



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, Virginia 23218

September 25, 2012

Thomas E. West
Chairman
Halifax County Board of Supervisors
134 South Main Street
Halifax, VA 24558

Dear Mr. West:

Thank you for your letter to the Governor, on behalf of the Halifax County Board of Supervisors, concerning the proposal to mine and process uranium in Pittsylvania County. The Governor shares your concerns. He has asked me to respond on his behalf.

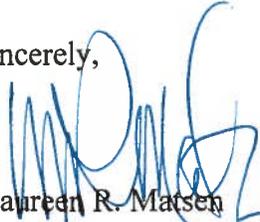
It is one of the many questions that remained unanswered, even after the NAS study was published last year, that led the Governor to agree – in response to a request from the Uranium Subcommittee of the General Assembly's Coal and Energy Commission - to create the Uranium Working Group and draw on the expertise of our state agencies to find answers to those questions. I have attached a copy of his charge to that group for your information. The group has combed through previous reports to identify the questions in need of answers, engaged a contractor with actual uranium mining and milling experience (industry professionals and former federal and state regulators), and is methodically investigating and gathering the information necessary to inform any decision that might be made about whether or not uranium mining should be allowed in Virginia.

The questions being examined by the working group include (to name just a few): what level of isolation and monitoring of waste is necessary after mine closure, and how that might be paid for; whether allowing the activity will create an economic stigma in the region and, if so, what impact that might have on the local economy; what implications the unique hydrology and weather patterns of the region might have for public drinking water and public health generally; and what additional personnel and resources would be required at the relevant state agencies in order for the Commonwealth to be able to regulate uranium mining activity and provide sufficient oversight of the industry. Some answers have already been presented in the public meetings of the Working Group, including identification of new technologies for containing

mine waste and tailings, and best practices in monitoring and site management, among others. I encourage you to review the public meeting presentations posted to the Working Group's web site for an update concerning information that has been gathered to date.

It is the goal of the working group to answer the many questions raised – but left unanswered - by previous studies of this critical issue. The health and safety of Virginia's citizens and environment are of paramount importance. The report of the Group is due to the Governor December 1, 2012.

Sincerely,



Maureen R. Matsen
Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources
and Senior Advisor on Energy
