

PUBLIC HEARING - PLANT WASHINGTON  
10/6/2009

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GEORGIANS FOR SMART ENERGY COALITION

FAMILY & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CITIZENS' HEARING

ON

PLANT WASHINGTON

Air & Water Quality

October 6, 2009

7:00 p.m.

Kennesaw State University  
Social Sciences Building, Room 3030  
1000 Chastain Road  
Kennesaw, Georgia

By: SaWanus LeGrand-Fleming

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GEORGIANS FOR SMART ENERGY COALITION  
Kennesaw, Georgia

1 MARY CARR, RENEWABLE ENERGY COORDINATOR  
2 SOUTHERN ALLIANCE FOR CLEAN ENERGY  
3 250 Arizona Avenue, NE  
4 Atlanta, Georgia 30307  
5 (404) 373-5832  
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21 MARY CARR: State your name and town where you're  
22 from for the record, it will probably help going through  
23 these comments and just try to limit it to two or three  
24 minutes. I'm going to call time if things go too long  
25 or is not related.

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1 TOM BARKSDALE: I'm Tom Barksdale. I'm the  
2 chairman of the Cobb Alliance for Smart Energy. We were  
3 formed to try to persuade Cobb EMC and their customers  
4 not to support this plant among other things. We are also  
5 committed to trying to bring about other reforms and the  
6 guilt or innocence of Cobb EMC. I and my organization  
7 strongly oppose the building of Plant Washington. We  
8 think this is probably the worse time in the history of  
9 Georgia and the United States that anybody should be  
10 building, going to go up that's a given it's only a  
11 question of by how much. Every expert and analyst that  
12 now comes forward on climate change says that it is  
13 happening more rapidly than even he said it would.

14 Plant Washington would be environmentally destructive.  
15 It is economically unfeasible, it's hazardous to our  
16 health and it is not needed. We could meet our  
17 electricity needs through efficiency alone if you take  
18 efficiency and add to that all solar and wind and  
19 others. It will more than that take care of our  
20 electricity demands. Georgia Tech issued a massive  
21 study just last month that made exactly that position.  
22 Georgia Tech study said that if we turned to efficiency  
23 alone, not talking about solar, if we just devoted our  
24 time to limiting efficiency, it would more than take  
25 care of electricity demands in the entire Southeast

1 until 2020. There are other studies that continue to  
2 reaffirm that idea. We do not need to be building Plant  
3 Washington. It is destructive and it is not needed.

4  
5 MATT COCHRAN. Matt Cochran, and I'm a Cobb  
6 County resident. I just want to put it into the record  
7 that I speak only for myself at this meeting. And I  
8 have just a quick few points since comments thus far are  
9 not focusing on the permit, I did want to limit my  
10 comment to the permits that have been issued.

11 First of all, I believe that Plant Washington  
12 would provide stable economic growth and prosperity for  
13 our state at a time when we desperately need jobs. I  
14 believe that it will provide tax dollars for the schools  
15 in Sandersville and for other public safety and  
16 community needs they are sorely in need of. I also  
17 believe that the plants providing up to 1,048  
18 construction jobs in almost four thousand permanent  
19 years of construction work will be a great boom to the  
20 Georgia economy. And that the 130 new permanent jobs  
21 created by the plant will also help Georgia economy. In  
22 fact, that this plant will produce 7.2 million dollars  
23 in additional wages from these jobs. I think it's an  
24 important thing to remember as well.

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1           DAVID CAGLE: My name is David from Douglasville,  
2 Georgia and I'm with Jobs for Georgians. Coal is a  
3 proven and reliable cost-effective way to generate  
4 electricity. Tremendous advances in clean coal  
5 technology make it possible to generate more power from  
6 less coal, and with lower emissions per unit of energy  
7 than ever before. As proof of the great technological  
8 advances made in clean coal technology, consider that  
9 the rate of major emissions from coal-based electricity  
10 plants has dropped by more than 50 percent since 1970,  
11 while the use of coal has tripled during the same  
12 period. This plant will use the best available control  
13 technologies to increase efficiency and reduce emissions.

14           Furthermore, when coupled with EPD's Mercury  
15 Reduction program, there will be a 90 percent reduction  
16 in Mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants across  
17 the state when Plant Washington is online. Plant  
18 Washington will be by far the cleanest coal-fired power  
19 plant ever built in Georgia. Georgia does not have the  
20 volume of wind or sunshine hours to be efficiently  
21 enough to be fully dependable on wind and solar energy.  
22 This is why I am here to support Power4Georgians Plant  
23 Washington Power Plant. Thank you.

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1 LANCE McCRARY: Lance McCrary, I live in Dalton,  
2 Georgia and I'm here representing Jobs for Georgians.  
3 Plant Washington will have minimal impact on the Oconee  
4 River. According to the USGS records, the average flow  
5 of the Oconee River is about 1.4 billion gallons per  
6 day. On an average day, Plant Washington will use less  
7 than one percent of the flow the river. On a peak day,  
8 this creeps just above one percent. When the river flow  
9 is such that water must be obtained from the aquifer,  
10 Plant Washington will continue to return about 1.5  
11 million gallons daily into the river. Thus helping to  
12 enhance its downstream flow even during dry periods.

13 Drawing water from the deep aquifer will not  
14 affect any existing rivers, ponds, streams or wells.  
15 The number of wells and their spacing along the 27-mile  
16 pipeline will help ensure that drawdown from any one  
17 location in the aquifer will be minimized.  
18 Studies of river flow and weather patterns over the  
19 last 20 years suggest it will only be necessary to  
20 withdraw groundwater from the aquifer for about four  
21 months once every five years. This rate of groundwater  
22 withdrawal is expected to have a minimal impact on the  
23 aquifer and allow more than adequate time for the  
24 aquifer to "recharge" before it is necessary to draw  
25 from it again.

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1 Plant Washington is expected to return about 1.5  
2 million gallons daily of water to the Oconee River, even  
3 when it is obtained from the Cretaceous Aquifer. This  
4 means that during times of low river flow, Plant  
5 Washington will actually be helping downstream water  
6 flow. Water used by the plant will be cleaned and  
7 tempered to state surface water standards and then  
8 returned to the Oconee River. The plant will use  
9 discharge ponds to keep the water return rate relatively  
10 consistent. Thank you.

11  
12 JENNA JIWA: Jenna Jiwa, a student here at  
13 Kennesaw State. I don't feel like the coal plant is a  
14 good choice for Georgia to make because I feel like it  
15 will damage our water system especially if we were to  
16 have another drought. And I than that shows right  
17 there, because what if we have another drought and we  
18 can't replenish there and the river is already low and  
19 we can't replenish our water any other way. And we need  
20 to look for the short term.

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1           BRANDON MACIE: Brandon Macie, I'm also a  
2 student. Even environment, the fact that it doesn't  
3 really seem to be a Democratic process involved. The  
4 hearings themselves: it kinda baffles me that the waste  
5 and toxins statistics they speak for themselves. I  
6 think the state already has enough toxic waste being  
7 polluted and emitted on a day-to-day basis. This will  
8 be the 91 with 11 already preexisting. It just don't  
9 make sense for Georgia to continue to go down this path.

10           If we are to be anything of an economic powerhouse in  
11 the future then Georgia needs to find more efficiency.  
12 It's to seek out ways to find new means of handling  
13 energy and transmitting it to the consumers.

14  
15           JULIANNE TREW: Julianne Trew, I'm from White  
16 Sulphur, Georgia. I'm also a student here at Kennesaw.  
17 I don't believe that Plant Washington is the best way to  
18 go about this because just the amount of damage to the  
19 water system and the lowering of the water table in the  
20 aquifer that is not easy to replenish at all. Any  
21 drainage from that can bring down the water levels in  
22 the water table for miles around. And the amount of the  
23 mercury released is definitely detrimental to everyone  
24 not just people in the immediate area but everyone  
25 because that water will eventually leak out into the



1 ocean and impact the entire planet. Also, with the air  
2 emission, it's not the best way to go about it.

3  
4 HARTMOT RAMM: It really strikes me that the one  
5 thing that's being ignored by EPD which I'm trying to  
6 generate some interest in renaming that interest. Since  
7 I went to the Sandersville hearing and I was struck by  
8 the fact that there was a very cozy relationship and it  
9 looked like people had something to say something.  
10 Something against the coal plant were being opposed not  
11 only by the people who were proposing the coal plant and  
12 were completely uninterested really in what the public  
13 had to say or whether harm might be fall to the public.  
14 Not only were the public there being confronting by the  
15 opposition of those people but also of the EPD.

16 And it struck me also that there was this big  
17 elephant in the room called global warming which wasn't  
18 allowed to be mentioned because that was somehow off the  
19 table but yet that has a bearing on everything, directly  
20 and indirectly. It has a direct effect on air quality  
21 because as temperature goes up the air quality ocean  
22 level increase enormously and so does the harm done by  
23 various other chemical processes in the atmosphere and,  
24 of course, water levels fall. By not mentioning global  
25 warming we can ignore the fact that there has been

1 tremendous science being done. The best science that  
2 I've ever seen in the science area. I'm a former  
3 professor of physical science and the science there is  
4 absolutely astounding.

5 I would venture to say there is no science,  
6 physical science anyway that can match the work that's  
7 been done on global warming. There is no question that  
8 it will go up. It's absolutely no question that the  
9 water level will fall because of the higher rates of  
10 evaporation especially in the Southeast, especially in  
11 the Southwest but also in the Southeast especially in  
12 the South period.

13 All of these arguments which ignore global  
14 warming are in a sense is ignoring the most important  
15 factor at all. They are in a sense totally irrelevant  
16 arguments. Arguments based on statistics of what we  
17 know is the case today. If irrelevant, what's important  
18 is what will happen in 10, 20 and 30 and 50 years. A  
19 coal plant last more than 50 years.

20 In 50 years, the Earth will not resemble what we  
21 are living now unless we make drastic changes in the  
22 level of carbon dioxide and change fundamentally the  
23 direction that the climate is taking because of the  
24 carbon dioxide that we are emitted into the atmosphere  
25 and around every culprit of the carbon. The worse

1 possible fossil fuel is coal. It's the worst possible.  
2 So it's the greatest offender in any discussion of water  
3 quality and air quality and suggests that it's okay  
4 because this event it can exist now.

5 Even now, I don't think it's admissible, but even  
6 now it's certainly in the future. It won't be final as  
7 jobs go. People in Cobb County are claiming they are in  
8 favor of jobs, where are these jobs going to be. Are  
9 they going to be in Cobb County? Jobs in Georgia don't  
10 care about Cobb County. If the money that is going to  
11 be spent by Cobb he may have object the coal plant is  
12 spent here a huge number of jobs. It would be an an  
13 enormous boom to Cobb County and we won't see that if  
14 the money goes to the coal plant.

15  
16 ANDREW DOAK: My name is Andrew Doak, resident of  
17 Cobb County. If emission standards are likely to  
18 increase in the next 50 years, then how can a plant with  
19 an estimated 50 year life span remain economically  
20 viable? When it's likely going to be fined for it's  
21 production an any amount of waste produced is  
22 unacceptable if it endangers life.

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1 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm from Atlanta,  
2 Georgia. I just feel that this plant is old technology  
3 as much as we have made advancements with this. It's  
4 burning water to create steam to create electric nuclear  
5 power does the same thing in another fashion. We have  
6 come a long way with how we can do the same thing and be  
7 sustainable. It's the 2000s, almost the 2010s.

8 I remember in elementary school being taught  
9 about how this all works and reach new avenues. We are  
10 not using them. I mean we really need to get with the  
11 times. If you think about it the water is being used  
12 and the arguments over Lake Lanier, I mean water is  
13 right now. Not only are we using it but we are  
14 polluting. Let's come up with something better in fact,  
15 we already have. Like I said, let's come up with the  
16 times and use this new technology instead of the same  
17 old, we are smarter than that now.

18  
19 CRYSTAL MIRON: My name is Crystal Miron from  
20 Acworth. I am a member of Cobb EMC. I am a member of  
21 the Cobb Alliance for Smart Energy. The Atlanta metro  
22 area and the surrounding counties already suffer from  
23 the worst air quality in the region and the high asthma  
24 rates.

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1           The mercury in our fish and drinking water is  
2 already a clear source of health risks to both humans  
3 and wildlife. Numerous proposed coal fired plants in  
4 the surrounding states have already been canceled and  
5 rejected on both financial and economical grounds. In  
6 Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee and even South  
7 Carolina reject the notion of more coal plants, why  
8 should Georgians have to take up the burden of further  
9 degradation while allowing these utilities to profit and  
10 to sell off the energy to the same state who don't want  
11           it in their own backyards.

12 Before any new coal plants should be considered,  
13 EPD should require that all existing power plants meet  
14 clean air that are already in place and already should be  
15 upgraded to the highest level of efficiency and  
16 pollution controls.

17           Power4Georgians would like us to believe that  
18 this will be a clean coal plant. There is no such thing  
19 really as clean coal. From the mountain top removal to  
20 transport to disposal of coal ash. Coal creates toxins  
21 that I know must be responsibly dealt with. Currently  
22 coal ash is not classified as a hazardous waste, although  
23 it undoubtedly contains toxins that are hazardous to  
24 human health. I do not believe that Georgians should  
25 have to accept these risks.

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1 MARY CARR: I really want to thank everyone. It  
2 really shows that this is a statewide issue that you all  
3 came out whether or not you are opposed to the coal  
4 plant or not. You're here tonight because you know that  
5 it affects you and it affects all citizens of Georgia.  
6 So thank you for participating and have a good night.

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8 (The public hearing ended at 7:50 p.m.)  
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