

Testimony of Mayor Henry Hale
Before the Subcommittee on Energy and Power Regarding
“EPA’s Proposed GHG Standards for New Power Plants and H.R. __,
Whitfield-Manchin Legislation”

November 14, 2013

Chairman Whitfield and other distinguished members of the subcommittee, my name is Henry Hale and I am the mayor of Fulton, Arkansas, which is located in Hempstead County.

Southwestern Electric Power Company, a unit of American Electric Power, which began serving customers back in 1912, made the announcement in 2006 to build a power plant in Southwest Arkansas. The John W. Turk, Jr. Power Plant would later become the single largest project ever constructed in the county where I live, with a capital investment of \$1.8 billion. As you know, the plant went into commercial operation on December 20, 2012. The citizens of Hempstead County are proud that SWEPCO and AEP made the decision to build the Turk plant in our county.

SWEPCO went to great lengths to overcome major environmental and legal challenges and build Turk, one of the cleanest, most efficient, and

most advanced coal-fueled electric generating plants in North America. It was the culmination of six years of successful engineering, construction, legal and regulatory efforts. Turk is an exceptional example of how well-planned teamwork and coordination can make a project of this magnitude come together. It's the first power plant in the U.S. to use ultra-supercritical steam technology, which allows the plant to use less coal, thereby lowering emissions, such as carbon dioxide. The Turk Plant is a 600-megawatt facility that operates 24 hours a day to meet the growing electrical needs of SWEPCO and co-op customers in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. SWEPCO realizes how important it is to plan for the future energy supply for our states, communities and customers.

Besides providing affordable and reliable electricity from coal, the Turk plant is good for the local economy. While Americans have been enduring difficult economic times, the Turk Plant has provided construction jobs for a peak of over two thousand workers, and has brought much needed tax revenue to local governments. Construction alone generated \$38 million in sales and property tax revenues. The plant has 109 permanent jobs with an annual payroll of \$9 million. The plant pays \$6 million in annual school and county property taxes. As an

employee of the local school district, I have seen firsthand how the taxes paid by Turk have benefitted our students.

But it's not all about the Turk plant itself. SWEPCO gave the local college, the University of Arkansas Community College at Hope, a \$1 million dollar grant to start a power plant technology degree program. Hundreds have now graduated from the program, enhancing education in a part of the State of Arkansas that desperately needed it in recent years. Many of the graduates are now employees at the Turk Plant. The Turk team has also helped the local communities with toy drives and park improvements for nearby Hope, Fulton and McNab. Construction workers and SWEPCO employees gave of their time, money and materials to improve the lives of others in the area.

The Turk Plant has won several awards, including The Edison Award from Edison Electric Institute; the 2013 Plant of the Year Award from Power Magazine; and the 2012 Project of the Year in the Best Coal-Fueled Project Category from Power Engineering.

Thank you for allowing me to speak before you today about the benefits of the Turk plant to the local communities and to the customers who

rely on the plant for clean and reliable electricity. I will be pleased to answer any questions you might have.