

Statement of Rep. Ralph M. Hall
Committee on Science and Technology
Hearing on Opportunities and Challenges for Nuclear Power
April 23, 2008

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding this hearing today on the very important issue of nuclear energy. I have always been a supporter of nuclear energy and I am buoyed by the activity from the utility companies who have submitted applications to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to build 33 nuclear plants. I hope that this truly is the start of the nuclear renaissance in our country.

We are faced as a nation and as citizens of the world with the responsibility of reducing our carbon dioxide emissions while at the same time providing affordable, reliable electricity to support our growing cities. There are very few options available to our electricity providers when it comes to emissions-free, reliable base load power, and in my opinion, nuclear power is at the top of that list if not the only energy source on that list until coal plants begin using carbon capture and sequestration technology.

I don't want my words to be misinterpreted to mean that I'm not a supporter of renewable energy because I am. I believe they definitely have a place in our energy mix, but I do not believe that they can produce the same amount of energy as reliably and as efficiently as nuclear energy. As an example, it would take 3,000 one-megawatt wind turbines on 150,000 acres of land to provide the same amount of electricity from one nuclear plant – and that's if the wind is blowing. The bottom line is that I think there's a place for all forms of energy in our current mix and that nuclear holds a secure place in that line-up.