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## Strickland is working hard to obtain loan guarantee for USEC

NOVEMBER 14, 2009

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Editor, the Gazette:

This letter is in response to an op-ed piece from Rob Portman concerning the recent denial of a federal loan guarantee to the United States Enrichment Corporation.

The loan guarantee will allow USEC to construct the American Centrifuge Plant in Piketon. We share Portman's concern. As local officials in Pike and Scioto counties, we are well aware of the complexity of the issues between the Department of Energy and USEC.

We do not for a moment wish to denigrate Portman's efforts to bring the American Centrifuge facility to Piketon. Nor do we question his continued interest in the plant. Our only regret is that he did not push through the loan guarantee while he held a critical position in the Bush Administration.

The purpose of this letter is to clarify an erroneous statement about Gov. Ted Strickland. Portman expressed concern the Strickland administration "has been silent for the past few months" concerning the American Centrifuge Project. This misconception perhaps stems from Portman's distance from the everyday labors of the governor's office.

Strickland's public statements on the Piketon facility in the past few months reflect the variety of critical projects, both present and future, in Piketon. The governor joined with Senators Sherrod Brown and George Voinovich and Representatives Jean Schmidt, Charlie Wilson, Zack Space and Steve Austria to push the Department of Energy to accelerate the Decontamination and Decommissioning cleanup in Piketon. Their successful efforts will cut the cleanup time by an estimated 20 years.

In June, the governor came to Piketon with Voinovich and Schmidt to announce the proposed construction of a Clean Energy Park initiative at the DOE facility. The Clean Energy Alliance will construct a nuclear power plant on the site. Future research at the facility will allow the study of additional forms of clean energy for the nation's future.

Never has the governor's attention strayed from the ACP. In February, he traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with Energy Secretary Stephen Chu to push for ACP. On March 11, in a letter to President Barack Obama thanking

him for quick action on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the governor once again requested quick approval of the ACP loan guarantee, declaring the project was "shovel ready." This letter was co-signed by the governors of Maryland, Tennessee and Kentucky.

In June, the governor once again met with Secretary Chu to discuss the loan guarantee. The next month, he wrote to Chu expressing concern that a conditional commitment had not been made. Senator Voinovich also joined the letter.

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In October, Strickland called Secretary Chu on the loan guarantee refusal and then spoke with Vice President Biden on the issue.

Strickland's frustration over the ACP loan guarantee denial reflects our own. The internal issues between USEC and ACP appear so complex that political pressure, whether from the governor or by our Congressional delegation or senators, seems unable to break the deadlock.

We are pleased Portman maintains his interest in Piketon. We need all the help we can get.

However, as local officials, we want to expel any notions Strickland has not done everything in his power to obtain the loan guarantee for USEC.

Harry Rider, Tom Reiser, Teddy West, Mike Crabtree, Blaine Beekman, Vernal G. Riffe III and Teddy L. Wheeler

Members of both the Scioto and Pike County Board of Commisioners

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