



ZIA NATURAL GAS COMPANY

P.O. BOX 2220 • HOBBS, NEW MEXICO 88241 • (505) 392-4277 • FAX (505) 392-3504

March 3, 2004

Chairman Nils Diaz
US Nuclear Regulatory
Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20555

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Regulations and Directives
Branch
USNRC

Chairman Nils Diaz,

The National Enrichment Facility would have a great impact on helping to diversify our economy. This would happen thru employment opportunities for our citizens, an increased tax base for Lea County and other business entities in support of LES operation. The construction project will be one of the largest single enterprises in this region. The annual employment package, corporate gifts and operational expenses would have a tremendous impact on Lea County.

Most communities would have large concerns about a uranium enrichment facility. However with the good corporate neighbors of Waste Isolation Pilot Plant and Waste Control Specialist, Lea County knows the dangers and they can be controlled. I personally have toured the above ground and below ground facility at WIPP and understand the safety steps Washington TRU Solutions takes to make sure their employees and citizens of southeastern New Mexico are not in harms way. I know our community and Zia Natural Gas Company would welcome Louisiana Energy Services to southeastern New Mexico.

National Enrichment Facility's gas centrifuge enrichment facility will benefit the United State by meeting the requirements for enriched uranium. Since nuclear generated electricity has proven to be a practical, dependable and irreplaceable energy source the citizens of the US should support them. I trust the NRC and other federal agencies will investigate the proposed NEF project and find that LES and Urenco Ltd can operate the facility safely.

Please allow me to tell you about Zia Natural Gas. Zia Natural Gas Company is a division of Natural Gas Processing, a gas utility and pipeline company headquartered in Worland, Wyoming. We are in the business of supplying natural gas to residential, small commercial and large commercial customers. This is done through our gas utility operations. As a natural gas utility company, we know the importance of nuclear energy. One of the causes of volatility in natural gas is believed to be because of the increased demand in electricity generation by natural gas. We would hope with the availability of enriched uranium the demand on natural gas could soften, which would lower cost for the consumer.

Please give National Enrichment Facility and the citizens of Lea County every consideration and accept this as an invitation for assistance as needed in the future.

Respectfully,

Guy Kesner, District Manager
Zia Natural Gas Company

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Add = T. Johnson (TCS)
M. Wong (MCA)