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*'Protecting Long-Term Energy Jobs and Keeping Arizona Water and Power Costs Affordable: The Current and Future Role of the Navajo Generating Station'*

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Mr. Chairmen and Members of both Committees. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committees regarding the concerns of our community, Page, Arizona.

Navajo Generating Station is located just outside the city limits of Page, Arizona, a remote Southwestern United States town with about 7,500 people. We provide the housing and support services for a majority of the employee's of NGS, Peabody Energy, and the support services of these companies; as well as the retail ability for nearly all employees of NGS; as well as, a majority of the coal miners who work on the Black Mesa of the Navajo Nation and the joint use area of the Hopi Tribe. The Page economy is based on two items, tourism and power generation. As a resident of Page, you either service tourism or power for employment.

Our view of the environmental efforts installed and planned by Salt River Project and the other owners of NGS are sufficient in meeting the environmental needs of our area of the United States. We feel the undue cost of systems that would provide a negligible result in pollutants would lead to a catastrophic consequence to our part of the region by the closure of NGS. Our view on the short and long term effects to Page, AZ, The Navajo Nation, The Hopi Tribe, Coconino County, and the State of Arizona, would leave a devastating destruction on the economic, educational, and the over all pursuit of the American Dream and would deny the inhabitants of this isolated area the ability to recover their livelihood or visitors enjoy their vacation.

Having been a witness to the dire results of the closure of the Mohave Generating Station at Laughlin, NV, the loss of jobs to the coal miners in our area resulted in the disruption of families by parents being uprooted to meet the financial responsibilities of their families as well as the undermined ability for children to pursue their educational desires to further provide for an area in great need of individuals to bring us into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Personally, my Navajo wife and I both lost our jobs because of this. We went from a family earning about \$140,000 a year to a family earning nothing. A dilemma that was felt many times by many families.

In an area where the unemployment rate exceeds national averages, the obvious result on our economy would be tremendous. Our school system would lose a significant tax base, and a large portion of our general population would most likely become wards of the State and the United States. Not only will this effect Page but the surrounding reservation communities of LeChee, Kaibeto, Kayenta, Coppermine, Bitter Springs and Cedar Ridge.

How could such a great public/private partnership that provides such a valuable resource and base of employment be shut down due to negligible aesthetic concerns? There is no health issue gains to be accomplished. Who has the capital investment to replace this power; within the next 10 years? This just does not appear to make good health or economic sense!

We truly hope the results of these Committee hearings will lead to an economical continuation of NGS, therefore, insuring a financially successful existence of the inhabitants of our community and surrounding area. Thank you for your time.