

# **Official Transcript of Proceedings**

## **NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

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National Enrichment Facility  
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

\* \* \* \* \*

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

THURSDAY,

MARCH 4, 2004

\* \* \* \* \*

EUNICE, NEW MEXICO

\* \* \* \* \*

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 sad, 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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