



Washington State Senate

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Senator Mike Hewitt
Senate Republican Leader
16th Legislative District

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March 18, 2010

J.V. Parrish
Chief Executive Officer
Energy Northwest
P.O. Box 968
Richland, WA 99352

Dear Mr. Parrish:

I wholeheartedly support Energy Northwest's January 19, 2010, request to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to renew Columbia Generating Station's operating license. Renewing Columbia's license will help ensure the plant continues providing safe, clean and affordable power to our region through 2043.

Nuclear energy is important to our state's energy mix, along with hydro, wind and solar. During the 2009/2010 biennium legislative session, I was a secondary sponsor of nearly a dozen progressive energy-related bills. From my 10 years as a senator representing Washington's 16th Legislative District, I know how critical the energy industry is to the economy of southeast Washington and to the entire state.

Columbia has been a valuable energy resource for the region's ratepayers for more than 25 years, and helps the Northwest enjoy some of the lowest electricity costs in the country. The continued operation of Columbia will help ensure we can meet our area's growing energy demands and while driving the region's continued economic recovery.

The ongoing operation of Columbia is vital to guarantee that a reliable, low-cost and diversified baseload source of power is available for the region's energy needs. I am proud to support your efforts to pursue Columbia's license renewal.

Respectfully,


Senator Mike Hewitt