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Energia Mia Forms to Unite Citizens Opposing More Nuclear Reactors for San Antonio

Rate Hikes, Water, Security, Health and Safety Risks, Radioactive Waste Are Among the Many Concerns

San Antonio, Tx Citizens are uniting in efforts to halt CPS' spending for more nuclear reactors. Speakers from many diverse organizations and businesses relayed their concerns about nuclear power as part of the newly formed Energia Mia network and are working to increase visibility and awareness of the problems of nuclear power.

"Energia Mia urges all citizens in San Antonio to get involved now and contact the mayor and city council. The rate hikes that would come from more nuclear power are unacceptable. They would create a severe economic hardship on many people and local businesses" said Cindy Weehler. "We have set up a new web site, www.EnergiaMia.org to provide information to the public and let people know how to get involved."

CPS has said that 5-8% rate hikes would be needed every two years for the next ten years to pay for more nuclear power. Electric rates could increase nearly 50% as a result.

"Even if we have all the money we need, even if there are no emissions, we still have the moral dilemma of the nuclear waste. It is extremely toxic and dangerous and there still is no safe way to permanently store this waste. I don't want to be part of passing this on to my children or yours. Nuclear power is a financial, ecological, and moral disaster waiting to happen," said community leader and former city council member Patti Radle.

"CPS should pursue safer, cleaner, more affordable energy options for our future, that would create green jobs in San Antonio," said Diana Lopez with Southwest Workers' Union. "We need jobs here through efficiency, where nuclear power would bring temporary jobs in Bay City and in Japan."

"CPS wants to use old, outdated technology. Nuclear power is a thing of the past, a dinosaur, and we want San Antonio to instead look toward new technologies and today's energy solutions," said Mariana Ornelas, an active member of AGUA, Aquifer Guardians of Urban Areas.

Charles English with Jefferson Heights Neighborhood Association questioned CPS' trustworthiness, pointing out that commitments made to his community in the Spruce 2 coal plant settlement have not been met. Christel Villarreal, active with Highland Hills Neighborhood Association, expressed concerns that citizens have so little voice in such a

major decision that will impact San Antonio's future for years to come. She will be among those gathering petition signatures for city council.

"CPS will not have any incentive to pursue efficiency if nuclear power is the goal," said David Wells, with the Alamo Group of the Sierra Club. "Vast financial resources would go into nuclear power, and then instead of conserving, CPS would be trying to find buyers for the excess power generated."

"There is a need for greater CPS accountability," said John Courage, with the San Antonio Area Progressive Action Coalition. "Nuclear power creates radioactive waste, for which we have no permanent solution. We shouldn't burden generations to come with this risk."

Water is of great concern in this time of drought," said Alyssa Burgin with the Texas Drought Project. "Additional nuclear reactors would increase water consumption, and 40,000 gallons/minute would be used at the site."

Charles Schirmer of Project Verde pointed out that energy gains can be made through building codes and retrofitting homes and businesses, making nuclear power unnecessary.

Other speakers included Amanda Haas of Esperanza, Larry Bower of Sun Energy, John Carlos Garcia from District 7, Pedro Fernandez of the Green Party and Roberto Botello.

Energia Mia will be holding additional press conferences to delve more deeply into some of the crucial nuclear issues, and welcome other citizens, businesses, homeowners associations and organizations to become involved and take action. The group will be creating a speaker's bureau and encourages discussion of these crucial issues.

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