

David Bailey, Founder of Ranch Hope
Legislative Testimony
February 1st, 2021

Good afternoon.

My name is David Bailey. As CEO of Ranch Hope, a non profit organization headquartered in Salem County, New Jersey, I am deeply and passionately invested in the health and well-being of Salem County and all of its communities. And as such, I am deeply troubled by any developments that might put our community at risk.

Salem County's need for the services our organization provides was already great. As a number of the region's major employers closed over the past decade – putting a strain on workers and their families, on the South Jersey economy and on the ability of local governments to fund increasingly needed social services – the need for our ministry has only grown.

Now in our 57th year of serving children, youth and families from throughout New Jersey, this has been a year when we all have certainly all looked to science and data to form our critical decision making. At Ranch Hope we rely upon too rely upon science and data to impact the lives of the children and families we serve who have been impacted by years of trauma. Trauma due to experiences of abuse and neglect, caused by families impacted by loss of employment, addiction and the myriad of mental health issues that accompany the stress on individuals and their families.

The Salem and Hope Creek nuclear plants are unquestionably important to our environment, our climate and to our need for safe, reliable energy. But these nuclear plants – and the \$1.2 billion worth of economic energy they provide to Salem County and the entire state of New Jersey – are absolutely critical to the health, and even the survival, of our communities.

Other speakers have testified to these plants' value to the grid, the environment and our climate change goals. I urge you consider the long-term impacts that losing these plants will most certainly have on South Jersey families, and on the short- and long-term health of our communities.

Thank you.

