



NEWS RELEASE
GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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PSC Chairman Urges Congress to Adequately Fund Nuclear Waste Fund

ATLANTA – Public Service Commission Chairman Lauren “Bubba” McDonald, Jr. is urging Georgia’s Congressional delegation to support adequate funding of the Nuclear Waste Fund in the federal 2002 budget. In a letter to Georgia’s U.S. Senators and Representatives, McDonald notes that Georgia ratepayers have contributed **\$534.2 million** in payments plus interest to the Nuclear Waste Fund since Congress approved the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. Despite the state of Georgia having made these payments, the Department of Energy has done nothing to remedy its failure to meet a 1998 deadline for opening a federal facility to receive spent high-level military and civilian nuclear waste.

In his correspondence, McDonald noted that storing high-level nuclear waste at Georgia Power plants Hatch and Vogtle has cost Georgia ratepayers an additional **\$12.2 million** to date because of the delay in opening the federal facility. He further cautioned that the continued delay by the federal government in removing this waste will ultimately cost taxpayers even more money as time continues to pass with nothing have been done.

McDonald says adequate funding of the Nuclear Waste Program is critical if the DOE is to meet the 2010 repository opening date, calling it “a matter critical to the electricity situation in Georgia and for the Nation.” He pledges Commission support to help Congress fix the waste-funding program in the authorizing committee.

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