

Don't Let the Noise Obscure the Facts

A professor in law school once gave me a simple rule for attempting to persuade a jury: when you have the facts on your side, you pound on the facts; when you have the law on your side, you pound on the law; when you have neither the facts *nor* the law on your side, you pound on the table.

Perhaps this adage helps explain the increasingly noisy behavior of NC WARN in its opposition to the advanced clean coal unit Duke Energy proposes to build at our Cliffside Steam Station in Cleveland and Rutherford Counties. This group's latest arm-waving came in the form of a full-page newspaper ad—funded principally by people outside our state—and encouraged opposition to the Cliffside plant. (“NC WARN runs ads to fight against new power plants,” Jan. 17)

Clearly, the facts are not on NC WARN's side. The modernized Cliffside facility will generate twice as much electricity as the five existing units at Cliffside today, while emitting one-half of the mercury, one-third of the nitrogen oxides and one-seventh of the sulfur dioxide. As part of the Cliffside modernization, we have committed to investing up to \$50 million per year in the Carolinas on enhanced energy efficiency programs. And the addition of our new clean coal unit will allow us to retire four older, less efficient units at the site. Put simply, the sooner we build this new unit, the sooner we can produce cleaner electricity at the site.

Just as clearly, the law is not on this group's side either. The advanced clean coal technology we will employ at the new Cliffside unit will remove regulated emissions at a level far below the requirements of state and federal law.

So, why the table pounding? The most often stated reason is a concern about global warming. However, this group's opposition extends not just to advanced clean coal plants but to new *nuclear* plants as well. Nuclear plants produce low cost electricity with *no* greenhouse gas emissions, which means they help *limit* global warming.

Clearly, there are trade-offs with any type of electricity generation technology available today. That's why we're pursuing clean coal, new nuclear, natural gas, renewable energy sources such as biomass and solar, and energy efficiency to serve the growing electricity demand in our state. Duke Energy is committed to reducing its carbon footprint, and we're taking concrete steps with these projects to do just that.

The U.S. Census Bureau recently ranked North Carolina as the sixth fastest growing state in the nation. North Carolinians understand that new energy sources are needed to support that growth. They expect us to provide the electricity they need for their homes and businesses and to support economic development to create new jobs.

Duke Energy has a long history of providing safe, affordable, reliable electricity to meet our customers' needs. Our company has supported the energy and economic development of our state for more than 100 years. We will continue to do so, loud table pounding notwithstanding.

James L. Turner, President and Chief Operating Officer
Duke Energy, U.S. Franchised Gas & Electric