

Submitted to TVA Directors
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from Mothers Against TN River Radiation (MATRR)

When David Freeman was chair of the TVA, the board voted to create a simple and ultimately successful Energy Efficiency Program. Here's how it worked: TVA hired 300 Energy Doctors who made house-calls. They came to your home, determined how to make it energy efficient, and all you had to do was sign one paper to authorize TVA both to improve your home to use less electricity and to pay for it out of the savings on your electric bill (until the work was paid in full). The program improved the lives and homes of nearly half a million TVA ratepayers, without their having to spend any money upfront or send in for rebates.

It was a win-win, and brought TVA back from the brink of bankruptcy by replacing nuclear construction projects with this energy efficiency project. Your debt ceiling has doubled since then, but TVA is again faced with extreme debts and is selling off its assets to feed the behemoth of nuclear construction costs. There is a clean and clear way out – by reinstating this proven efficiency program for your other 8.5 million ratepayers.

We ask this board to direct the reinstatement of that successful program, rather than continuing to allow these excessive expenditures on more nuclear. For less money you can quickly build an Efficiency Power Plant with this program, that would be advantageous for TVA and valley residents.

For decades now, the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) recommendations to expand energy conservation have been ignored by TVA, and a report to Congress last fall still emphasizes TVA's shortcomings in energy efficiency and capital expenditure planning. [1]

And TVA will keep getting it wrong until the board directs it towards a sustainable future. Many of us had hoped that the appointment of an energy efficiency expert to the board was a sign that TVA would finally be moving forward, but we have been sorely disappointed in the lack of performance on the part of Director Marilyn Brown. Whatever the motive, she seems to have been diverted into the nuclear program by being appointed to chair the Nuclear Oversight Committee, rather than this board wisely using her knowledge to spearhead an effective Energy Efficiency Program for the future of TVA. Well, fortunately, the successful program was developed and proven in the 70s. We again ask this board to direct that it be reinstated, using some of the funds that would only incur further debt by trying to resurrect the dead at Bellefonte Nuclear Plant.

Apparently, this board has succumbed to industry lobbyists rather than making decisions after consultations with economic, environmental and science experts. Are you going to continue enabling this CEO, who is leading you toward a nuclear industry with escalating costs and no solution for the highly toxic radioactive waste it produces. Each one of you surely must know that only one major accident at Browns Ferry, Sequoyah or Watts Bar can mean the end of the government corporation you are charged with directing, and possibly the end of a habitable Tennessee Valley. Will you continue to gamble on that or choose to guide TVA toward a responsible future?

TVA's nuclear experiment is proving a failure for a second time, plunging it into \$26 billion debts and the selling of important assets to finance obscenely high, and supposedly unforeseen, billions in cost overruns. The first time this experiment failed, we were fortunate to have the wisdom of David Freeman's board to avert bankruptcy by jumping off the nuclear bandwagon onto solid ground, and instead leading us toward a sustainable future. At that time, TVA became the national energy leader that it could and should be now.

Unfortunately, Mr. Kilgore has led TVA back into the same morass that Freeman's board pulled us out of 34 years ago. As Mr. Freeman said, TVA would almost certainly have been bankrupt long ago if the board had not shut down the nuclear projects in the 70s – simply because they cost too much. Costs for nuclear construction keep escalating [2], but this TVA board appears unwilling to choose a reasonable solution – despite the clear financial advantages of renewables and efficiency.

Jeffery Immelt, CEO of General Electric, the world's leading supplier of nuclear power generation equipment, said five years ago, "If you were a utility CEO and looked at your world today ... You would *never* do nuclear. The economics are just overwhelming." [3] And again just last month he told Forbes Magazine, "it is almost impossible on a cost basis to justify investing in nuclear power plants for the future." [4] Instead, he has steered his company toward natural gas, wind and solar – as have energy leaders around the world.

Back in 1979, the GAO made the following recommendations: [5]

1. TVA lead the nation in developing electricity management plans and programs,
2. encourage energy conservation and the most efficient energy production and use,
3. encourage the use of renewable resources, and
4. assure adequate public involvement in energy planning and policy making.

Even then it noted that TVA was slow to develop solar projects. Thirty-three years later, TVA is below slow in developing solar projects – even though solar is now more cost-efficient than nuclear. [6] A new U.S. National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) report finds rural utility-scale solar power potential to be over 2.2 million GWh in Tennessee alone [7] - certainly enough to cover the TVA estimated need of 22,000 GWh by 2019. Not only would solar power cost TVA less money than nuclear, solar also creates more jobs - without amassing radioactive liabilities and this need for substandard 'creative' accounting.

We call on you, as TVA Directors, to stop dragging us through this nuclear quagmire, to reassess your role in TVA's history, and to do your duty as directors by replacing the current CEO with someone who can lead TVA into a truthfully prosperous future with energy efficiency and renewables.

Respectfully submitted by
Gretel Johnston
for Mothers Against Tennessee River Radiation
best@matrr.org

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References:

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- [2] Mark Cooper, Senior Fellow for Economic Analysis, "[The Economics of Nuclear Reactors: Renaissance or Relapse?](#)", Institute for Energy and the Environment, Vermont Law School, 2009.
- [3] Jeffrey Immelt, CEO of General Electric, [London Financial Times](#), Nov. 18, 2007.
- [4] Jeffrey Immelt, [Forbes](#), July 1, 2012.
- [5] GAO Comptroller's Report to Congress, "[Triennial Assessment of the Tennessee Valley Authority – Fiscal Years 1977-1979](#)," EMD-80-91, August 13, 1980, pgs. 7 & 8.
- [6] John O. Blackburn, Sam Cunningham, "[Solar and Nuclear Costs – The Historic Crossover: Solar Energy is Now the Better Buy](#)," NC WARN Waste Awareness & Reduction Network, July 2010.
- [7] National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), "[U.S. Renewable Technical Potentials: A GIS-Based Analysis](#)," NREL/TP-°©6A20- °©51946, July 2012, page 11, Table 3.