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Good Evening. My name is Tom Hinton. I live in South Carolina. I am quite fortunate to have a home right on the lovely Savannah River. My porch looks out on the peaceful flowing waters. Plant Vogtle essential IS in my back yard. Thus, I have a vested interested in the planned expansion of the facility.

I also have an interest in it from a professional perspective. I work at an ecology laboratory, one that specializes in studying environmental contamination, including radionuclides. In addition to being an ecologist, I also consider myself an environmentalist. By that, I mean that protecting the environment is a high priority to me.

I am aware of the environmental impacts of nuclear energy. Many years ago I worked as an environmental engineer at a uranium mine in Wyoming. As the company carved a huge, gaping hole into the earth, I desperately tried to refill it, remediate it, and restore it.

I have also been to Chernobyl. I have seen the destroyed reactor; in fact, I am one of the few individuals that has been INSIDE Chernobyl's sarcophagus. I earned my doctoral degree in radiation ecology from Colorado State University in 1989. I then went to the Paul Scherrer Institute in Switzerland for three years to study the effects of the Chernobyl accident. I have continued this course of study throughout my career as a University Professor. Just two weeks ago I was in Gomel, Belarus. Belarus was one of the three former Soviet-satellite countries most impacted by the Chernobyl accident. I was an invited speaker at an Advanced Research Workshop on the Effects of Multiple Contaminants, including radiation.

I thus bring some professional credibility to my stand on the expansion of Plant Vogtle. While I am concerned about the direction America is headed, and my opinion often differs with that of the current administration, I do applaud their desire to enhance nuclear power generation within the U.S. I fully support nuclear energy for commercial power use. I fully support the expansion of the Plant Vogtle facility.

My supports stems from knowledge of contaminants in the environment. We live in a chemically sophisticated world. Better living through chemistry is the reality. Humans are masters at combining chemicals in magical ways to produce goods that truly enrich our lives. The price we pay, however, is that complex mixtures of metals, nicotine, and benzene are found in our blood; PCBs, PAHs and POPs settle in our fat; we inhale pesticides that cling to our house dust; endocrine disruptors are excreted in our urine. Infants BEGIN life with detectable levels of PCBs and DDT in their veins....laced from mothers' breast milk. All of this occurs while the ice melts in the arctic from global warming. These are the things that threatened our environment, our existence,not the emissions from nuclear power plants.

From an environmental standpoint, nuclear power is good for this country, and thus I fully support the expansion of the Plant Vogtle facility.

Dr. Thomas G. Hinton; 2229 Riverside Plantation Road. Jackson, SC 29831. (phone 803 302 9537).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Hinton', written in a cursive style.