

**U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Chairman Christopher T. Hanson
Remarks for Former NRC Commissioner Dr. Peter B. Lyons
Memorial Service
Los Alamos, New Mexico
August 29, 2021**

Good morning, I'm Christopher Hanson, Chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

It is a great honor for me to be here this morning representing the women and men of the NRC in remembering the life, work, and legacy of former Commissioner Lyons. He served as a Commissioner from 2005 to 2009.

I worked with and for Pete later at the Department of Energy, where we tried to establish a new(ish) policy for high-level radioactive waste. An uphill battle and an interest we would share for many years after.

We discussed this and so many other topics over lunches of German food in D.C. And it wasn't just me, Pete was incredibly generous with his time. Many others shared a quiet table with him at Café Berlin and relished it as much as I did.

When I had the opportunity to join the NRC as a Commissioner in 2019, I called Pete first for his thoughts and counsel. He didn't hesitate, telling me it was his favorite job in government.

He said the issues were interesting and important, the agency professional and technical staff first-rate, and you could really pick an area to make a difference and focus on it.

What made his advice hit home was that he knew me and genuinely cared—both about the agency which he served and about me. He knew it would be a good fit—and so far, at least—he's been absolutely right.

It might be hard for people outside of the Washington, DC, bubble to appreciate what a rare human Pete really was in that world.

Pete never got Potomac Fever – that affliction that causes people to only care about the politics and not the substance of policy decisions. Washington can be a tough place—full of big egos, bigger ambitions, and too much money.

He was inherently inoculated against all of that. He was so genuine and so earnest – about his interest in people and in policy. He really wanted to make progress on hard problems, whether nuclear waste or the expansion of the benefits of nuclear and fusion power sources.

In a time when there is so much heat and so little light in the world, Pete's approach to policy, work, and life is worth remembering and emulating.

He was a friend and a mentor and remains a role model for public service to me and to so many.

When I asked NRC staff to share their memories of Pete, the same themes came up again and again. Aside from admiration for his scientific bona fides, he is remembered as genuine, kind, collaborative, respectful of everyone...and apparently always up for a good meal.

I have here a collection of remembrances and photos of Pete's time on the Commission. It's a small token of the admiration and appreciation that staff of the NRC have of Pete. I'm pleased to present it to you, Peggy, Dave, Dan, and Michael.

I'm joined today by Ms. Cathy Scott, Commissioner Lyons' legal assistant during his time at the NRC.

On behalf of both of us and the 2,800 employees of the NRC, please accept my deepest condolences for your loss. We join you in your grief and have prayed for comfort for you since Pete's passing.