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FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER TIM ECHOLS MEDIA ADVISORY

Commissioner Echols Heads to Washington to Discuss Nuclear Waste Management and Disposal Issues

Atlanta, May 3, 2011 – Tim Echols, Georgia’s newest Public Service Commissioner, leaves today for Washington. D.C. to discuss nuclear waste management with elected officials, policy leaders and the news media. Echols, who has advocated privatizing nuclear waste management, will be featured in this week’s Atlanta Business Chronicle as an Op-Ed guest columnist discussing the issue. Echols is paying for his own expenses on this trip.

Echols will speak in Washington at a policy breakfast held at the Leadership Institute on Wednesday May 4, 2011 at 7:30am. The Institute, founded by former Reagan Aide, Morton Blackwell, is located at 1101 North Highland Street in Arlington. Later that afternoon, he will meet with Jack Spencer at the Heritage Foundation. Spencer authored the plan Echols is promoting.

“In his testimony to President Obama’s Blue Ribbon Commission on America’s Nuclear Future, Spencer argued that our current approach to managing used nuclear fuel is broken,” said Echols. “The government promised to take title to the used fuel and dispose of it. It has not.”

Echols serves on the Nuclear Waste committee for the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), and intends to formulize Spencer’s plan into a motion at the Fall Meeting of NARUC. “Spencer’s plan would include some federal oversight, with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency playing a role,” said Echols. “But the plan also injects market forces into the process and empowers the private sector to manage the nuclear waste.”

Echols said that the market manages every other aspect of nuclear power generation—except the management of the waste. “At the end of the day, taking the responsibility for waste management away from the government would put the entire process of nuclear power generation in private hands,” said Echols. “Once this happens, operators will have incentives to deal with the waste in a cost-effective way instead of simply paying the government a fee.”

Echols believes companies like Areva, which reprocesses waste in France, is on the right track and needs opportunity here in America.

Echols will also meet with former Reagan Attorney General Ed Meese and participate in ceremonies surrounding the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 5, 2011.

For more information on Commissioner Echols and the Georgia Public Service Commission, visit the Commission web site at <http://www.psc.state.ga.us>.

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