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Press Release - Muskie Starts Hearings on Power Development and Environmental Protection

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From the Office of the
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For Release:
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MUSKIE STARTS HEARINGS ON POWER
DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Senate Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations will begin hearings on S. 2752, The Intergovernmental Coordination of Power Development and Environmental Protection Act of 1969, on February 3 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 3302 New Senate Office Building. The witnesses will be:

Dr. Lee A. DuBridge, Director, Office of Science and Technology, Executive Office of the President

Mr. Charles F. Luce, Chairman, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., New York City, New York

Mr. Michael McCloskey, Chief of Staff, The Sierra Club, Washington, D. C.

The subcommittee will also hold hearings on the legislation on February 4 and 23 at the Francis Scott Key Auditorium, St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The witnesses for February 4 are:

The Hon. Marvin Mandel, Governor of the State of Maryland

Hon. Joseph D. Tydings, U. S. Senator (Maryland)

Hon. Rogers C. B. Morton, Member of Congress, First District of Maryland

Hon. J. Millard Tawes, Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, accompanied by Mr. James B. Coulter, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Hon. William O. Doub, Chairman, Maryland Public Service Commission

On February 23, the subcommittee will return to hear from representatives of public interest groups and the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company.

At the Annapolis hearing, the subcommittee will review the proposed legislation in the light of certain intergovernmental problems raised by the siting of an atomic power generating plant and transmission facilities being built on the Chesapeake Bay by the Baltimore Gas and Electric Company.

S. 2752 would provide a regional, intergovernmental mechanism to promote sound planning in electrical power development and, at the same time, protect the public interest with respect to the environmental impact of such development.

Commenting on the hearings, Chairman Muskie said, "In the coming decades, this nation will depend more and more on reliable and adequate electricity. Thus far, the planning and development of this resource has been uncoordinated and insufficient, and for the most part done without governmental or public participation.

"This legislation would provide an effective intergovernmental mechanism for assuring that electrical needs will be met with the maximum degree of protection for our citizens.

"We have found that building an electric power potential has developed serious side effects both in generation and transmission. These include increased air and water pollution, radiation and electrical hazards, destruction of scenic, recreational and historic areas and adverse commercial impact. Concerned citizens in many different areas of the country have brought law suits to halt the development of power facilities.

"There is an equation between power reliability on the one hand and protection of the environment on the other. This equation must be found. It includes providing for an adequate degree of intergovernmental authority and responsibility which will assure that the public interest is considered above all as a paramount factor before ground is broken and before electric facilities are permitted to go forward."