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Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Hearing
Public Comment on Calvert Cliffs New Reactor Application
Wednesday, January 25, 2012 1:00-2:30PM
Calvert Marine Museum

Hello, I am here today on behalf of the Clean and Safe Energy Coalition, or CASEnergy. The CASEnergy Coalition is a grassroots organization. The coalition supports the increased use of nuclear energy to ensure an environmentally clean, safe, affordable and reliable supply of electricity.

Nuclear power is one of the nation's largest sources of electricity that produces virtually no greenhouse gases. The license application for a new reactor at Calvert Cliffs comes at a critical time as the U.S. anticipates a projected 24 percent rise in electricity demand by 2035. With an average growth in gross state product of 2.6 percent over the past five years, Maryland needs the additional 1,600 megawatts of baseload power that a third reactor at Calvert Cliffs will provide. In recognition of this fact, the Maryland Public Service Commission has issued a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for the new reactor.

Nuclear energy is the only large-scale, clean-air electricity source that can be expanded to dramatically mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. As an example, nuclear energy-generated electricity avoided 12 million metric tons of carbon dioxide in Maryland in 2010. This is the same amount of carbon dioxide that is released in a year by 627,000 passenger cars.

Maryland relies on nuclear energy as a vital component of its diverse mix of electricity sources. Nuclear energy accounts for 89 percent of Maryland's clean-air electricity generation and more than 32 percent of overall electricity generation.

Nuclear energy supports clean air, land, water and wildlife, and has perhaps the lowest impact on the environment of any energy source. Nuclear energy facilities also require less surface area to produce the same amount of electricity as other sources. As an example, one nuclear facility with a footprint of one square mile creates the same amount of energy as 20 square miles of solar panels or 1,200 windmills. Since no new transmission corridors will be required to support the new reactor at Calvert Cliffs, very little additional space will be required for the project.

Additionally, areas surrounding nuclear facilities provide an excellent habitat for all species of plants and animals as they are often developed as wetlands that allow trees, flowers, and grasses to thrive. This is possible since water discharged from a nuclear energy facility is extremely clean and never comes in contact with radioactive materials.

Federal and state regulatory bodies have already given their approval and support for a new reactor at Calvert Cliffs after conducting rigorous environmental impact studies. Not only has the Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement as the result of a meticulous review by technical experts, but the Maryland Board of Public Works has also given its unanimous approval of UniStar's tidal wetlands permit application.

Nuclear energy supplies safe, reliable and affordable power for Maryland without polluting the air or harming the ecosystem. On behalf of CASEnergy, thank you for your attention to this important public policy matter.