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NEWS RELEASE

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Georgia PSC Commissioner Lauren “Bubba” McDonald, Jr., Is Appointed Vice-Chair of Nuclear Waste Subcommittee

ATLANTA, March 28, 2013—Georgia Public Service Commissioner Lauren “Bubba” McDonald, Jr., has been appointed Vice-Chair of NARUC’s Subcommittee on Nuclear Issues—Waste Disposal. One role of the Subcommittee is to work with the Administration, Congress and stakeholder organizations to ensure that the funds collected for long-term disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste will be used for that purpose.

Since 1982, \$750 million has been collected annually from electric utility customers for the construction of a long-term disposal facility originally expected to start collecting waste in 1998. When it became apparent that DOE would not be able to meet its statutory and contractual obligation to accept and dispose of radioactive waste, Commissioner McDonald and others on the NARUC Subcommittee were instrumental in raising awareness that action was needed to ensure appropriate use of these fees.

To date, the Nuclear Waste Fund has collected fees and earned interest totaling over \$25 billion, yet successful construction of a long-term geologic repository for spent fuel has eluded us. The approach laid out in 1987 is no longer viable since work on a repository at Yucca Mountain halted. Without a permanent storage site, Commissioner McDonald and the Subcommittee are concerned about the cost and security of onsite storage pools and storage casks at the nuclear power stations for an indefinite period of time.

Spent fuel is being stored at 121 nuclear generating sites in 39 states. With 104 of these commercial nuclear units still active and supplying 20% of the nation’s electricity, 2,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel continues to be added each year to the 65,000 metric tons of spent fuel stored at these reactor sites.

As Vice-chair, Commissioner McDonald will be working closely with the Subcommittee Chair, Greg R. White of the Michigan PSC, and his fellow

subcommittee members to encourage implementation of many of the recommendations made last year by the Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) on America's Nuclear Future. (www.brc.gov) Starting in 2010 the BRC studied the back-end of the nuclear fuel cycle including interim storage, spent fuel reprocessing and final disposition. Its recommendations to DOE in January 2012 included:

- consent-based siting of facilities;
- interim storage facilities;
- a permanent geologic repository by 2048;
- safe and secure interstate shipping; and
- active U.S. leadership in international efforts and non-proliferation.

Strong leadership from McDonald will help move the industry closer to achieving these goals for permanent storage and for the continued viability of nuclear power.

NARUC is the national association of commissioners who regulate essential utility services. Its members are responsible for assuring reliable utility service at fair, just, and reasonable rates. As with all NARUC efforts this Subcommittee on Nuclear Issues—Waste Disposal works to set and influence public policy, share best practices, and foster innovative solutions to improve regulation. (www.naruc.org)

Go to: <http://psc.state.ga.us/pscinfo/bios/mcdonald.asp> for a full bio on PSC Commissioner Lauren "Bubba" McDonald, Jr.

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