

Environment America

DATE: February 16, 2010

CONTACT: Anna Aurilio

202-725-0268 (cell)

202-683-1250, Ext. 317 (office)

asquared@environmentamerica.org

Obama Nuclear Loan Guarantees will Set Back Race Against Global Warming and Risk \$8.3 Billion Taxpayer Dollars

Washington DC: Today, President Obama announced a conditional loan guarantee for more than \$8.3 billion to build two new nuclear reactors in Georgia. Environment America's recent report *Generating Failure: How Building Nuclear Power Plants Would Set America Back in the Race Against Global Warming* ([click here for report](http://www.environmentamerica.org/home/reports/report-archives/new-energy-future/new-energy-future/generating-failure-how-building-nuclear-power-plants-would-set-america-back-in-the-race-against-global-warming#lqg9wJNPOrFXS4rGySF12Q)) [http://www.environmentamerica.org/home/reports/report-archives/new-energy-future/new-energy-future/generating-failure-how-building-nuclear-power-plants-would-set-america-back-in-the-race-against-global-warming#lqg9wJNPOrFXS4rGySF12Q] shows that far from being a solution to global warming, nuclear power will actually set America back in the race to reduce pollution. Environment America urged the Obama administration and Congress to focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy instead of nuclear power as the solution to global warming.

"When it comes to global warming, time and money are of the essence, and nuclear power will fail America on both accounts," said Anna Aurilio, Washington DC Office Director of Environment America. "At a time when President Obama is calling for fiscal restraint, we should be spending taxpayer dollars on the energy options that yield the best short-term and long-term energy and environmental benefits. Nuclear power clearly fails on both counts," she added.

Environment America warned that several proposed new projects are under scrutiny by regulators. Over the past weeks, regulators in Florida have denied massive electricity rate increases proposed for two new nuclear power plants; and a municipal utility in Texas is threatening to pull out of its involvement in a new reactor project there because of huge cost overruns.

"We urge President Obama to look carefully at the negative experience of Florida ratepayers and the San Antonio utility, before finalizing these risky loan guarantees for new nuclear reactors," said Aurilio. "By contrast, the administration's support of renewable energy incentives in the economic recovery plan helped spur the biggest year ever in wind energy growth," she concluded.

Further, Environment America warned that conditional loan guarantees would fund construction of a new reactor design – the AP1000 -- that has raised safety concerns for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

(NRC). The NRC has informed Westinghouse that it has concerns that the reactor could not withstand severe weather including tornados and hurricanes as well as earthquakes- [click here for the NRC press release](http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2009/09-173.html). [<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2009/09-173.html>]

“The proposed new reactors in Georgia would risk \$8.3 billion in taxpayer dollars on new unsafe reactor designs,” said Aurilio. “Clean energy solutions like energy efficiency and renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power are far more effective and affordable than nuclear power in both cutting global warming pollution and saving consumers’ money,” she added.

###

Environment America is a federation of 28 state-based, citizen-funded environmental organization working for a cleaner, greener healthier future.

www.environmentamerica.org