

## CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA  
95814

February 25, 2011

Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future  
United States Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20585

**RE: Request for a California Hearing**

Dear Members of the Blue Ribbon Commission:

The signatories -- Democrats and Republicans from both Houses of the California State Legislature -- invite the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future to convene a meeting in California.

Concern over seismic events at nuclear power plants in California is not a new issue. In July 1976, the Humboldt Bay Nuclear Power Plant was shut down for seismic retrofitting in response to concerns arising from discovery of previously unknown seismic faults. In 1983, updated economic analyses indicated that restarting Humboldt Bay would not be cost effective and the plant was designated for decommissioning.

Due to concerns about grid reliability posed by seismic disruptions, in 2006 the California State Legislature passed AB 1632, legislation directing the California Energy Commission (CEC) to develop a long-term plan to address seismic vulnerability of large baseload electric generation facilities.

In July 2007, a magnitude 6.8 earthquake in Japan rocked the Kashiwazaki Nuclear Power Plant, the largest nuclear plant in the world. The plant experienced ground motion nearly twice the shaking that was anticipated when the plant was designed, resulting in minor radioactive leaks. The plant was immediately shut down and two years later remains offline. The cost resulting from this loss of power totals more than \$12 billion - \$6 billion in replacement fuel costs and \$6 billion in economic impacts.

In October 2008, the CEC released their draft AB 1632 report titled *Assessment of Nuclear Power Plants* calling for the performance of additional three-dimensional seismic studies of the fault zones around Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. On October 22, 2008, PG&E, owner of Diablo Canyon, responded to the CEC's recommendations, stating in testimony before the CEC that, "...we believe there is no uncertainty regarding the seismic setting and hazard at the Diablo Canyon Site."

Mere weeks later, it was announced in November 2008 that the USGS had discovered a previously unknown significant fault potentially running directly underneath Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. This new fault represents the second active fault in the immediate vicinity of the plant. The characteristics of the new fault, as well as its relationship with the first fault, are largely unknown as detailed seismic studies have yet to be completed. In particular, it is unclear if the Shoreline Fault intersects the Hosgri Fault, which is also located offshore of Diablo

Canyon. An intersection of the faults could significantly alter previously held assumptions about potential seismic activity and threat to Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant.

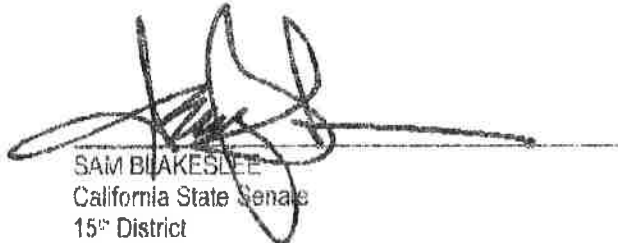
The CEC's AB 1632 report also included recommendations for additional seismic studies at California's other operational nuclear power plant, San Onofre. Given the uncertain seismicity of their respective locations, Diablo Canyon and San Onofre present unique logistical challenges regarding the long-term, on-site storage of nuclear waste.

California is at a critical moment in its nuclear history. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is currently reviewing an application from PG&E to relicense Units 1 and 2 at DCNPP whose current licenses expire on 2024 and 2025 respectively. Southern California Edison is expected to submit a license renewal application for Units 2 and 3 at SONGS in 2012, whose current licenses expire in 2022. The NRC acknowledges the special seismic circumstances of California's nuclear reactors in the draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants. The work of the Blue Ribbon Commission could provide valuable insight and inform the NRC, as well as the California Public Utilities Commission, as they consider these applications and the implications of the plants continued operation.

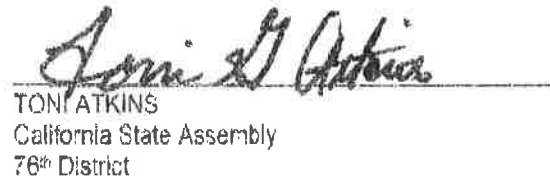
As the Blue Ribbon Commission prepares the draft report, which will include considerations of technology and policy alternatives, it is our hope that the unique issues surrounding nuclear power and waste storage & disposal in seismically-active California are considered. We believe that a California hearing that includes testimony from seismic experts and local stakeholders would greatly assist in the preparation of the report.

We appreciate the efforts of the Blue Ribbon Commission to identify challenges and propose alternatives regarding nuclear waste. We believe the seismicity, and remaining uncertainty, of California creates unique concerns which deserve to be more closely examined and we welcome the opportunity to host a commission meeting here in the Golden State. Please contact Senator Blakeslee's office at (916) 551-4015 or any of the signatories at their Capitol offices, with any questions or concerns you may have.

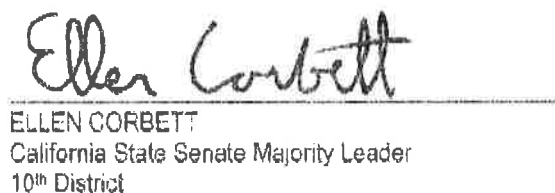
Thank you for your consideration,



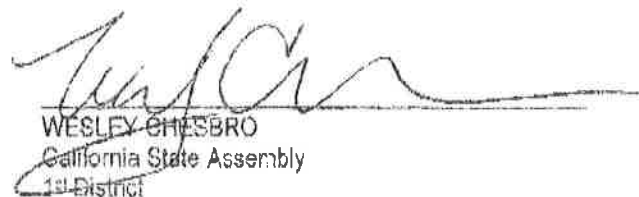
SAM BLAKESLEE  
California State Senate  
15<sup>th</sup> District



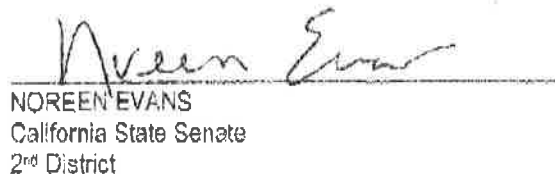
TONI ATKINS  
California State Assembly  
76<sup>th</sup> District



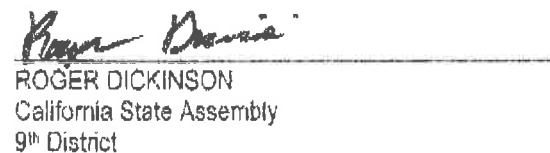
ELLEN CORBETT  
California State Senate Majority Leader  
10<sup>th</sup> District



WESLEY CHESBRO  
California State Assembly  
1<sup>st</sup> District

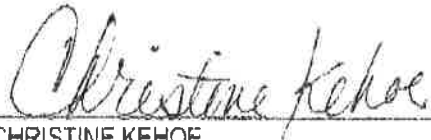


NOREEN EVANS  
California State Senate  
2<sup>nd</sup> District



ROGER DICKINSON  
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9<sup>th</sup> District

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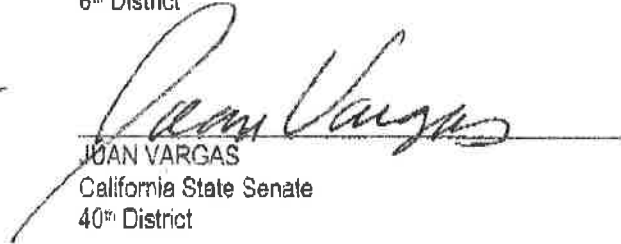
CHRISTINE KEHOE  
California State Senate  
39<sup>th</sup> District



JARED HUFFMAN  
California State Assembly  
6<sup>th</sup> District



MARK LENO  
California State Senate  
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JOAN VARGAS  
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