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3 MR. LONG: Good afternoon. My name is Lou
4 Long, and I'm vice-president of technical services
5 for the Southern Nuclear Operating Company. I've
6 got 29 years of nuclear experience with the
7 Southern Company, I've got degrees in physics and
8 nuclear engineering from Georgia Tech. And I've
9 got the responsibility for nuclear fuel within the
10 Southern Company, and that's a job I take very,
11 very seriously. And I've got kids and I've got
12 grandchildren, and it's part of them (sic) that
13 I'm concerned about in doing my job. I also serve
14 as vice-chairman of the Nuclear Energy Institute
15 Spent Fuel Working Group and probably have been
16 involved in this area for about 15 years, myself
17 personally, having gone out a long time ago to
18 look at this thing called Yucca Mountain.
19 Southern Nuclear is a licensed operator of
20 Hatch and Vogel nuclear plants in Georgia and
21 Farley in the state of Alabama. Our plants are
22 operated on the principle of safety first and
23 reliability second. In 1998 our plants produced
24 over 43 million megawatt hours of electricity.
25 Plant Hatch generated a new record there, Farley

1 over 12 million, Vogel 18 million megawatt hours.
2 Because of these plants at Farley and Vogel the
3 Southern Company avoided -- and listen to this
4 number -- 39 million metric tons of carbon dioxide
5 that would have been released by the alternative,
6 that is, the combination of coal and gas, those
7 greenhouse gases that this town's so concerned
8 about.

3... 9 From the very beginning of nuclear power the
10 federal government has assumed the responsibility
11 for handling the high-level waste. There are a
12 couple of reasons for that. One, they already had
13 high-level wastes that were left over from the
14 weapons program that produced the bombs --
15 Hiroshima and Nagasaki and all our weapons program
16 -- and also the nuclear Navy had a lot of spent
17 fuel. And in addition, at that time they were
18 supporting the development of nuclear power as a
19 new technology in our country. The Nuclear Waste
20 Policy Act of 1982 was very specific about that
21 program and how it'd be carried out. And
22 specifically, the Department of Energy would begin
23 accepting fuel in 1998; and we, as of 1982, would
24 begin contributing to the funding of the
25 development of the storage spot for our high-level

3 cont.

1 waste. We were in fact required to sign contracts
2 back in June of 1983 that codified this obligation
3 between us and the Department of Energy. And as
4 of this date the Southern plants alone have
5 contributed almost $600 million into that fund,
6 and our total industry payments have been 16
7 billion.
8 The DOE did not keep its obligation to come
9 here and show up at Plant Hatch in January 1998 to
10 begin to take our fuel, and now the completion
11 date of Yucca Mountain is anticipated to be 2010
12 or beyond. So we have been -- originally we
13 designed these plants with the idea that we would
14 have about 20 years of storage there on site, and
15 at that time we'd begin shipping it off to the
16 federal government as contracted. Because they
17 haven't shown up, we've been forced to spend
18 literally millions of dollars to prepare
19 additional on-site storage on our sites, moneys
20 that did not have to be spent if the DOE had
21 performed on time.

1...

22 I've visited Yucca Mountain. I've talked to
23 the scientists, a lot of them National Lab people,
24 very, very reputable kind of people. And I've
25 looked at that facility out there. It's in a

1 cont.

1 stable geologic formation that was birthed some 12
2 million years ago. And if ever there was a perfect
3 spot to put spent fuel, that's it. And certainly
4 it's better than the alternative of leaving it
5 down at our sites for some indefinite period of
6 time.

7 Two points: High-level waste is not like
8 low-level waste. Low-level waste is something
9 that gets generated from hospitals and whatnot.
10 We generate a lot of it. It gets put off and it's
11 stored above ground. High-level waste is not that
12 way, and I take issue with the idea of saying that
13 this stuff if about -- it's markedly less than 50
14 years, in 50 years from the way it is now. That's
15 just not true, particularly for the transuranic
16 elements that are in that fuel. They're just as
17 dangerous 50 years from now as they are now.
18 MR. LAWSON: Thirty seconds.
19 MR. LONG: We know how to move fuel, and some
20 people are going to talk about that later on. But

2...

21 I take issue with the idea of not putting high-
22 level waste in a place that we have studied and
23 understand, with engineered barriers that are
24 designed for 10,000 years, as opposed to leaving
25 it on our site for 50 years. I'm worried about it.

2 cont. If we -- We have tried to be a responsible industry. Our decommissioning funds now assume taking those sites back to pristine levels, and that's the way I want to leave it for our kids. This high-level waste needs to go to someplace where it's isolated and protected, and we'll have been the good citizens that we have said we're going to be. Thank you.

MS. SWEENEY: Thank you.

MR. LAWSON: Thank you, sir. Evidently I misspoke. Ms. Palmer is on my list, and if she's ready to speak I could take you now. Is she here? Okay. And she will be followed by Susan Clark and Lauren McDonald. Sorry about the mixup.