

# Peace River Environmental Society

Re; response to Mel Knight's consultation report

Dec 15-2009

## Nuclear in Alberta a long shot at best

Key messages;

1. Our organization is pleased with the results and content of the consultation report. The report was detailed and captured the majority of ongoing concerns associated with nuclear power. In his media release Mel Knight indicated that Alberta's health and environmental standards would be upheld but I do have some concerns with how that would play out when we know that the Federal Government is in charge of nuclear activities. When we look at tritium standards for example Canada is 70 times higher than other jurisdictions; why is that and what are Alberta's tritium standards?
2. The report actually reveals that there is only 45% of Albertans supporting nuclear power on a case by case basis. People should go to the government website and read the 125 page report before jumping to conclusions. Unfortunately very little attention is being directed to the other finding of the report which says that 75% of Albertans support renewable energy options.
3. For us the highlight was the fact that the Alberta Government is consistent with its message that taxpayer dollars will not be used to build nuclear reactors in Alberta. That is significant because nuclear reactors will not be built without government dollars. Cost overruns for new reactors and refurbishments continue to plague the nuclear industry around the world.
4. 5000 petition names have been submitted to the GOA opposing nuclear power and those names were not included in Mel Knight's announcement. More people have signed the petition than the total number of people who responded to the survey. We have to wonder how representative a survey of 4483 Albertans really is when the province's population sits at 3.7 million.
5. I believe that it is irresponsible for the Alberta Government to merely look to the Federal Government to protect the health of Albertans and the environment. A couple of things stand out in my mind with the federal government's approach, 1) the Chalk river fiasco where the president of the CNSC was fired for doing her job, 2) the federal nuclear liability act which protects the nuclear industry in the case of a major disaster, 3) and of course the fact that the latest nuclear technology does not work and I'm referring to the 600 million dollar maple reactors. "The nuclear industry in Canada continues to be a money pit."
6. I think that we need to cut ourselves loose from thinking that a large corporate player will come in and save our communities. We need to shift our thinking towards more sustainable energy options which can attract local investment and interests. Renewable energy options are currently available and will become more affordable with widespread deployment and manufacturing which will create jobs. Germany alone employs more than 250,000 people in the renewable energy sector. Feed-in tariffs are the key to make that happen and Ontario is the latest jurisdiction to adopt legislation to make that happen.

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