcome to Eunice in Lea County, New Mexico.
17 I'm the newly elected mayor of Hobbs. I just assumed
18 that position today. So if I'm not quite as polished as
19 my colleagues, please -- I'll go ahead and ask for your
20 forgiveness now.

21 Hobbs in August of 2003 adopted Resolution
22 No. 3917, which is the strongest commitment a public
23 entity can make in support of a project. And that
24 Resolution 3917, which I'd be glad to leave you,
25 represents the will of the Commission that we support

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1 the national enrichment facility to be located in Lea
2 County, specifically, Eunice, New Mexico.

3 Now, let me address my perspective from a
4 different view than some of my friends. I also had the
5 opportunity to travel to The Netherlands and to view the
6 Urenco plant in Almelo. And when I was asked to go, I
7 thought what in the world am I going to do to make this
8 assessment? I'm not qualified. Technically I'm not
9 qualified. Educationally I'm not qualified. So upon
10 what basis am I going to consider this project and come
11 back to my constituents and tell them that at the level
12 of understanding that I have, that I'm comfortable and I
13 think this would be a great project for Lea County.

14 When I arrived and we were making our way to
15 the facilities, the things that I was interested in
16 number one was the life. By life I mean vegetation,
17 animals, people, how green are things, how healthy do
18 the animals look, those types of things. And I was
19 amazed. The closer we got to the plant, small dairies
20 growing their own feed, feeding their own dairy cattle,
21 producing milk that they would sell or use for
22 themselves. If there was a problem with the plant,
23 those things, in my opinion, would not exist.

24 Once we got to the plant and we went inside the
25 plant, we were able to walk into one of the cascades

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1 where all the centrifuges are processing all this
2 material. It's an amazing thing. They never shut them
3 down. It's my understanding if one goes down, it just
4 bypasses it and goes right on to the next, extremely
5 clean, very secure. But more importantly is we had to
6 test for radioactivity before we left. And I've got to
7 tell you I tested negative, no problems, and that's why
8 I'm here with you tonight. So that's a good thing.
9 That's a real good thing.

10 The next thing I was curious about was the town
11 and the community itself. Vibrant, growing, commerce,
12 people buying, people selling, people having coffee just
13 like you and I do every day in our neighborhoods, no
14 different.

15 The next thing that I was curious about was
16 other industrial complexes around the plant itself. If
17 there was a problem, why would anyone else locate a
18 plant or a facility where employees who work for them
19 near a project that's a problem? They would not in my
20 opinion. And there was activity all around the plant.

21 The next question I had for myself was do they
22 provide products and services to Urenco? That would be
23 a reason for them to be there. But they do not.
24 They're totally separate industries.

25 And this is the most critical point to me.

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1 Have you ever removed a cascade? Have you ever taken
2 one physically down? And the answer to that question
3 was yes. Totally back to a greenbelt area. If in fact
4 you do that and you have no problems with contamination,
5 then you feel very comfortable in adding additional new
6 cascades for the purpose of extending the life of the
7 plant, knowing that your employees are going to be safe.
8 Is there risk? Absolutely. There's risk every day of
9 our lives.

10 I support the national enrichment facility in
11 Lea County, Eunice, New Mexico. I trust in the
12 expertise of these individuals to make sure that it will
13 operate in a safe and secure manner. I thank you for
14 your time.

15 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you very much,
16 Mayor.

17 And now we are going to Mayor Claiborne.

18 MAYOR CLAIBORNE: Hi, I'm Claydean
19 Claiborne, mayor of the city of Jal, and I could echo
20 a lot of things that have been said, but I'll keep
21 this brief and say that I am here tonight to speak on
22 Behalf of our community.

23 The decision to support the construction of the
24 enrichment facility was not made before an in-depth
25 examination of all the facts. The Almelo facility was

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1 visited, and questions were asked of individuals who
2 lived in the area. After reviewing all the gathered
3 data, a recommendation was then made to the city council
4 who voted unanimously in favor of our city's support.
5 For those citizens who may have still had questions, the
6 questions were posed and answered at a well-attended
7 public hearing held in our community.

8 At this time I would like to reiterate: The
9 city of Jal supports this project with our bitter rival
10 Eunice.

11 However, I do have one more statement that I
12 would like to make. I want to say that I appreciate
13 those who are not residents of our area and yet are
14 concerned about our well being. However, I do not
15 understand why anyone would think that we are not
16 capable of making such a decision for ourselves. We are
17 intelligent individuals who have taken the time to
18 become informed about what is to be constructed in our
19 area. I say thank you for your concern, but it is
20 definitely unfounded. Thank you.

21 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Mayor.

22 And we're going to go to our next three
23 speakers, Billy Hobbs, Eunice City Council, and then
24 we're going to go to the chairman of the Lea County
25 Council, Harry Teague, and to Gary Schubert, also Lea

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1 County.

2 Billy.

3 MR. HOBBS: First of all, I'd like to
4 thank LES for their help. What I've come up here to
5 speak about today is we started out eight months ago to
6 build new playground equipment down at the city park.
7 Ours is outdated and torn up and all that. Well, end of
8 this month we are going to be able to replace all the
9 playground equipment. We raised \$160,000, somewhere
10 around in there, for this project. And LES was a big
11 part of it because they came in and donated some money
12 towards it so we can go out and get foundations and get
13 a company that does playground equipment to make sure
14 it's safe for everybody and the state requirements and
15 everything else that will be met. And I like I said,
16 without their help and several of the other businesses
17 and stuff, people out there in the audience, you know,
18 we wouldn't be able to do this today. So I just wanted
19 to say thank you, and we support LES all the way.

20 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you,
21 Councilman Hobbs.

22 And Mr. Teague.

23 MR. TEAGUE: Well, it's just a few notes I
24 have on what I want to talk about. Actually, this is
25 2,000 signatures of people that were not all able to be

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1 here tonight in support of LES. Also, I'm not going to
2 read them. I'm just going to give them to the people
3 from the NRC.

4 My name is Harry Teague, and I am the chairman
5 of the Lea County Commission. I'm also an employer of
6 100 people. I'm a granddad of four people, a father of
7 two, a husband of one. And I think that makes me pretty
8 qualified to speak about Lea County and LES from a lot
9 of different angles.

10 The NRC is here to evaluate this site for its
11 safety and environmental. They are well qualified to do
12 this, and we are fortunate to have these people doing
13 this for us, these people here. We will trust them to
14 present a fair and honest answer to all of the questions
15 that are asked. If everyone would leave them alone,
16 they would come up with the correct answers in a short
17 period of time. But people will try to help them.

18 And some of the information given to them by
19 groups that do not want the plant built in Lea County
20 will be incorrect. And it will be incorrect because
21 they're not obligated to tell the truth. LES has to
22 prove what they say is true, but not the other groups.
23 One false statement that they have made about the plant
24 in Almelo, Holland, which I went to, they have said that
25 that plant has been shut down for different reasons at

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1 different times. That plant has never been shut down
2 since it was built. I talked with several of the
3 employees at that plant, and some of them have worked
4 for that plant over 24 years. They told me that
5 plant's never been shut down, and I believe them. In
6 talking to the employees at Urenco in Almelo, Holland,
7 they have a lot of company pride. Poor companies don't
8 have company pride by their employees.

9 Some people will say we don't want LES. We
10 want something better. Well, I challenge them today to
11 say what that is. And I'm not talking about a halo and
12 a million dollars for everybody in Lea County. I'm
13 talking about the name of a company and a product and
14 when it's going to be here and how many jobs it's going
15 to bring and what those jobs are going to pay. Because
16 these are things that we know about LES. And if you
17 have a pipe dream of someone else that you want to have
18 here, let's have that same information about them. And
19 if we can't have that information, then let's leave that
20 alone.

21 I think one thing -- our government works, the
22 way that it works, it will err on the side of safety in
23 the minority. And I'm glad that it does that. That's
24 another reason it makes me proud to be an American
25 living in Lea County, New Mexico, today because of the

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1 way our government operates.

2 But having went through all of that, that
3 leaves us to evaluate the desires of the citizens in Lea
4 County. And I've talked to several people in Lea County
5 about their opinion of LES coming to Lea County, and
6 four or five of them don't want it. And literally
7 hundreds of them are elated. And they're like me.
8 They're excited about the things that are going to
9 happen in Lea County. And one of the reasons they're
10 going to happen in Lea County is because of LES.

11 You know, I want the same things that nearly
12 all of you here want. I want a good job in Lea County
13 so that my kids don't have to move to Phoenix or Dallas
14 to get that good job. I want my grandkids to be here so
15 that I can see them, so that I can go to their soccer
16 games, their spelling bees, their piano recitals.

17 The things that I want, you know, life is
18 simple and pleasant. And in Lea County, that's all we
19 want. We want simple and pleasant things and our kids
20 home to help us enjoy them. LES is a part of that goal.
21 They're going to help us attain that goal with the jobs
22 that they provide at this plant.

23 The large number of the local people here at
24 this meeting tonight are concurring with what I have to
25 say. They agree. The majority of the people here

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1 tonight agree with what I have to say. So let us be in
2 support of our county and all of the communities in it.
3 Let us be loud and constant in our support of our county
4 and the jobs that LES is bringing to our county. Do not
5 let a small group of people, most of who do not live in
6 our county or in our state, keep us from having economic
7 growth for our families in Lea County.

8 And for those of you who are opposed to this,
9 if you're not from Lea County, go away and leave us
10 alone, please. And for those of you who are from Lea
11 County, when the permitting process is finished and your
12 questions have been answered, when your fears are put to
13 rest, lay down your signs. Give your support to your
14 friends. Be united with the majority of Lea County in
15 welcoming LES and progress to Lea County. Thank you.

16 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

17 We're going to go to Gary Schubert, and then
18 we're going to go to Joe Calderon and Hector Ramirez
19 from Hobbs. Go ahead.

20 MR. SCHUBERT: Thank you very much. I'm
21 Gary Schubert. I'm the vice chairman of the Lea County
22 Commission. And you can see with the chairman that we
23 have, they don't need me. Being vice chairman of
24 something reminds me of the joke about children that
25 were in a clubhouse. And when the last kid couldn't

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1 decide of a title or something, one of the kids told him
2 he could be vice president of sex and music. That
3 basically meant when we need you, we'll call you.

4 I too got to travel to Almelo, and I had a
5 great experience there. We saw the people were
6 fantastic. Almelo represented to me the kind of a town,
7 community that I'd like to live in. I was envious, and
8 my community Hobbs I hope could be more like that. It
9 was vibrant. The people were kind and cheerful,
10 welcoming, and everybody that went had a great time.
11 And the company morale at the Urenco facility was as
12 good as I've ever seen at any place. And like Harry
13 said, you can't hide morale. If it wasn't a good place
14 to work and if management and administration didn't
15 support the people, they wouldn't have felt like that.

16 As you can tell, some things make me nervous.
17 Talking in a front of a group like this does. I get
18 nervous when I see my daughter dance on stage. I get
19 nervous when I see my son play baseball. I'm not
20 nervous a bit about this facility. I have full faith
21 and confidence that the NRC will do their job, see to it
22 that LES does what they should do. I have full faith
23 and confidence that LES will be up front, be honest.
24 Everything -- every problem, every question that has
25 been presented to LES by me and others has been answered

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1 directly, to the point, without a lot of fanfare.
2 Everything has been open and honest communication. And
3 I support the facility. I appreciate the NRC being
4 here, and I welcome the day that we get to start turning
5 some dirt. Thank you.

6 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Gary.

7 I think we have two of the city commissioners
8 from Hobbs. Mr. Calderon.

9 MR. CALDERON: My name is Joe Calderon.
10 I'm on the city commission. I just completed ten years
11 yesterday on city commission, and I was also on the
12 school board. I was elected in 19 -- in 2003.

13 I'm going to speak a little bit differently.
14 Because this morning we met with Ms. Wong and her group.
15 And I guess I live on the south side of Hobbs, which is
16 the less affluent, and the -- I hope this doesn't come
17 out wrong, but they're not as educated I guess as I am.
18 But I'm very comfortable living there. And I worked for
19 the last ten years as a risk coordinator with the
20 schools in Hobbs working with the at-risk kids.

21 But my deal today was I was excited because I
22 guess LES and the NRC was concerned about the minority
23 population in Hobbs. And that's close to my heart. And
24 I thought we had a very, very productive meeting today,
25 and they're going to continue. And we answered a lot of

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1 questions, and it was great. And these are the people
2 that will not be here at the meetings. These are the
3 people that rely on us to get the information.

4 And you know, let me jump a little bit to the
5 first group. Senator Leavell is a good friend of mine,
6 and I was lucky to go to Almelo. But even if I had not
7 gone, the fact that he went, I take his word. And I was
8 allowed to go. And I guess people know us, and I hope
9 that they trust us enough when we tell them that this
10 was a safe project that is going on.

11 I was very excited because one of my former
12 students went with us that owns a radio station. Who
13 would think that 30 years -- when I had him in class 30
14 years ago, that we would be walking together in
15 Holland -- well, Amsterdam rather, looking for a
16 Catholic church. And here we are. Every time we heard
17 a bell or we saw a steeple, we thought it was a church.
18 It wasn't.

19 Finally we stopped a taxi, and he took us to
20 the Catholic church. And here we are in church with
21 Dutch and Latin. I was an altar boy, but that was years
22 ago. I have changed quite a bit. But that was super,
23 super that we were able to go -- for me just the fact
24 that I went to Catholic church in Amsterdam is a big
25 deal for me right there.

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1 But getting back to this project, we are the
2 ones that are going to give the information back to the
3 minority population, and the fact that you came and you
4 were concerned and LES is concerned about the minority
5 population means that this is a good company here. And
6 I support it 100 percent. Thank you.

7 FACILITATOR CAMERON: And thank you,
8 Mr. Calderon.

9 We're going to go to Mr. Ramirez. And then
10 we're going to go to Jon Goldstein from the State of New
11 Mexico.

12 MR. RAMIREZ: Good evening. I'm Hector
13 Ramirez. I'm city commissioner for District 3 in Hobbs,
14 New Mexico. I'm proud to be in New Mexico and Lea
15 County.

16 I'd like to say something that -- there's two
17 people -- two gentlemen in this room that worked real
18 hard for this program to be here, and that's Senator
19 Leavell and Johnny Cope. They worked 100 percent. I
20 was in Santa Fe one time, and the only thing I heard
21 these two gentlemen talking about this LES.

22 I don't want to forget anybody else, but thank
23 you to the leadership of New Mexico and Lea County that
24 this program -- or this project is coming over here. I
25 represent a district with a lot of minorities. I'm

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1 proud to be a minority. I trust the people that
2 represent us over there. Thank you for this
3 opportunity.

4 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you,
5 Mr. Ramirez.

6 And Mr. Goldstein.

7 MR. GOLDSTEIN: My name is Jon Goldstein,
8 and I'm with the New Mexico Environment Department. I'm
9 here representing Secretary Curry who wasn't able to
10 make it; although, he wishes he could have, because he
11 was born in Hobbs, and it doesn't take much of an excuse
12 to come back.

13 There are about eight of us here tonight from
14 the Environment Department, and I'm just going to read
15 off their names real quick so you guys will know.
16 You'll probably be seeing more of them as the years go
17 by. Jim Norton, Environmental Protection Division
18 director; Charles Lundstrom, Water and Waste Management
19 Division director; Ana Marie Ortiz, Field Operations
20 Division director; John Parker, the bureau chief of the
21 Radiation Protection Bureau; Richard Goodyear from the
22 Air Quality Bureau; Sherry Miller from the Radiation
23 Protection Bureau; and Clay Clark from the Office of
24 General Counsel.

25 I also wanted to read this statement from

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1 Secretary Curry. It's in the form of a letter to the
2 NRC. It constitutes the State's comments on the EIS.

3 I write this letter to you today in order to
4 submit the New Mexico Environment Department and State
5 of New Mexico's comments on environmental issues related
6 to the uranium enrichment plant proposed in Lea County,
7 New Mexico. If built, this facility will be the first
8 of its kind in the state of New Mexico. We believe this
9 facility will bring new technology not currently in use
10 at any commercial uranium enrichment facility in the
11 United States. I would therefore like to request the
12 most thorough, holistic, and intensive environmental
13 review possible.

14 I understand that the Nuclear Regulatory
15 Commission is currently considering the scope of the
16 environmental impact statement for this facility.
17 Currently included in this scope are land use,
18 transportation, geology and soils, water resources,
19 ecology, air quality, noise, historical and cultural
20 resources, visual and scenic resources, socioeconomics,
21 environmental justice, public and occupational health,
22 and waste management.

23 I believe that this is a good inclusive list
24 and would like to request that none of these topics be
25 dropped from the EIS. I would also like to ask that

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1 special attention be paid to two of these items in the
2 EIS in licensing processes: Environmental justice and
3 waste management. Environmental justice is an issue of
4 growing importance to this department as well as to the
5 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and citizens
6 throughout the country. I hope it will be thoroughly
7 examined in the EIS.

8 Waste management is also of central importance
9 to EMD and the state of New Mexico. As you know,
10 there's not currently a facility operating anywhere in
11 the country that could accept the depleted uranium tails
12 that this facility will produce. Given this fact and
13 the assurances that Louisiana Energy Services has made
14 to the State, that there will be no long-term storage or
15 disposal of this waste in New Mexico, I hope this issue
16 will be closely examined in the EIS and license
17 application. EMD also intends to use permitting and
18 regulatory authority to ensure that this waste leaves
19 the state in a timely manner.

20 EMD will require up to eight permits for this
21 facility including regulation of air, groundwater and
22 surface water discharges, as well as hazardous wastes.
23 Through the process of permanent review, the State
24 intends to carefully examine each and every aspect of
25 this proposed facility before any approvals are given.

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1 We expect that the NRC will take a similarly intense
2 approach to the licensing of this facility.

3 As I have done today with this letter, the
4 State intends to continue to make its voice heard
5 throughout the NRC's review of LES's license
6 application. I hope that this communication will run
7 both ways. Please contact me at any time if I can help
8 you with any further information. Sincerely, Ron Curry,
9 Cabinet Secretary EMD.

10 Finally, I just wanted to say that the level of
11 cooperation and information shared that we have seen so
12 far from LES has been good, and we sincerely appreciate
13 that, and we would hope that it will continue. Thank
14 you.

15 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you,
16 Mr. Goldstein, and please give our thanks to the
17 Secretary. All right.

18 And we're going to go to Darrold Stephenson,
19 Jal City Council, right now.

20 MR. STEPHENSON: It's kind of
21 frightening for me to be up here and look at Mr. Cope
22 and Mr. Leavell. A lot of politics sitting out here in
23 the front. I'm trying to be one myself, but I'm not
24 very polished yet.

25 But anyway, I'd like to tell all you people

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1 that I am the county commissioner for this area. I take
2 in Jal, Eunice, Monument, south Hobbs, and west Hobbs.
3 That's a lot of territory I have to cover, and I get a
4 lot of phone calls. But one thing about it, I'd like
5 for you people to know, I have never talked to anyone in
6 this area that opposes this move for LES.

7 I went to Almelo myself with Senator Leavell,
8 and we viewed their beautiful country over there. There
9 was no trash, like I say, and I don't know. I'd like to
10 demonstrate my support for this LES, and if you don't
11 mind, I'll take just a minute here. Tim, Lawrence,
12 Melanie, if this will tell you anything, this is
13 support. However, I want you to know, my wife said that
14 I would not make a good poster boy.

15 But anyway, give us a break. Support your
16 community. Support LES and work with the NRC. And
17 they're very good people, and I love all of you. Take
18 care. Vote.

19 FACILITATOR CAMERON: And thank you,
20 Mr. Stephenson.

21 We're going to hear from Mr. Johnny Cope at
22 this point. And then we're going to go to Karen Keith.

23 MR. COPE: NRC staff, I thank you also for
24 being here tonight. Audience, I think that you can see
25 tonight the quality of leadership that we have in our

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1 state, county, and city. I applaud all our elected
2 officials, and I thank them for being here tonight and
3 supporting LES.

4 I'm here as a businessman who has substantial
5 investment in Lea County. And I want to see things grow
6 in our county. Due to oil and gas fluctuating, going up
7 and down, we've seen bad times and hard times. And this
8 county truly does need to diversify. And wow, what an
9 opportunity that Lea County has to do a 1.8 billion
10 dollar facility. We're talking about 400 construction
11 jobs, very high-paying construction jobs because this is
12 a high-tech facility. And I think that's to last nearly
13 six years. And then 230 jobs after the facility opens.
14 And there are so many people in this room that would
15 love to have one of those jobs and improve their lives
16 and their family's lives. And I just am real thrilled
17 that there's so many people here tonight to show you the
18 support that we have, that we want this facility built
19 here.

20 One of the things that maybe we have forgotten
21 or hasn't been mentioned -- there's been a lot of things
22 said. But how LES got here, actually, you know, Kathy
23 Bearden and the Economic Development Commission actually
24 invited LES to come to Hobbs -- or to Lea County. We
25 thought we had a site that might fit the criteria which

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1 you would require for such a facility. And so they
2 came, and certainly they spent a lot of time and due
3 diligence. They have been very forthright to us and, I
4 think, has tried to be to all of the public people to
5 communicate what their intentions are and how serious
6 they are about doing things right.

7 There's been many people mention tonight that
8 they went to Almelo. And I also got to go to Almelo.
9 And I felt it was the responsibility of the people that
10 are supporting the project to determine to their own
11 selves if they felt the facility was safe. And Monty
12 and Gary and all the people that have went, Carroll --
13 I'm not qualified also to make that determination.

14 But what we did was have opportunity to visit
15 with the staff there and all the people around the
16 plant. I mean, it was green, and they had cows just on
17 the other side of the fence. There was a map that I saw
18 previous, ten years ago, an aerial map, and you know,
19 there wasn't much around the plant. But as I saw the
20 plant, I mean, there was -- it was all kind of activity
21 and life around the plant.

22 And I do know that the NRC has a wonderful
23 reputation to issue permits and operations that help
24 facilities run safely, and I certainly know that y'all
25 will make every effort to try to make that happen. And

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1 I would like to say hurry.

2 But this community truly has embraced LES, and
3 I think it's going to be a partnership. I don't even
4 think our community has any idea what spin-offs are
5 going to be off of a 1.8 billion dollar plant. I
6 honestly don't. I mean, the infrastructure that it's
7 going to take to support this plant is going to be truly
8 something special for our county.

9 And for the people that are maybe here that are
10 unsure about the safety of the facility or wanting to
11 work against this plant, I hope we can through the
12 process make you understand that this is going to be
13 something truly special for New Mexico.

14 I thank you for your time.

15 FACILITATOR CAMERON: And thank you.
16 Thank you very much, Mr. Cope.

17 We're going to go to Karen Keith and Lee Cheney
18 and then Mr. Robert Turner.

19 Karen.

20 MS. KEITH: I'll pass. I have been a
21 resident of Eunice for 20 years. I read about this in
22 the paper. My babies were born here. I love this
23 community. I plan on retiring in this area. I was just
24 curious. I apologize if I stepped on anybody's toes
25 tonight, but I would ask that you be a little bit more

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1 open-minded. Some of us have gone through other DOE
2 problems, and maybe we can lend a sympathetic ear, a
3 great big shoulder. I mean, we are all a big community
4 in this area, west Texas, and/or southeastern New
5 Mexico. And again, I apologize if I stepped on anyone's
6 toes. Thank you.

7 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Thank you,
8 Karen. And I'll try to just note that, you know,
9 obviously the NRC wants to get all types of information
10 so that we can do our evaluation.

11 Lee, do you want to come up?

12 MR. CHENEY: Good evening, ladies and
13 gentlemen. My name is Lee Cheney, and I'm here
14 representing the Citizens Nuclear Information Center in
15 Hobbs. I have made a written presentation to the NRC
16 this evening, but I'd like to briefly summarize it for
17 you now. Before I do, I want to comment about the
18 Almelo situation.

19 LES went into Louisiana and into Tennessee, and
20 they selected the local politicians and the local
21 business leaders, flew them over to The Netherlands,
22 wine-dined them and dined them, and they came back and they
23 said how good it was. It took a while. It took
24 Louisiana eight years of fighting against LES before
25 they won. It takes time for people to learn the truth.

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1 LES picked up and went to Tennessee. They did
2 the same thing in Tennessee, and it took Tennessee
3 several years for the people there to learn the truth.
4 And they had a lot of politicians behind them in
5 Tennessee, from Al Gore down to local business leaders
6 and local politicians who were willing to stand up and
7 tell the people the truth. Now I'll proceed with my
8 presentation or a summary of it.

9 I requested that the NRC look into the
10 following problems: One, nuclear proliferation and
11 national security; two, a plausible waste solution;
12 three, radioactive New Mexico rain; four, other
13 environmental and safety problems.

14 Nuclear proliferation and national security are
15 particularly important problems since 9/11, and I've
16 asked the NRC to refuse to grant LES an operating
17 license unless Urenco opens all of its books and records
18 to United Nations International Atomic Agency for
19 inspection and is cleared of any direct or indirect
20 overt or covert involvement in the spread of centrifuge
21 uranium enrichment technology.

22 I have also asked the NRC to require LES to
23 submit a supplemental application stating that LES has a
24 legally-binding signed contingency agreement with a
25 private company that will be ready to accept LES waste

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1 for deconversion before LES begins producing enriched
2 uranium.

3 People in New Mexico call blowing dust and sand
4 New Mexico rain. Many of you are familiar with the
5 photographs of New Mexico rain that have been passed out
6 to the people here in Eunice. LES tells us that
7 emissions from the LES NEF ventilator stacks will be no
8 worse than normal radiation from the sun. But everybody
9 knows that long-term exposure to the sun causes sunburn
10 and cancer. I have asked the NRC to look into the
11 long-term effect accumulations of radiation and UF6 gas
12 emission that will have on the impact area and on New
13 Mexico rain, on the blowing dust and sand.

14 I've also asked the NRC to look into the
15 following problems. One, increased cancer risks, both
16 for people who work at LES NEF and for people who live
17 in the impact area. Two, the Ogallala Aquifer and how
18 water shortage problems that Lea County now has will be
19 affected by the LES NEF and what effect an increase of,
20 say, 70,000 people in Eunice and Lea County population
21 would have on the Ogallala Aquifer.

22 Three, all aspects of contamination to Lea
23 County water by LES NEF. Four, contamination of birds
24 and animals and the impact that would be caused by LES
25 NEF. Five, problems that can result from a major

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1 explosion and fire caused by the collision of various
2 types of oil field trucks with one of the trucks hauling
3 UF6 on the highway between Eunice and Andrews. Six,
4 property devaluation caused by the LES NEF. Seven, the
5 NRC should tell the people how much UF6 gas and
6 radiation would be put into the air if there was a 9/11
7 type destruction of the LES NEF. Regardless of the
8 probability factor, the people in the impact area have a
9 right to know the facts about this worst-case scenario.

10 Eight, the enrichment plant at Almelo had its
11 operating license revoked twice because Urenco allowed
12 the plant to emit up to 28 times the authorized level of
13 emission. However, because of politics, big money, and
14 manipulation of the legal system, the Urenco Almelo
15 plant was never shut down. I have asked the NRC to
16 require LES to put an ironclad guarantee in an amended
17 license application clearly stating that the LES NEF
18 will immediately shut down if any emissions above the
19 required levels are detected.

20 I want to thank the NRC for holding this
21 meeting and for allowing this committee to make these
22 comments and presentation.

23 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Thank you
24 very much.

25 We're next going to go to Mr. Turner and then

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1 to Mr. Grogan and then to Amy Williams.

2 Mr. Turner.

3 MR. TURNER: Harry, you now have 2,006
4 names added to the list. This is the first time I've
5 seen so many politicians in the same room and all
6 agreeing. So I'm really impressed by that. I'm here,
7 as introduced, Robert Turner, a member of the NAACP. We
8 unequivocally and without reservation support the
9 construction, the operation of the Louisiana Energy
10 Services plant.

11 We believe that this plant will be
12 environmentally safe and economically productive. The
13 facility will also bring numerous kinds of jobs. And
14 I'm a career specialist by -- that's where I work. I
15 help students find careers. And I have an idea of
16 different kinds of careers, how much money they get
17 paid, where they are, and all these good things. And I
18 know that this area is really suffering for these high
19 technical kinds of jobs, the jobs that will be paid
20 \$50,000 or more. We definitely need that here. We need
21 it for several reasons. So our kiddoes -- and I think
22 you've heard that tonight -- won't be moving to Dallas
23 and Fort Worth and Albuquerque. And nothing wrong with
24 moving. But we need them here so our community can
25 grow. So we definitely support that because we need

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1 jobs.

2 You've heard numerous individuals say they'd
3 had a chance to go to Almelo. Believe it or not, I did
4 too. We were there December the 5th through the 10th,
5 and we had citizens from Hobbs, Eunice, and Albuquerque,
6 and we went to view the plant. It was very, very
7 encouraging the way they introduced the plant to us.
8 First, they had a video PowerPoint presentation that
9 introduced us to the plant, the entire operation, how
10 uranium is enriched. So when we toured the facility, we
11 already had an idea of what was happening in the
12 particular plant.

13 What did I look for when I went there since I'm
14 not a nuclear engineer or physicist? I had about four
15 things that I really looked for that I could detect.
16 How about noise level, you know? Is it noisy? I mean,
17 if it's really noisy, well, nobody wants to live close
18 to it. Not at the plant in Almelo; it's not noisy.
19 Next thing I looked for odor. While walking through
20 both the old facility and the new facility, I didn't
21 smell anything really. Maybe the new paint on the new
22 facility was detected, but nothing else.

23 How about smoke, emissions, and all these other
24 things? Didn't see any of that. How about situations
25 that appeared to be dangerous like water on the floor or

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1 products on the floor, loose electrical cables? Not at
2 the plant in Almelo. I was very impressed with the
3 staff there and how it was operated. It was very, very
4 encouraging.

5 As I said, we toured both the old facility and
6 the new facility. When we arrived at the new facility,
7 you could see the many changes that were not in the old
8 facility. In other words, state-of-the-art stainless
9 steel valves, I mean, just a tremendous upgrade from the
10 older facility. That's the one that they're going to
11 replicate here. It is a massive structure, very well
12 kept, and it will definitely be an asset for the
13 community.

14 Needless to say, we're excited about the
15 possibility of seeing such a structure as this here in
16 Eunice, New Mexico, which will be advantageous to all of
17 New Mexico really, and especially Lea County. I really
18 want to retire and see -- I have two grandsons. They're
19 in Dallas. If I don't find some work for them here,
20 they're going to stay in Dallas. You know what I'm
21 talking about? So I definitely want to see the plant
22 built here. The NAACP encourages this and supports
23 this, and I want to thank everybody for inviting me here
24 tonight and also to see the crowd and the people from
25 Washington.

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1 And I expect to see the approval of the license
2 within about a month and a half. I don't know why it
3 takes so long. Come on. Come on. You ought to have
4 the plant already in existence. In Almelo, Holland,
5 just go see that one. It's already there. It's up.
6 It's operating. So maybe we could cut some of that red
7 tape, because it's not a new thing. It's already there.
8 And they have been in operation for, I believe, 35
9 years. Wow, all the books should be out by now,
10 wouldn't you say? So thanks a lot.

11 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thanks, Mr. Turner.

12 And now we have Mr. Grogan.

13 MR. GROGAN: My name's Ron Grogan. I
14 guess I'm the first one to speak tonight that didn't go
15 to Holland. But I did spend four years and four months
16 in Germany. It's a different atmosphere over there,
17 very clean country. Europe's very clean. They take
18 care of the country. They take care of the environment.
19 Don't expect the facility here to look like it did in
20 The Netherlands. It's a different attitude.

21 I'm currently a PHA facilitator at work. That
22 means process hazard analysis. That means we examine
23 worst-case scenarios and try to plan how to prevent it.
24 Well, I'll probably be called a caveman in the newspaper
25 or something. Because I mean, everybody that's

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1 expressed views against this facility has been called a
2 caveman and relates to the Stone Age. But in my
3 opinion, the people who don't have a healthy respect for
4 radiation, people that don't have a healthy respect of
5 uranium are the ones that need to get some education.

6 In chemistry class in Eunice High School, we
7 learned about the half-life of radiation, you know. And
8 this means, you know, radiation decays, and it takes
9 different amounts of time for radiation to decay. And
10 I'm not a nuclear engineer. I'm not a nuclear
11 scientist. I'm just a person with a little education.
12 But I do read on the internet. And dependent on the
13 type of uranium, there's one type of uranium that takes
14 254 million years to have a half-life of 254 million
15 years. A little bit of this goes a long ways. I mean,
16 this will outlast any of us, any of our descendants. I
17 mean, 254 million years from now, there's no telling
18 what kind of life, if any life, will exist on Earth. We
19 need to think about the future.

20 I don't think that LES will deliberately cause
21 an accident. I also don't think that Union Carbide --
22 everybody should remember Union Carbide. We had the
23 plants here. I don't think that Union Carbide planned
24 for a chemical release in Bhopal, India, in 1984 that
25 killed 2,000 people. I don't think that PEPCON

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1 deliberately set the fire in Nevada in 1988 that killed
2 two and injured 300 people. And I don't think that the
3 partial reactor meltdown in Three-Mile Island in 1979
4 was intentional. They were accidents. The NRC since
5 that time has made tremendous changes in the nuclear
6 industry, I mean, tremendous safeguards.

7 I've heard a lot of comments here about dealing
8 with the fact that, well, we're used to dangerous
9 environments. We live in the oil field; we're used to
10 the dangers in the environment. I'm well aware of the
11 fact that if that gas line out there on the west edge of
12 town was to blow up and the wind was from the west, that
13 a good portion of the city of Eunice could die from
14 hydrogen sulfide poisoning. I know this. We all know
15 this. But again, we're not dealing with H2S here.
16 We're not dealing with hydrocarbon. We're talking of
17 something -- what we're dealing with here is not
18 something that's going to dissipate into the atmosphere
19 and go away. It's not something that's going to take
20 and degrade in the ground and become harmless. We're
21 dealing with something with a half-life of 254 million
22 years.

23 Now, having said that, I support the LES with
24 these conditions. I grew up here in Eunice. I was born
25 in Hobbs, raised in Eunice. I left, spent 20 years in

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1 the Army and eight years elsewhere before I came back.
2 I was gone for 28 years. I'm back in Eunice to stay. I
3 want my kids to live here. I want my grandkids to live
4 here. I want this -- this is my home. Okay.

5 My feelings about this LES, the three
6 conditions that I think that they should meet before
7 they're granted a license, I think that they need to
8 limit the amount of radiation stored -- the amount of
9 uranium stored at the facility so that at a minimum, no
10 more than 30-day supply -- or maximum, no more than
11 30-day supply of material, whether it's raw or waste,
12 will be kept on the facility onsite. You know, all
13 these papers say that, well, LES is not going to store
14 this stuff in New Mexico. Well, currently there's not
15 any place in the United States that can process it.
16 There's not any progress been made, and they've been
17 working on this for eight years. And it seems to me
18 like they could have been working on the same process to
19 decommission the waste that they are to enrich it. But
20 there's no place to store it. I don't want this stuff
21 stored withing 255 miles of Eunice. I don't want it
22 stored at the WIPP site. I don't want it stored at the
23 WCS site. 254 million years is what I'm thinking. I
24 don't want something buried in my ground near my home
25 that's going to last for 254 million years.

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1 And I think that the NRC does a fine job of
2 enforcing the safety regulations at the current nuclear
3 facilities. But I also feel that there's shortcuts
4 they're taking on a daily basis. And basically, the NRC
5 gets involved when there's an accident. Am I right?
6 And I feel that LES sooner or later is going to take
7 some shortcuts, and when you take a shortcut, that leads
8 to accidents.

9 This is my opinion. Like I say, I support LES
10 with conditions.

11 FACILITATOR CAMERON: And thank you.
12 Thank you, Mr. Grogan, for that opinion.

13 Now, we're going to go to Amy Williams.

14 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Amy Williams.
15 I'm with Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety in Santa
16 Fe, New Mexico.

17 First, I'd like to address the accident
18 analyses that should be included in the environmental
19 impact statement. Considering that uranium hexafluoride
20 decomposes when heated and produces deadly hydrogen
21 fluoride, all accident analyses must include the risks
22 associated with fire at the facility. The accident
23 analyses must include risks to the public within a
24 50-mile radius of the facility as is generally the
25 standard in environmental impact statements produced by

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1 the Department of Energy. Risk to workers in all
2 accident scenarios must be evaluated carefully.

3 Also, solid uranium hexafluoride, which is the
4 form in which it is transported and stored, can be
5 converted into this deadly gas when under extreme heat.
6 Therefore, fire analyses should be performed for uranium
7 hexafluoride in transit from Illinois to New Mexico and
8 out of New Mexico to all interim storage facilities,
9 including facilities for both enriched uranium product
10 and waste.

11 In addition, the environmental impact statement
12 should evaluate the emergency response capabilities of
13 the communities surrounding the national enrichment
14 facility and those along the transportation routes. The
15 EIS should estimate the suitability of Lea County's
16 solitary hospital to handle radioactively contaminated
17 patients.

18 As alternatives to the facility, the EIS should
19 address alternatives to and for NEF. For example, NEF
20 has previously been rejected by Louisiana and Tennessee,
21 which were Louisiana Energy Services' previous preferred
22 locations. The EIS should explain why LES is no longer
23 pursuing these alternatives and the circumstances under
24 which LES was required to withdraw their proposals in
25 those states.

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1 Also, the EIS should present alternatives to
2 the NEF. Obviously a no action alternative must be
3 included. Alternative methods of economic development
4 should be included for Lea County, such as renewable
5 energy research and development. As I learned today,
6 considering the strength of the wind in this area,
7 perhaps wind farms should be investigated as another
8 source.

9 As for the economic impact, we request that the
10 EIS detail the number and type of jobs that will be
11 created by NEF. Specifically, how many of these jobs
12 will require workers with special knowledge of nuclear
13 physics, and how many of these workers will have to be
14 imported from other facilities or countries? How many
15 jobs will be created for current Lea County residents?
16 What would these jobs be? What will their average
17 salary be? And how long are they expected to last?

18 Also, we request that you investigate the
19 upward mobility of the jobs that the Lea County facility
20 will present. Furthermore, we request that the EIS
21 include the projected economic multiplier for the
22 facility so that Lea County residents may actually judge
23 the economic impact the facility will have on the area.

24 Also, the EIS should address the effects of Lea
25 County's issuing a 1.8 billion dollar industrial revenue

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1 bond to LES, the future impacts such an allocation may
2 have on Lea County, and the potential economic impacts
3 if the facility should fail to generate revenue.

4 Considering that the U.S. government currently
5 artificially sustains the uranium market, it is possible
6 the NEF may not generate as much revenue as expected.

7 Furthermore, as LES is 90-percent owned by foreign
8 agents, the EIS should estimate how much of NEF's
9 proposed revenue would remain in Lea County and in the
10 United States and how much will be exported to foreign
11 countries.

12 Concerning emissions, the EIS must estimate the
13 levels of air and water emissions expected from the
14 facility and the risk presented to the public by those
15 emissions. Any definition of risk should be related to
16 the number of cancer deaths per 10,000 people so that
17 there may be consistency between risk estimates which
18 will facilitate comparison of risk from NEF and other
19 nuclear facilities.

20 Furthermore, as reported in the December 18th,
21 2003, Albuquerque Journal, heavy winds in southeastern
22 New Mexico have been known to transport sediment as far
23 as away as Wisconsin. The EIS should include an
24 analysis of the effects of NEF's air emissions on those
25 living downwind of the facility. Analysis of the

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1 effects of air emissions should extend beyond the
2 50-mile radius.

3 Furthermore, LES's plans for its facility in
4 Louisiana included a holding pond for wastewater. The
5 EIS should include the effects of ingestion and
6 inhalation of depleted uranium due to evapotranspiration
7 from such a holding pond. In addition, the EIS must
8 estimate the effects of such a holding pond on the soil
9 and groundwater beneath it.

10 The Industrial Revenue Bond for NEF specifies
11 that LES may not build a facility in Lea County if it
12 has committed environmental violations in the county.
13 Considering that LES is composed primarily of national
14 and international organizations, we request that this
15 provision be expanded to include environmental
16 violations in any country in which LES or its partners
17 operate nuclear facilities.

18 Thank you.

19 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you very much,
20 Amy.

21 We're going to go to a group of speakers now
22 who are the people who work for the various local
23 governments in terms of running the local governments,
24 the managers, public safety, and also the schools. And
25 we're going to start with Mr. Dennis Holmberg who is the

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1 Lea County manager.

2 Dennis.

3 MR. HOLMBERG: I'm Dennis Holmberg, the
4 Lea County manager. I live between Hobbs and Lovington
5 and have been here, as of last week, nine years.

6 I am here to talk to you this evening to read a
7 letter from the Lea County Water Users Association that
8 addressed some of the questions that were brought up in
9 the early stage of the amount of water that would be
10 used by the proposed plant and a comparison of what that
11 means. The letter is from the Water Users Association,
12 dated September 29th.

13 In the desert water is life. This fact is
14 ingrained into the minds of every New Mexican and every
15 inhabitant of the dry southwest. As a result, any
16 proposal for economic development must carefully address
17 the impact on the availability of water in our state and
18 in our community.

19 In the last weeks there have been several
20 misleading statements regarding the water in the
21 national enrichment facility. Some have claimed that
22 the proposed facility will require tremendous amounts of
23 water to operate and have a detrimental effect on our
24 community.

25 Nothing could be further from the truth. The

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1 estimated water use of the NEF will be approximately 75
2 acre feet of water annually. To put this in
3 perspective, consider this. The 75 acre feet is the
4 same amount of water allowed for a 25-acre farm. The
5 Eunice Golf Course uses 210 acre feet a year. The Hobbs
6 Country Club uses 283 acre feet a year. And the New
7 Mexico Game Commission uses 170 acre feet to maintain
8 the Green Acres Lake in Hobbs. These numbers come from
9 the 2000 Lea County regional water plan. When you
10 compare the figures, you quickly see that the NEF water
11 usage is actually very small.

12 We have worked closely with NEF to review these
13 water needs. We could easily meet the requirements.
14 NEF has proven to be a cooperative company that intends
15 to operate efficiently and respectfully when it comes to
16 water usage in New Mexico. As stewards of Lea County
17 and Eunice's water, we look forward to working with
18 them.

19 And I would tell you that is signed by the
20 Chairman Buster Goff; Bob Carter the vice chairman; Bill
21 Bentle, who is a member from Jal; Gary Schubert, who
22 spoke to you from Hobbs; J.W. Neal a member from Hobbs;
23 Nita Waddell, who's a member; Jim Britton, Gary Fonay, a
24 member; Becky Jo New; Betty Britton, who is the mayor of
25 Tatum; and by John Norris, a farmer in Lea County.

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1 Thank you very much. I have a copy of this for
2 your records.

3 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Thank you,
4 Mr. Holmberg.

5 We're next going to go to the city manager of
6 Eunice, and now I have to apologize in advance for
7 not -- Mr. Ron Abousleman. Okay. There he is.

8 Mr. Abousleman.

9 MR. ABOUSLEMAN: My name's Ron Abousleman.
10 I'm city manager here in Eunice, and I'm fairly new to
11 the area. I've only been here about nine months. But I
12 am a native New Mexican. I didn't come as prepared as
13 some of the other people, so I'll probably wing it a
14 little bit.

15 You've heard everything that has been said this
16 evening. I in no way would try to address the technical
17 aspect of what's going on here. I don't have the
18 knowledge, and I'm sure that most of us don't have that
19 knowledge. We're lucky to have the NRC and the
20 Environmental Department that will be looking out for
21 those aspects of this plant that we're looking at
22 locating here next to Eunice in Lea County.

23 I think that what we do need to look at is the
24 economic diversification that can take place should this
25 project be located here. It's something that I know Lea

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1 County has been looking at for quite some time now,
2 because it's something that I hear at almost every
3 meeting that I go to. And I do attend quite a few
4 meetings, diversification of the economy. We cannot
5 depend so much on oil and gas as we have in the past.
6 We don't know what's going to happen in the future.

7 And I think there's a fear there, and possibly
8 a fear of more than what this plant can bring to our
9 area. I think the technology is so advanced today
10 compared to 1979 or some of these dates that were
11 brought up of accidents that may have occurred at other
12 plants. And I think we have to really look at that and
13 consider that along with everything else. But I think
14 what I would want to see and I think we should look at
15 and be very concerned with is the economic
16 diversification of this area.

17 And it's not only for Lea County. It's not
18 only for New Mexico. Much of Texas will be a part of
19 the benefits that we can get from something of this
20 nature. You know, some of the people have indicated
21 that they want their kids to grow up here. They'd like
22 their grandchildren to grow up here. I come from close
23 to Albuquerque where a lot of people are saying the
24 people are moving to. Well, I have three children. And
25 unfortunately, my three children had to go look for jobs

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1 outside of New Mexico. They're all employed in other
2 states, and I would love to have them here also. I
3 would love to have them next to me. And I think the
4 whole state needs to look at diversification, not just
5 the county.

6 We just were blessed with a grandchild that's
7 about nine months old. I've had the opportunity to see
8 that grandson of mine only about three times, and it's
9 hard. You get -- luckily, we have e-mail and all this
10 stuff now, and it's very advanced technology when it
11 comes to the cameras that I can -- I finally got to see
12 my grandson when he crawled for the first time over the
13 internet. I didn't get to see it live.

14 But anyway, what I would like to emphasize is
15 the economical diversification. We're going to see
16 what's been told about 400 jobs through construction.
17 That construction period can take up to six, seven
18 years. Can you imagine what would happen to this area
19 if we have 400 people here constantly for the next six,
20 seven years? And then about two years after
21 construction starts, we have the permanent employees
22 locating in the area or getting hired, and that means a
23 little over 200 jobs, permanent positions, average
24 salaries of approximately \$50,000 a year with benefits
25 packages above 30 percent. I think those are the things

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1 we need to look at.

2 The construction will help the local economy.
3 You know, it's going to help Eunice. It's going to help
4 Andrews. It's going to help Hobbs, Lovington, Tatum,
5 even Jal. I've got to join in on that. I've learned
6 that already. I've got to be sure I make that point.
7 But I think, you know, these jobs are going to help us
8 all. So I think we have to look at that very carefully
9 and kind of prepare for that.

10 You know, this would be the first industry of
11 this type in the whole United States, this technology.
12 It would be so great that a technology such as this that
13 would be ground breaking for the United States would be
14 located in New Mexico and further located in Lea County.

15 I think the other thing we're missing right now
16 when it comes to economic diversification is the
17 spin-off industry. I would like to see the spin-off
18 industry to locate very near where this plant will be.
19 Because that will just mean more for us. The
20 decontamination facility I'd like to be right next door.
21 I don't want it 250 miles away or 500 miles away or
22 10,000 miles away. I'd like to see it next door to this
23 facility.

24 And I think the one thing that I'll end with is
25 that tonight when you go home, if you're a little bit

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1 hungry, you might be able to stop at our Allsup's or
2 Circle K. If this facility locates here, maybe then
3 we'll have some restaurants, some facilities where we
4 can go and have a nice dinner at this time of the
5 evening. Because right now you can get a candy bar or a
6 coke, and that's about it.

7 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

8 We're going to go to Mr. Hackler, and then
9 we're going to go to Chief Harper and Chief Rice.

10 MR. HACKLER: I'm on Texas time, and that
11 Allsup's sounds pretty good right now, so I may look up
12 the directions here in just a moment.

13 One of the things I figured out is that I
14 missed out on the trip to Holland. Over in Andrews,
15 we're working on trying to get a community college
16 there, and the most exciting trip that I've taken is
17 down to Pecos, Texas, to see a comparable facility.

18 My name is Glen Hackler, and I'm the city
19 manager in Andrews, Texas. Our mayor, Bob Zap was here
20 back in November and, I believe, addressed you. Our
21 county judge is out of town. Major Zap was unable to be
22 here. His grandson had surgery in Lubbock this morning.
23 And so my comments are on his behalf as well as on
24 behalf of the city of Andrews.

25 To the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, I

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1 appreciate the opportunity to address you as well.

2 Just by way of background, about a decade ago
3 the citizens of Andrews, recognizing a state and
4 national problem, began exploring the possibility of
5 siting this facility for the disposal of low-level
6 radioactive waste in Andrews County. That facility is
7 known to most of you as WCS, the waste control
8 specialist.

9 During that process, an incredible amount of
10 due diligence was performed by our community and by the
11 community leadership to determine if a low-level
12 radioactive waste site could be located in a safe,
13 environmentally responsible, and efficient way. And our
14 conclusion was yes, with proper regulatory oversight, it
15 could be done.

16 That project is nearing reality today. We
17 approached the LES project in the same way. We've met
18 with LES officials as well as members of the Nuclear
19 Regulatory Commission. If a safe, environmentally
20 sensitive, technologically sound facility can be located
21 in southeast New Mexico, we could support it. Based
22 upon the preliminary information presented to us, we
23 believe this can be done, and we support those efforts.

24 The issue of uranium enrichment is a national
25 issue as well. I personally believe the importance of

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1 having a domestic source of enriched uranium for the
2 nation's commercial nuclear power production is of
3 critical importance. We have a great deal in common
4 with our neighbors in southeast New Mexico, and it
5 doesn't stop at the state line. These commonalities can
6 be a regional strength.

7 And just as a total aside here, I want to tell
8 you that we are extremely impressed with what's going on
9 in Hobbs and in Lea County. You have a lot to be proud
10 of.

11 We also share a common industry, oil and gas.
12 The entire Permian Basin of Texas and southeast New
13 Mexico has demonstrated that a potentially very
14 hazardous industry, when developed appropriately, can
15 and has become a major economic force.

16 The proposed LES project has the potential to
17 provide a long-needed economic diversification and make
18 a truly significant economic impact on this entire
19 region. With good science, proven technology, and the
20 proper oversight to ensure public health and safety and
21 protect the environment, the LES project can be a great
22 local, regional, and national success. We support the
23 efforts of the NRC to make sure that these objectives
24 are met. And we support the efforts of LES to make this
25 project a reality. Thank you.

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1 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

2 Chief Harper.

3 CHIEF HARPER: I'm Jerry Harper. I'm fire
4 chief here at the Eunice Fire Department. You know,
5 I've been standing back here listening to a lot of these
6 people up here talking about the NRC and LES. As far as
7 the Fire Department, we're real supporters of LES. I
8 just want to also say that I appreciate NRC coming in,
9 you know, for the safety of the uranium plant and all.
10 I can't add what a lot of these people have said, you
11 know, about this LES coming in. All I can say is we
12 sure support it. It is a good asset to New Mexico, Lea
13 County, and Eunice. And I'm just real proud that
14 they've chosen this area here. Thank you.

15 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Chief.

16 And Sheriff Keith Rice.

17 SHERIFF RICE: Good evening. I'm Sheriff
18 Keith Rice, and I think I just found out where I fit in
19 on the political totem pole. But I do believe that the
20 sheriff has to be a good strong base so that our other
21 political leaders can build on that. Thank you NRC for
22 being here tonight and listening to everyone.

23 First of all, let me thank you for this
24 peaceful congregation and for the media. And Daniel, I
25 don't believe you're going to get any action photos

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1 tonight. So I believe that's out of the question.

2 Law enforcement in Lea County has been pretty
3 much my life. I'm in my 29th year of law enforcement.
4 And I've loved every minute of it, and I love Lea
5 County, and I love the people in Lea County or I
6 wouldn't have done this for this many years. I would
7 like to say too that I'm the father of three and the
8 grandfather of three here in Lea County. I too want
9 them to stay here in Lea County. I want them here with
10 me also.

11 You know, when WIPP came in, we worked hand in
12 hand with Department of Energy, and we worked with WIPP.
13 We prepared ourselves and educated ourselves in the
14 event that there were any problems that occurred in
15 security and the safety of the citizens of Lea County,
16 and it worked very well and has worked well. When
17 Wackenhut came to Lea County, we educated ourselves, and
18 we prepared ourselves for anything that might happen out
19 there. And it has also worked very well.

20 I can assure you if the enrichment plant comes
21 in here, we will educate ourselves. The spirit of
22 cooperation that I have seen, I have no reason to doubt
23 that will not continue with security. And I assure
24 you we will educate ourselves, and when it becomes time
25 or necessary, if it does, I promise you that your safety

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1 will be in our hands, and we will be educated, and we
2 will be prepared. And I appreciate you allowing me to
3 come tell you that tonight. And I welcome -- as a
4 citizen of Lea County born and raised here, I welcome
5 LES to Lea County. Thank you.

6 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Sheriff.

7 We're going to go to Toni Trujillo and then Joe
8 Calderon and Stan Rounds.

9 MS. TRUJILLO: Good evening everyone. My
10 name Toni Trujillo. I'm the Eunice superintendent of
11 the Eunice Public Schools. I want to first thank the
12 Eunice High School students. Y'all turn around and look
13 at our products. We love them. Would you stand up just
14 for a second? Because I think what we've been talking
15 about today is all about our kids, and we really love
16 our kids.

17 I also want to thank their teacher for being
18 here, and I'm very proud that they were able to
19 videotape this meeting. I'm glad that the students have
20 an opportunity to be witness of good government in
21 action, and I believe that's what we're seeing tonight.
22 But I also want to say that I'd like my children to go
23 home and go to bed, that they've got school in the
24 morning. So if we can, I'm going to try to be very
25 brief, and hopefully the speakers behind me will be so I

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1 can get my kids home.

2 I'm wearing two hats tonight. One, I'm
3 representing the Chamber of Commerce, and I have a brief
4 statement for them. And then I'm also representing the
5 Eunice Public Schools.

6 On behalf of the Eunice Chamber of Commerce, I
7 am submitting a letter of support for LES and its
8 application to the NRC to open a nuclear enrichment
9 plant in our area.

10 We appreciate the company's interest in
11 creating a positive business climate. LES has been and
12 will be a good business neighbor. The company has shown
13 its commitment to Eunice by opening a field office and
14 becoming a part of our community. The company's
15 representatives have responded to all questions in a
16 straightforward, honest, and complete manner. And we
17 know that they will continue to do so with the NRC's
18 oversight.

19 We look forward to working with the LES as a
20 valued member of the Chamber of Commerce. Working
21 together, we will bring needed business and industry to
22 our community and support our growing economy.

23 And now for the Eunice Public Schools. This
24 correspondence serves as a letter of support to the
25 National Enrichment Facility in its effort to secure an

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1 operating license from the Nuclear Regulatory
2 Commission. Since the announcement was made that the
3 national enrichment facility, NEF, would submit an
4 application, the Eunice Public School District has been
5 involved in an ongoing relationship with NEF.

6 A high, and I emphasize high, level of
7 commitment to be a full educational partner with the
8 Eunice Public Schools has already been evidenced in our
9 discussions and joint activities with NEF. And I'd like
10 to give you some concrete examples of that. First, NEF
11 has established a Lea County Educational Advisory
12 Committee, including all five Lea County superintendents
13 and the New Mexico Junior College. The advisory
14 committee has discussed work force development issues
15 necessary for the successful interface of technology
16 programs between the public schools and the junior
17 college.

18 Second, NEF has engaged in discussions, and I
19 would consider those substantive discussions, with the
20 Eunice Public Schools regarding needed curricular
21 changes that will provide our students with the
22 appropriate opportunities to successfully compete with
23 their peers in the areas of technology integration and,
24 as you've heard tonight, hopefully to have our children
25 stay home and have very good jobs here and be part of

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1 the community and also be part of their families. As a
2 concrete example of that, Eunice High School next year
3 will revise its algebra I course and offer applied
4 physics this upcoming school year.

5 Third, NEF -- and this is the one I think
6 probably most of us are very interested in, NEF
7 continues to support our high school athletes. With the
8 assistance of NEF, our girls went to the state
9 volleyball tournament, and after our regional basketball
10 games on Friday and Saturday, tomorrow and Saturday --
11 and I'm sorry, Jal, but unfortunately, it's just us
12 that's in the regional tournament. After the Friday and
13 Saturday games, NEF will again help our girls by
14 providing funds to defray the costs of attending the
15 state basketball tournament. This continuing support
16 for our Lady Cardinals is another indication of the true
17 team spirit that is exhibited by this company.
18 Furthermore, we continue to progress in other areas of
19 support, including technology and facility needs and
20 security enhancement.

21 Thank you for your careful consideration of
22 this critical application. Thank you.

23 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you very much.

24 Let's go to Steve Rounds.

25 MR. ROUNDS: Stan.

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1 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Stan. I'm sorry.
2 Maybe the facilitator better go home.

3 MR. ROUNDS: I have been called a lot
4 worse things in my career. I have been superintendent
5 for 21 years, and I've heard it all.

6 Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. I'll make
7 it very short. I do again want to recognize the Eunice
8 Public School students over here. We've got some good
9 ones up the road about 20 miles also by the way in
10 Hobbs. And we look forward to continuing to work with
11 the districts in Lea County.

12 First, I want to make a personal statement this
13 evening and, I think, to kind of set the stage for some
14 of the comments I'll make both on behalf of the Hobbs
15 Municipal Schools and also on behalf of the Hobbs
16 Chamber of Commerce as president elect of that
17 organization. I've not been to Almelo. So I'm one of
18 the people that has not gone there.

19 However, after ten years in Lea County and a
20 lifetime in New Mexico, one of the things that I've
21 learned is to trust the word of my friends and not to
22 assault their character. This evening I've heard from
23 some of my friends and people I trust, Ross Black, Don
24 Whitaker, Carroll Leavell, Johnny Cope, Joe Calderon,
25 Hector Ramirez, Mr. Turner, and the others who spoke who

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1 had been there. One thing that my dad taught me as a
2 Methodist preacher is look people eyeball to eyeball,
3 and then you'll see if they're telling you the truth.
4 Folks, these folks don't lie.

5 Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of Hobbs
6 Municipal Schools, let me make a brief statement. This
7 letter has been forwarded to Chairman Nils Diaz of the
8 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Good evening to the
9 staff. Good to have you in Eunice and in Lea County.
10 Also Governor Bill Richardson and Secretary Ron Curry.

11 Dear Sirs, we are at the threshold of an
12 opportunity to make significant improvement to the
13 economy and New Mexico with the application of the LES
14 national enrichment facility for placement in Eunice,
15 New Mexico. As the largest school district and as a
16 partner with the other four districts in Lea County, the
17 Hobbs Schools have been actively involved in ensuring
18 that the educational landscape in Lea County is prepared
19 to affirmatively respond to the needs presented by this
20 endeavor. We have found the LES/NEF to be an active
21 partner in planning and interaction with the schools.

22 As you've already heard, and I'll add to the
23 list, already a number of initiatives have been
24 undertaken jointly. The superintendents of Lea County
25 along with New Mexico Junior College have met several

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1 times with the staff from LES/NEF to design curricula
2 appropriate to the forecast needs for employment in that
3 facility. In fact, folks, if you'll think with me just
4 for a moment, our freshmen and sophomores in our schools
5 today are a potential work force for this facility. We
6 take that very seriously here in Lea County in the
7 education.

8 The Hobbs Schools have benefited from the
9 efforts of personnel from NEF already to provide
10 educational enhancements to the Hobbs High School in
11 this current year. A robust school-to-work plan is
12 being jointly developed, which is designed to keep Lea
13 County students employed in Lea County by preparing them
14 with employment skills appropriate to this effort. In
15 fact, I am the dad of two who live in Lea County and a
16 granddad of one just seven weeks ago who I hope to keep
17 here also. And continued dialogue will assure LES/NEF
18 continues to act as a good neighbor in the schools and
19 throughout our communities.

20 As we prepare for the inclusion of 400
21 short-term jobs in Lea County and prepare to accept the
22 responsibility to serve the eventual 210 employees who
23 will permanently staff the first phase of this facility,
24 we are sure that LES/NEF will continue the cooperation
25 and partnership necessary to ensure the continuation of

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1 a high-quality education for our students.

2 Therefore, ladies and gentlemen of the National
3 Regulatory Commission, I do urge your support for this
4 application and assure you of our support and continued
5 support of this venture.

6 If I may now switch hats, let me talk as the
7 president elect of the Hobbs Chamber of Commerce and
8 read a short statement from that chamber.

9 On behalf of the Hobbs Chamber of Commerce and
10 its 700 members, we are writing this letter in support
11 of the Louisiana Energy Services' application to build
12 and operate a national uranium enrichment facility in
13 the Eunice area of Lea County, New Mexico. We believe
14 and are convinced that the need for a safe and
15 controlled uranium enrichment facility in the United
16 States would provide the necessary independence and
17 security so important to our current and future energy
18 needs.

19 In reviewing the current data and in visiting
20 with knowledgeable handlers of nuclear and uranium
21 by-products, it appears that NEF's proposed process and
22 technology development will meet or exceed the
23 Commission's requirements. The enrichment facilities in
24 Almelo, Netherlands, is the proposed model in the
25 development of the NEF facility in Lea County, New

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1 Mexico. The information reviewed shows the Almelo
2 facility to be safe, well secured, and well operated,
3 and presents a positive and desirable addition to their
4 neighbors.

5 The economic impact of 250 technical positions
6 in the southeastern corner of New Mexico could and would
7 change the landscape and culture of our communities in a
8 very positive way. The addition of highly skilled
9 employees and families relocating to the Lea County area
10 would give needed stability and growth to the area. The
11 site selected for the NEF facility has been proven to be
12 seismically stable and free from foreign contamination.
13 Nowhere in the United States would you find such a
14 location for this process. The proposed NEF facility
15 would back up to the Waste Control Specialties of
16 Andrews, Texas, property and a possible secure and
17 long-term repository for the by-products from the LES
18 plant.

19 The Hobbs Chamber of Commerce has carefully
20 reviewed the information regarding the uranium
21 enrichment process and feels comfortable endorsing the
22 Louisiana Energy Services application to build a
23 processing facility in Lea County and knows that the LES
24 corporation would be a good corporate citizen. This is
25 an important step that Lea County, New Mexico's, taken.

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1 And it has not taken it lightly and without thought and
2 concern. The time is right for the United States to
3 have its own processing facility, and Lea County is the
4 right place in which to build it. Thank you.

5 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Okay. Thank you,
6 Stan.

7 And we'll go to Mr. Ojeda, and then we're going
8 to go to Becky LoDolce.

9 Mr. Ojeda.

10 MR. OJEDA: (spoken in Spanish and English)
11 Members of the NRC. My name is Hermillo Ojeda. I
12 am the president of the Hispanic Workers Council in
13 Hobbs, New Mexico. I am in support of this uranium
14 enrichment plant to be built in Eunice. I have been
15 living in Hobbs for over 30 years, and I have seen the
16 community grow along with my business. So this project
17 would be good for the community.

18 My concern at first was safety because of the
19 word "uranium." However, it was due to the wrongful
20 information rumors about the word uranium and its
21 dangers. However, after getting all the information
22 from our meeting in Hobbs, I have been straightforward
23 with any questions that I had. I am now convinced that
24 there is not a safety issue at all.

25 Also, my trip to the uranium enrichment plant

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1 in Almelo in The Netherlands was really a project that
2 opened my eyes. I was 100-percent convinced in my
3 support for this project. Along with other members of
4 the New Mexico delegation that visited the plant, I
5 personally talked to the citizens of Almelo. And the
6 leaders of Almelo are 100-percent in support of their
7 plant and in support of this plant. But what I was
8 impressed the most is the job stability and the loyalty
9 of the 20-plus years of employment of the Almelo plant
10 in The Netherlands.

11 Therefore, I support this plant 100 percent.
12 And also, on behalf of the Hispanic Workers Council and
13 its members, we also support the NEF. Thank you very
14 much.

15 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you,
16 Mr. Ojeda. And Becky.

17 MS. LODOLCE: Good evening everybody. My
18 name is Becky LoDolce. I'm with Concerned Citizens for
19 Nuclear Safety, and I have some concerns from residents
20 of New Mexico, including Lea County, that we would like
21 to add to our statement.

22 Starting with employee health and safety. Most
23 of the workers of this plant will be dealing with deadly
24 uranium hexafluoride. The EIS must consider cumulative
25 health effects from inhalation and ingestion of uranium

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1 hexafluoride to workers. There is a federal program to
2 compensate uranium workers under the Radiation Exposure
3 Compensation Act. But unfortunately, because of poor
4 record keeping, most former uranium workers will not
5 receive compensation. Therefore, the EIS should include
6 a plan for maintaining and updating workers' records in
7 a secure and public location where NEF employees can
8 access the radiation records in the event that they must
9 file under the Compensation Act.

10 Environmental justice: A thorough
11 environmental justice review must be included in the
12 EIS, which includes NEF's effects on minority and
13 low-income populations. According to the Lea County
14 clerk, in 1999, more than 35 percent of the population
15 in Lea County was minority. There was an unemployment
16 rate of 9.3 percent. And the EIS must consider these
17 factors in their environmental justice analysis.

18 Facility disposition: The EIS should include a
19 detailed disposition and closure plan for NEF, including
20 cost analysis. It should specify disposal locations for
21 any contaminated material that may be produced by
22 decontamination and decommissioning of the facility and
23 transportation routes that will be necessary for
24 disposal of decontamination and decommissioning wastes.
25 Further, the EIS should include risk to workers that

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1 participate in decontamination and decommissioning
2 activities.

3 In terms of waste: NEF is expected to produce
4 upwards of 140,000 tons of depleted uranium waste during
5 the course of its operations. LES has stated that this
6 waste would remain in New Mexico no longer than the
7 operating lifetime of the facility, which is estimated
8 to be 30 years. Even if the deconversion facility and
9 permanent disposal areas were built, LES waste would be
10 last in a long line of 450,000 tons of such waste
11 awaiting deconversion and disposal in Paducah, Kentucky,
12 and Portsmouth, Ohio. The EIS should address where the
13 LES waste will be stored in the interim between closure
14 of the NEF and deconversion and disposal. What
15 transportation routes will be required to transport the
16 wastes first to the interim location, and finally to the
17 proposed deconversion and disposal sites? Will there be
18 public meetings and opportunity for public comment for
19 those living along the transportation route?

20 We request that the EIS examine possible
21 locations for both the deconversion and disposal
22 facilities, as well as transportation routes to those
23 facilities. Furthermore, the EIS should include impacts
24 to areas along the transportation routes, as well as
25 detailed accident analyses, including examination of the

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1 adequacy of emergency response teams along those
2 transportation routes.

3 On the topic of water: The EIS should specify
4 the amount and source of the water that it will be using
5 and the effects it will -- its use will have on water
6 supplies in the entire region. The EIS should consider
7 current surface and groundwater resources but also those
8 for the operational lifetime of the facility. What will
9 the effect on the facility be on water resources as they
10 begin to diminish further over time?

11 On the topic of Urenco: In cases of proposed
12 nuclear weapons facilities, the EIS is required to
13 outline the effects that the facility will have on the
14 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970, of which the
15 United States is a signatory. NEF will not be a weapons
16 facility. However, given LES's parent company, Urenco
17 has a history of selling sensitive nuclear weapons
18 information to Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, and Libya. We
19 therefore request that the EIS include an analysis of
20 Urenco's operations and their effect on the NPT and
21 horizontal weapons proliferation internationally.

22 Moreover, as Urenco's questionable reputation
23 may make the facility vulnerable not only to -- as a
24 terrorist threat, but also espionage activities, the EIS
25 must include a detailed and extensive section outlining

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1 security measures that will be required to protect the
2 facility. While we understand the sensitive nature of
3 security planning, we request that as much of this
4 security plan as possible be available to the public.

5 In terms of need for this facility: Currently
6 the demand for enriched uranium is low while there are
7 abundant quantities currently available. One of the
8 major sources of enriched uranium is from the
9 dismantling of nuclear weapons from both the United
10 States and Russia. In the 1980s there was more
11 production of enriched uranium. In 1993 worldwide
12 demand for enriched uranium was half of the production
13 capacity. Therefore, the EIS must address why this
14 facility is necessary given the current abundance of
15 enriched uranium and the possibility that LES may not
16 profit from NEF and may be unable to repay the \$1.8
17 billion dollar bond issued by Lea County.

18 And just a comment to the residents of Lea
19 County. The 1.8 billion dollar construction for NEF
20 equates to more than 50 percent of the entire fiscal
21 year 2003 budget for the State of New Mexico, and a
22 generous 300 jobs created in the Eunice area equates to
23 approximately six million dollars per job. And roughly
24 200 jobs would be permanent jobs. I just spoke to my
25 people of that. And -- or I'm sorry. Would be -- the

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1 life span of those jobs would be 30 years. Six million
2 dollars per job is an awful lot to invest in one
3 generation of workers. Thank you.

4 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you. We're
5 next going to go Shalina Shaver, Erika Valdez, and
6 Twilla Parker.

7 Ms. Shaver.

8 MS. SHAVER: Hi, my name is Shalina
9 Shaver, and I am currently the branch manager of
10 Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Hobbs, New Mexico. We just
11 wanted to come out and say tonight that we fully support
12 LES coming to our community. We are very excited to
13 have you here. Thank you, NRC, for wanting to protect
14 us and make us safe. I don't understand at this point
15 in this meeting how anyone can have questions about the
16 safety that is surrounding this project. Once LES meets
17 these guidelines and comes to our community, we should
18 have no doubt based on what these people are doing for
19 us that we would be safe. Our children would be safe
20 and our entire community safe. And of course, we'll
21 have economic development and diversity. Thank you.

22 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you Shalina.
23 Erika.

24 MS. VALDEZ:(spoken in Spanish and English)
25 Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Erika

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1 Valdez. On behalf of the Hispanic community and also
2 echoing the forthcoming sentiments of the Economic
3 Development Corporation of Lea County, I am here to
4 express the full support, faith, and confidence in the
5 ability for LES to operate a safe and economically
6 advantageous company for the future prosperity of Lea
7 County, the city of Eunice, and the state of New Mexico.
8 Thank you.

9 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Erika.

10 Twilla.

11 MS. PARKER: And my name is Twilla Parker.
12 I'm here just as a citizen. While I was in school -- I
13 went to Penn State for my graduate work -- I did various
14 work in economic background, agricultural background,
15 environmental background, including cost and benefit
16 analysis of proposed projects such as this, and rural
17 development. I never thought that Hobbs would not be
18 considered a rural community. And I am from Hobbs. But
19 in our research, we always used Hobbs as rural instead
20 of urban because we are so isolated, right? The
21 government considers us urban, and I found out a few
22 things when I was learning about economic development in
23 rural economies.

24 One is that we need to be diversified. And our
25 economy has not been diversified. I'm still fairly

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1 young, but I can remember in the '80s and the '90s the
2 oil bust. My parents weren't in the oil field. But our
3 family did still suffer in the oil bust. And our
4 communities have been trying to diversify. And if we
5 are able to diversify, then we'll be able to survive
6 those low slumps better.

7 Okay. Another thing that people have brought
8 up is something that I've always heard called the brain
9 drain. In Pennsylvania this is a big problem, which is
10 where I heard the term brain drain. Overeducated youth
11 leave, and we lose that education that we've paid for.
12 Well, I'm one of those educated youth that has recently
13 came back. And I would say when I left Hobbs, I had no
14 plans of coming back to Lea County. But being in
15 Pennsylvania, I missed Lea County, and I missed the
16 people.

17 And I see this as an opportunity to allow our
18 young people to get their education and to use it here
19 so we don't lose that education. We keep our education
20 and our skilled youth in Lea County. Thank you.

21 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Twilla.

22 We're going to go next to Rose Gardner. And
23 then we're going to hear from Robbie Roberts and I think
24 it's Rosina. Rose Gardner.

25 MS. GARDNER: First, I would like to

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1 extend a welcome to the NRC. I'm thankful that this
2 procedure is in place regarding licensing and your role
3 in it. The next thing I wanted to say was I truly
4 apologize to all of those here that have been offended
5 by the remarks made by some of our Lea County officials.
6 It's unconscionable to treat our guests this way.

7 The first topic I would like to address is the
8 road conditions on some of our New Mexico roadways. The
9 two-lane road that leads to the plant site is in a very
10 deteriorated condition. There's daily oil field traffic
11 as well as the only road leading to the county landfill
12 and the waste depository. I've lived in Eunice 42 out
13 of 46 years, four years served in the United States Air
14 Force. And as long as I can remember, there have been
15 numerous accidents both on Highway 18 that leads to the
16 area and also on the Texas highway towards Andrews.
17 Sure there are different reasons for these accidents,
18 but nevertheless, they involved fatalities. The use of
19 this road -- I use it. My husband uses it to go to work
20 in Seminole. I use it to go get goods in Odessa,
21 medical facility in Andrews. My family lives in
22 Andrews, Odessa. These roads need to be properly zoned.
23 They need to be improved. And I'm paraphrasing because
24 I've got a lot of things to say.

25 Also, due to the increased amount of

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1 construction that will be related to the plant and then
2 after that the transport of containers of uranium ore
3 and enriched uranium. Also, these are definitely safety
4 issues that need to be addressed and how this will
5 impact our daily lives for the future. We also get
6 traffic from Texas that passes through Eunice on their
7 way to our popular recreation location in Carlsbad as
8 well as the Sacramento Mountains including Cloudcroft
9 and Ruidoso. Some of these people do stop in Eunice to
10 eat or gas up. So we owe it to them to check out the
11 traffic and roadway safety aspect.

12 The next topic is concerning the storage
13 container safety and the yet unresolved disposition of
14 future waste. I won't go into all the amounts of waste
15 that we know are already sitting out there in the United
16 States. Whose waste is going to take priority? Who
17 will dispose of this waste? And all the necessary
18 repositories and where, those haven't been addressed,
19 not with concrete and solid evidence to prove to me that
20 this issue has been resolved. It has not.

21 I'd hope that the other waste in the United
22 States is taken care of and given priority over the
23 Eunice waste. Those people around here have had to live
24 with the dangers for many years, and our government has
25 not taken care of the problem.

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1 The next one I'd like to discuss is the safety
2 issue involving the open contamination water pit that
3 will be onsite. It was described as having walls and
4 managed to protect wildlife from getting in the water.
5 The sun's evaporation process as well as what happens if
6 we get some heavy rains and the pit overflows? Will it
7 contaminate the soil around it? Can the water be
8 contained at all? The construction of the pit is of
9 interest as well. What type of liner can be used that
10 will not leak and show resistance to external conditions
11 that we are assured there will be no soil and underwater
12 contamination.

13 There will be emissions from the plant that
14 will possibly be harmful to waterfowl and humans as well
15 as livestock in the area. Certainly these are to be
16 monitored. But if high levels of contamination are
17 found, are there enough precautions in place to assure
18 that no one will be hurt.

19 The water resource developments are very
20 limited. Since our main water resource is the Ogallala
21 Aquifer, I'm concerned about the misleading figures I
22 have come across regarding the amount in the plant.
23 Even though some of these have been addressed tonight,
24 I'll be interested. LES claims on its website that it
25 will use 75 acre feet of water per year, about the same

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1 as a neighborhood of 210 homes or an 18-hole golf
2 course. Yet the Hobbs Golf Course uses 283 acre feet of
3 water, and Eunice only has nine holes, and it uses 210
4 acre feet. I have questions about the water figures
5 again.

6 I do not believe that the 40-year water study
7 performed in '99 and 2000 in Lea County took into
8 account a swell in population over the next 30 years of
9 growth of approximately 70,000 people. As LES pointed
10 out in their recent article on how Almelo, Netherlands,
11 grew from a small farming community to a city of 70,000.
12 Is our aquifer able to sustain not just plant usage of
13 water for approximately 30 years, but an increase in
14 population that's two times the amount of our bigger
15 neighbor Hobbs? I believe this is an important issue
16 that needs to be addressed.

17 The surrounding communities as well as other
18 New Mexico counties are depending on the same water
19 which comes from a nonreplenishing aquifer. In a news
20 release dated June 12, 2003, by the United States
21 Department of Agriculture states, the search for
22 solutions to the declining water level in the Ogallala
23 Aquifer recently gained momentum with the introduction
24 of the High Plains Aquifer hydrogeologic map and the
25 Monitoring Act by Senator Jeff Beeman. This legislation

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1 seeks to extend the life of the Ogallala by setting up
2 the framework needed to work towards long-term solutions
3 to reduce the rate at which water from the aquifer is
4 being mined.

5 It goes on to say, how long will precious water
6 of the Ogallala Aquifer will last is not known.
7 Therefore, conservation is critical. Solutions must be
8 sought and alternatives explored.

9 Has Lea County and the city of Eunice completed
10 all the recommendations and suggestions made by the
11 engineers that performed these studies? Some
12 suggestions regarding water storage and the drilling and
13 acquisition of additional wells have not been addressed
14 by our city of Eunice as of yet. Again, these
15 recommendations were made before this plant was even in
16 the picture.

17 The final issue I would like to address is the
18 valuation or devaluation of properties in Eunice. As a
19 landowner with four homes -- houses, rather, and two
20 small businesses, I am concerned about the values of
21 these properties. If there should be a problem at the
22 plant, a contamination of land or water occurs, how is
23 that going to affect me? Will my property value go
24 down? If the value goes down and I decide to abandon my
25 hometown for a new and safer place to live, who would

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1 want to buy my properties? I would think that I'd have
2 to take a loss on all that I have. Frankly, this is not
3 acceptable to me because at this point in time, there is
4 no plant. There is no radiation problem. There are no
5 radiation emissions vented in the air.

6 The recent information disclosed about possible
7 international industrial espionage and intrigue on the
8 part of a former Urenco scientist also gives one reason
9 to pause and reflect on the possible consequences that
10 do not show up for many years and how all of it could
11 possibly impact our state and national security.

12 In closing, I would like to ask that you as
13 members of the NRC to deny once again the license
14 application to Urenco, LES/NEF. Thank you.

15 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

16 Robbie Roberts.

17 MR. ROBERTS: I'm Robbie Roberts, and I'm
18 here to issue a statement of support from both the
19 Lovington Chamber of Commerce and the Lovington Economic
20 Development. I've been involved in this project since
21 early part of their acknowledgment that they were
22 interested in this area. And I have had nothing but
23 really support from LES. And therefore, I wrote a
24 resolution from the Lovington Economic Development
25 Corporation, of which I am the president, in support of

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1 them. The Lovington Chamber of Commerce asked me to
2 come here and represent them because our economy needs
3 to be diversified to support and grow. We have an
4 existing retail customer base that needs more services
5 and businesses in which to grow our economy.

6 As Economic Development president, I know that
7 economic development can only work through vision and
8 dreams of individuals and companies willing to step out
9 of mainstream and focus on new technology and new
10 business, which will give a shot in the arm to a region
11 that is nearly wholly dependent on hydrocarbon
12 production. That's all been stated tonight, and I'm not
13 going to go into any further discussion on it.

14 Basically, I come here now as a concerned
15 citizen. I'm a chemical engineer. Through college I
16 elected to take nuclear chemistry as part of my program.
17 Through my experience as a chemical engineer and
18 building plants around the United States and the world,
19 I have been able to be onsite at several nuclear
20 technology facilities. And I have never -- and being
21 able to inspect these plants, understand the safety that
22 is now in the new technology of nuclear energy, that the
23 dangers have been reduced. Of course, there is danger.
24 But as a part of an age that grew up, we now realize the
25 fallacy and the fear of nuclear energy. And we reject

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1 the horror stories presented to us in our youth. We
2 realize that simply because we cannot see it, that it's
3 dangerous. It can be disposed of. It can be handled
4 with safety.

5 We know that nuclear energy is a clean energy.
6 It's been stated that -- 20 years ago that was their
7 phrase. It does not pollute our atmosphere as the
8 majority of the electricity that is produced in the
9 United States which comes from coal that is a continual,
10 not just an upset, not just a possible, it is a
11 continual pollutant. It does cause acid rain. It does
12 contaminate the water supplies and our local surrounding
13 area.

14 Therefore, it is my recommendation that we
15 support the LES/NEF facility, and I would like to state
16 that if we continue to take a not-in-our-backyard
17 stance, that we will lose the ability to have input into
18 these facilities that are going to be built, whether
19 they're here, whether they're around the country. If we
20 continue to say not in our backyard, they're going to be
21 built, but as long as we keep them close, we can have
22 input and we can bring up the standards.

23 And the last point that I would like to bring
24 is that as a parent, New Mexico has been a natural
25 resource base. Oil and gas, uranium, potash, all of

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1 these are natural resources that have been a base for
2 the economic development of New Mexico throughout the
3 years. Our biggest natural resource is our children,
4 and right now we all know, we've heard -- I have two
5 young children, nine and eleven. Right now we know that
6 they will be seeking employment elsewhere. And it is
7 for their sake we have to depend on their knowledge and
8 what they learn as they grow up. We have to depend on
9 the NRC to protect them. But for them ever to come back
10 here, to ever be able to come back here and to have the
11 life, the jobs, we're going to have to support the
12 industries that have the higher-paying jobs and
13 therefore provide them with a standard of living. And I
14 would love to see my kids come back here. And that's
15 really about all I can say.

16 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Rob.

17 Is it Rosina?

18 MS. GREEN: Hi, I'm Rosina Green, and I'm
19 from Jal, and please don't throw anything at me. And
20 Claydene just gave me one of those looks.

21 In regards to the application by Louisiana
22 Energy Services to build and operate a uranium
23 enrichment plant in Lea County, New Mexico, the board of
24 directors of the Jal Chamber of Commerce would like to
25 offer our utmost support.

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1 Jal is located approximately 25 miles south of
2 the proposed facility in southern Lea County. Our
3 economy has relied on the energy industry throughout
4 most of our history. Many years of oil and gas
5 production have acquainted us with the hazards and
6 benefits that go hand in hand with any type of energy
7 production. We have no doubt that this facility will be
8 operated in a safe and efficient manner that will be
9 beneficial to the people of Lea County and in the best
10 interest of our national energy needs.

11 The full-time jobs that will result from the
12 operation of this facility will be a tremendous boom to
13 the economy of southeastern New Mexico, an area that has
14 faced difficult times for the past 15 to 20 years. If
15 for no other reason, the people of this area have voiced
16 strong support for this project. Our meetings with LES
17 representatives and visits by local officials to the
18 enrichment plant in The Netherlands has further
19 convinced us of the safety and the efficiency of such a
20 facility.

21 We understand that the application review
22 process by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is a
23 necessary and important part of the creation of this
24 plant. We pledge to cooperate fully with the NRC in any
25 way we might be called upon to see that this license

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1 application is reviewed in a timely manner that will
2 ensure safe, efficient, and secure operations by the
3 proposed national enrichment facility.

4 Thank you for your consideration, and we invite
5 you to come and visit us in Jal any time.

6 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

7 We have a few more speakers, and we came to
8 hear you tonight, and we're going to hear you, and I
9 just thank all the rest of you for your patience. We
10 are going overtime. Our next four speakers, Paul
11 Campbell, Joan Tucker, Pat McCasland, and Kathy Bearden.

12 Paul.

13 MR. CAMPBELL: Good evening. I came here
14 this evening to lend my support to this project. I
15 think it's very important to our area and our community.
16 My wife and I moved to Hobbs 25 years ago to join in a
17 family business. That family business is now, as of
18 last year, in its fourth generation of family coming
19 into that. But without economic growth and without
20 diversification, I don't think we'd ever get to see the
21 fifth. So I really think it's important we look at the
22 economic diversification.

23 The other issue was the safety issue, and I
24 have all the confidence in LES and the information
25 they've provided us, even more confidence in my friends

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1 and community leaders that went to Almelo and researched
2 that and came back with that information. That gives me
3 very good confidence. But I have greater confidence
4 because I know the NRC is going to watch out and make
5 sure that everything is done correctly.

6 So I again appreciate you coming and the role
7 that you have in that and fully support LES/NEF. Thank
8 you.

9 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

10 And this is Joan.

11 MS. TUCKER: Good evening. I am Joan
12 Tucker, and I am privileged to be here tonight. A very
13 warm, warm welcome to the members of the NRC. We are
14 delighted to have you here.

15 As a regional community, we are comprised of
16 independent, spunky people with pride and spirit, and I
17 might add, a willingness to stay up late when the
18 occasion arises. Like so many in this room, I am
19 intensely proud to be part of this area and care deeply,
20 as you do, about the future of this terrific regional
21 neighborhood.

22 As we explore economic development and
23 diversification opportunities, we must assess will this
24 particular business, will this particular industry add
25 to our quality of life? If we don't make that

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1 assessment, we fail our responsibility for the future,
2 and we trample our community pride and our community
3 self-respect. Some measures of quality of life for a
4 business include caliber and number of jobs, treatment
5 of their employees, placing a high value on education,
6 environmental impact and safety, corporate citizenship,
7 and of course ethics. Measured by this standard, LES
8 will prove to strengthen our quality of life and in
9 consequential ways.

10 Secondly, to the point of nuclear energy, there
11 is much emotion surrounding the issue of nuclear energy
12 and safety. However, when you strip away the emotion
13 and the fear and when you objectively review the
14 science, the facts, we find sound basis for much greater
15 nuclear power throughout our nation and a clear, clear
16 need for nuclear power.

17 It is tremendously exciting to think that Lea
18 County could be home to a respected company with a
19 respected track record that would help make that happen.
20 Ladies and gentlemen of the NRC, thank you for your
21 review and your consideration.

22 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you very much.

23 Pat.

24 MR. MCCASLAND: You know, I've been
25 sitting in the back, and some of the people I really

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1 couldn't understand very well, so I want to make sure
2 you can hear me. Everybody all right? Everybody awake?
3 Stay awake, please.

4 Well, thank you to the NRC for coming tonight.
5 You know, in reality the NRC, New Mexico Environment
6 Department are the advocates for this county. They're
7 the ones that are going to ensure that our safety, going
8 to ensure that our environment is not impacted to a
9 degree that we will be impacted. So I appreciate you
10 guys, and we're going to have to rely on you. The EIS
11 that you're going to be doing, I hope when I read it,
12 I'm not going to have to be critical.

13 I was born in Eunice in 1950, and I went to
14 school here, graduated from high school, went to Ozark
15 Christian College, New Mexico Junior College, graduated
16 from New Mexico State University with a bachelor of
17 science degree in 1974. And I worked for a major oil
18 company, worked for myself. Then I went to work for the
19 New Mexico Environment Department.

20 And there were eight guys here while ago --
21 they've already gone, but they were here from the State
22 of New Mexico. All of them live in Santa Fe. It's a
23 long ways down to Lea County from Santa Fe. But I used
24 to work for one of those guys. And it just so happened
25 I was in the bathroom, and he was in there. I hadn't

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1 seen him in five years, and he was down here, and he's
2 been through this process or familiar -- he's real
3 familiar with the process. He said, Pat, he said, have
4 you looked into it?

5 And you know what? It's interesting. We've
6 heard a lot of comments tonight from several people, but
7 I haven't heard anyone say that they've read the
8 application. Now, when I was working for the
9 Environment Department, my title was environmentalist.
10 Okay? And I really had a hard time saying, yeah, I work
11 for the environment. I'm an environmentalist. Because
12 immediately you're a tree hugger. And that's a problem.
13 In Lea County that's a problem. I want you to know
14 that. Right, Harry? Where's Harry Teague?

15 MR. TEAGUE: And that's right.

16 MR. MCCASLAND: And that's right. And I'm
17 taking way too long, and I know. But in that
18 application it talks about the residents that live 2.63
19 miles west of where the facility's going to be. And
20 that's exactly where I live. And my wife is -- she is
21 so blessed to have me there because I can read, and I
22 know where the application is. And I've read the
23 application, not all of it though. Now, I mean, I don't
24 want to overimpress you or anything.

25 But when I read the application, it talked

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1 about the things that I was concerned about,
2 environmental impacts, the release, airborne release,
3 transportation, the operations of the facility. And you
4 know, I came up, it's a hazardous activity. It's like
5 getting married. If you do everything right, you'll
6 stay married, and that's what we want. And marriages
7 can last for a long, long time.

8 And so my one question is, is the NRC going to
9 have a person onsite every day at that facility?

10 MR. JOHNSON: The plan is that there'll be
11 inspectors that will inspect the construction and during
12 the operation, but right now we're not planning on a
13 full-time resident inspector.

14 MR. MCCASLAND: Okay. That answered one
15 of my questions.

16 I have a recommendation, and it may seem -- I
17 don't want to offend LES or anyone. Because I know the
18 benefits are going to be there for Lea County from this
19 facility. And the association with LES, I wish it was
20 owned by a United States company. Nevertheless, I think
21 that there is a need in this county for maybe an
22 oversight group appointed by the Lea County Commission,
23 a stakeholder's group, if you will, to look at the
24 environmental impact statement and possibly even assist
25 the NRC in making a permit that will be a better permit.

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1 I thank you for letting me speak tonight, and I
2 apologize for speaking a little too long.

3 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you for that
4 suggestion and also for the analogy between marriage and
5 LES. Let's see where we go with that one.

6 Kathy Bearden, and then we're going to go to
7 Tom Jones.

8 Kathy.

9 MS. BEARDEN: I'm Kathy Bearden, and I'm
10 president of the Economic Development Corporation of Lea
11 County. EDC of Lea County believes that this project is
12 a great opportunity to enhance the economic diversity of
13 this region. We further, more importantly, believe that
14 this is a great opportunity to strengthen our national
15 energy security. We believe nuclear energy is an
16 important piece of our national energy future as we
17 strive to reduce our dependence on foreign sources of
18 energy. This facility will play an important role in
19 our energy security by providing a competitive domestic
20 source for our future nuclear fuel needs.

21 I've been asked by some of my business
22 counterparts in the county to present these letters of
23 support for the LES project. As you know, EDC of Lea
24 County has come to the conclusion that LES would be a
25 strong, responsible steward of the environment and of

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1 the security and health of the citizens of Lea County.

2 Also, I think it would be presumptuous of any
3 person in this room to try to tell the NRC how to do
4 their job. But you have given your word, and we'll hold
5 you to that word that you will be thorough, that you
6 will be diligent, that you will also be quick. So we
7 appreciate your coming to Lea County, and thank you.

8 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

9 Tom.

10 MR. JONES: I'm Tom Jones of Waste Control
11 Specialist. I had a speech that's been essentially
12 repeated several times tonight. So I'll address a
13 different issue. We support and welcome LES to come in
14 as our next door neighbors.

15 One of the things that I've been exposed to
16 over my career is the opportunity to work with a couple
17 of companies that make billion dollar investments in
18 their manufacturing facilities, high-tech facilities.
19 And there's a couple of things there that have not been
20 mentioned tonight. A company that spends a billion
21 dollars for a high-tech manufacturing facility needs the
22 community's support like we're addressing tonight. But
23 what they take to the community, I think, is what is
24 important. The investment that a company like this can
25 make in employees and education and training and safety,

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1 number one, they've got a lot of money invested in
2 folks, and they're going to treat them right. And
3 that's the kind of employers we want.

4 But they're also the kind of company that's
5 been making an investment in the community. I think you
6 see a lot of the folks in this kind of a company are
7 going to be actively involved in the community. You're
8 going to see blood drive donations increase. You're
9 going to see United Way collections increase. And
10 you're going to see a lot of investment in the local
11 businesses. There's a lot of quality control
12 requirements that a company like this has got to impose
13 upon their vendors. So there will be a lot of education
14 and a lot of treatment of vendors.

15 So I guess I really welcome them for what
16 they're going to do for the community, long-term and
17 spin-off things that we haven't discussed. Thank you.

18 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you, Tom.

19 We're going to go to Glen Hackler, then Steve
20 McCleery and Terah Bettis.

21 Glen.

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: He spoke earlier.

23 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Oh, okay. Steve
24 McCleery.

25 MR. MCCLEERY: Good evening to the NRC. I

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1 want to welcome you to Lea County. My name is Steve
2 McCleery. I'm president of New Mexico Junior College,
3 and this is indeed an honor to have you here.

4 I think one of the things in higher education
5 that we have to be good stewards of is teaching people
6 how to think, teaching people how to triangulate better,
7 and people to come to a conclusion on their own. So I'm
8 not here to speak for every one of our students. That
9 doesn't make sense. But I am here to specifically speak
10 for the New Mexico Junior College as the president of
11 the board, not the students and not the staff. They
12 have to come to their own conclusion. That's healthy.
13 That's good. And hopefully, we're creating people in
14 that workplace that can think critically, put the
15 information together, and then come to their own
16 conclusions.

17 I have written a letter to Mr. Diaz in support
18 of this project. And the reason I've done that is
19 because the data, at least that I have gathered -- and I
20 have read part of the application process. It was
21 delivered in volumes to my office. It goes on and on
22 and on. I would not sit here and tell you that I have
23 read every word. I have not.

24 But any of the questions that I would have
25 asked in an information gathering stage to triangulate

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1 the data tells me a couple of things. One is that the
2 product that's going to come out -- okay, I'm not
3 talking about the by-product -- is going to be a good,
4 well-cared-for, well-documented, if you will, facility.
5 And that's important to everybody in this room. But I
6 will also tell you that I have met multiple times with
7 people from LES and from Urenco. I find them to be very
8 ethical. I find them to be very forthright. I find
9 them to be forthcoming with any information that I need.
10 And I find them in every case willing to go to the next
11 level to address the questions.

12 At their request, they met on our campus with
13 our students, and they held a question-and-answer
14 session. I was very impressed with the questions that
15 our students asked. But I was equally impressed with
16 the answers that in this case Rod Krich was able to
17 meet. He didn't skirt the issues. He addressed the
18 point. And he challenged them. He said don't trust me;
19 research for yourself. That's good advice.

20 But at this juncture, I will tell you I am very
21 confident in the process. I'm very confident in LES.
22 I'm very confident in Urenco. I'm very confident in
23 this plant facility. I'm very confident in these people
24 out here, particularly the educational setting, to be
25 able to provide a trained work force. And that's going

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1 to be as critical as anything in this because you can
2 have all the facilities in place and all the things from
3 NRC's points, but you've got to have the work force to
4 follow through. I am confident that Lea County from one
5 end to the other will provide that work force.

6 I'm confident that our politicians and our
7 legislators can provide the needs in terms of road
8 infrastructure, electricity, water, those things will be
9 addressed. Because we're a people that have come to the
10 table. We're very proactive. And I'm confident in the
11 citizens of Lea County to continue to ask the right
12 questions.

13 And then finally, I'm very confident in the
14 process that you're doing to triangulate the data.
15 You're going to sort it out. You're going to look at
16 that and process it. At this point in time I think you
17 will find very favorable results as to what LES wants to
18 do. Thank you.

19 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you.

20 We have our last five speakers. Terah Bettis
21 and then Dan Snow after Terah.

22 MR. BETTIS: I'm going to make mine short
23 and sweet because I'm tired. But my name is Terah
24 Bettis, and I work for Vision Realty. I sell real
25 estate. And I live here in Eunice, and I have two

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1 children of my own.

2 And I also traveled to Almelo, Holland. It was
3 a wonderful trip. And I'd just like to say that I was
4 very impressed with the plant there. The people were
5 wonderful. The staff was very professional. They
6 answered any questions that we needed. Plus, there was
7 a few of us that walked around town and did a little
8 shopping, went into the stores. And we asked about
9 how -- what their feelings were about the plant and if
10 they were comfortable with it being there and so forth.
11 And we had not one negative reply at all. Everyone was
12 very pleased with the plant.

13 And I too would like to see my children grow
14 up, go to college, and be able to stay here as well, and
15 to see my grandchildren grow up. I'd hate to have to go
16 through and not get to spend time with them.

17 So anyway, that's all I have to say. And I
18 appreciate you guys coming, and I'm very confident in
19 what y'all are doing also. Thank you.

20 FACILITATOR CAMERON: And thank you,
21 Terah.

22 Is Dan Snow still with us? Okay. Thank you.
23 We're going to go to Jerry Vaughn and Danny Beavers and
24 then to Jim Ferland. Jerry and Danny? Okay. Let's go
25 to Jim Ferland.

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1 MR. FERLAND: And I do promise I will make
2 it short. On behalf of LES, thank you all very much
3 from the NRC for coming here tonight. And again, on
4 behalf of LES, we look forward to working very closely
5 with you over the coming few months to process the
6 license application and then to construct and operate
7 what I believe will be a very safe facility for our
8 employees, for the citizens, and for the environment.

9 I hope you are tonight as impressed as I always
10 am with the quality of the leadership and the citizens
11 of Lea County and the surrounding communities. Given
12 the comments tonight, I essentially only have one thing
13 left to say. You know, we look forward to LES becoming
14 a responsible corporate citizen and a key member of this
15 wonderful community you-all have. Thank you all very
16 much for coming tonight. Have a safe drive home.
17 Thanks.

18 FACILITATOR CAMERON: Thank you. I think
19 that's our last speaker for tonight. And I'm going to
20 ask Lawrence Kokajko, NRC, to close the meeting out for
21 us.

22 MR. Kokajko: Good evening once again. I
23 would like to thank you for attending tonight's scoping
24 meeting for the environmental impact statement
25 associated with the Louisiana Energy Services'

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1 application for enrichment facility. I am heartened by
2 the large turnout on this very significant project. And
3 I want to tell you that it is our pleasure to be here to
4 serve you.

5 We have heard your comments, and we will take
6 them under consideration in our environmental review.
7 And I would like to invite you to attend the meeting
8 that we have when we develop the draft environmental
9 impact statement later this year.

10 Finally, as a matter of housekeeping, I would
11 be remiss in my duty if I didn't thank those who helped
12 make this possible, particularly the NRC staff,
13 particularly Melanie Wong who did a great job trying to
14 orchestrate and get everybody here. Jessica Umana and
15 Alicia Williamson, would y'all stand up, please? And
16 Carol Walls too. These people have been dynamite, and I
17 rely on them a lot.

18 I'd also like to introduce a couple of other
19 people: Lisa Clark, who's an attorney representing the
20 NRC; as well as one of our premier technical reviewers,
21 David Brown, off to the side. You're also represented
22 with a very fine man in Tim Johnson, and I want to thank
23 Chip Cameron for facilitating as well.

24 With that in mind, this meeting is adjourned.

25 (10:29 p.m.)

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