

2-13-2017

Tres Hicks comments below

Good evening Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Tres Hicks. I serve as Chair of the Board for EDCLC (the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County). We are a county wide partnership of businesses, local governments and educational institutions. Our mission is to expand and diversify Lea County's economy. I am a Professional Engineer and Surveyor with a consulting firm located in Hobbs, where I live.

The EDCLC and our members have long embraced advanced technologies and projects involving the Nuclear industry. The EDCLC has worked side by side with several entities seeking to site a nuclear related industry here in Lea County. Similarly, we as a business community, embrace the need for an Interim Storage Facility. We believe this geographic region is well suited for such a facility. Under the right conditions of suitability, appropriate technology, environmental monitoring and preparedness, and economic value, we welcome this industry to our region.

We are confident the NRC in its study efforts will thoroughly evaluate the proposed technology as it relates to the suitability for the intended use here, and considering the term of its intended use here. We are also confident you will evaluate all the possible changes in conditions and outcomes should things not go as planned, and will ensure a viable plan is in place for these possibilities.

New Mexico residents are the primary affected populations, NOT Andrews:

NRC should weigh heavily the concerns of New Mexico residents along the border of New Mexico because it is the people in Eunice, Hobbs, Lovington, Jal and the people who work at URENCO, and in Oil and Gas, and other energy and related industries, that are most proximal to the site and not the town of Andrews which is some 36 miles from the site.

We request the NRC consider the suitability of site conditions, relative to the local New Mexico population and the risks to same. Evaluate the burden of that risk, and the response requirement that will be borne by our local governments. The study should also consider the impact on our physical transportation infrastructure and upgrades that may be necessary to that infrastructure to ensure safe and effective operation of the site.

These concerns extend to making sure that the laws and regulations of New Mexico regarding its environment should be held paramount as we are the most affected by the location of this proposed site. We encourage the NRC to require and ensure that New Mexico's interests are protected and provided for.

This concern should also apply to economic value received from the siting of such a facility immediately adjacent to our population. New Mexico and the local communities within Lea County should not be left holding the bag for addressing these concerns while receiving no compensation for same.

The Health Safety and Welfare of the New Mexico citizens most affected by the siting of this project here is of utmost concern.

Thank you for your time and attention.