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NRC Public Hearing on North Anna's Early Site Permit – Louisa, VA 8-15-2006

I am here tonight to voice my support for one of the most misunderstood technologies of today's time – the generation of electricity using nuclear energy . . . and specifically for my support of the Early Site Permit at North Anna. I first became fascinated with nuclear science as an undergraduate studying physics. My interest led me to graduate school where I studied nuclear engineering at the University of Virginia located less than 40 miles west of where I am standing tonight. I later began my career as a Nuclear Engineer, where it was, and still is, our job to ensure the safe operation of the reactor core, the reactor coolant system, engineered safeguards, and all the safety-related equipment and systems of the Dominion nuclear units.

The more I learn about nuclear power generation, the more I am assured that it is safe, reliable, and clean. The track record of the industry and Dominion speaks for itself. Although I come to you tonight as a proud employee of Dominion, as a past-Chairman of the VA Section of the American Nuclear Society, and as a active member of the North American Young Generation in Nuclear, I am compelled to speak tonight, not to my allegiance to these organizations, but as a reassured citizen.

I am reassured because our nation needs more base-load energy generation and tonight's hearing is one step to a process that brings us closer to resolving our need for more clean, economical, and reliable power. I emphasize base-load generation because many opponents to nuclear power seem to miss this significant factor.

I agree that solar and wind power should continue to provide more and more power as a percentage share of the total power generated. Although these technologies are maturing, getting a large concentration of energy is not possible due to the distributed nature of the ultimate energy source (the sun and the wind). I also believe in conserving energy, and believe that we need to continuously make efforts to reduce our energy consumption. However, even when solar and wind power is applied to its fullest extent, these sources coupled with conservation cannot meet the country's overall demand for electricity.

The only environmentally conscious solution to adding base-load generation is nuclear power. I am an environmentalist, and I cannot comprehend how some people, who claim to be environmentalists, are still debating nuclear energy's environmental value.

Of all energy sources, nuclear energy has the lowest impact on the environment, including water, land, habitat, species and air resources. Nuclear energy is the most eco-efficient of all energy sources because it produces the most electricity in relation to its minimal environmental impact.

Nuclear energy is efficient and cost-effective due to its high plant performance coupled with modernized plants, low production cost, future price stability, and clean air compliance value. New nuclear plants at North Anna will ensure nuclear energy's continued contribution to both our economy and the protection of our environment.

I agree with the draft Environmental Impact Statement that concludes that there are no environmental impacts from the possible future construction and operation of a nuclear power plant at North Anna that should prevent issuing an Early Site Permit (ESP). I applaud Dominion for taking the steps necessary to ensure nuclear energy remains an option.

Thank you.

Todd Flowers
Richmond, Virginia

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