

PRESS RELEASE

U.S. and Japanese Industry Experts Discuss Nuclear Cooperation at The Howard Baker Forum

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(December 11, 2014 / Washington, D.C.) The Howard Baker Forum hosted the seventh annual U.S.-Japan Roundtable Conference on December 2 at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., focusing on nuclear energy cooperation and the roles that American and Japanese nuclear companies are playing in energizing a nuclear energy revival around the world.

More than 100 representatives from the nuclear energy industry, government, academia and think tanks from both countries examined the progress in American nuclear build and political optimism in Japan for returning to nuclear energy after the 2011 disaster.

For several years now the future for nuclear energy has looked bleak in the United States, which has not built a single reactor in 30 years, and in Japan, where a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami destroyed three reactors at Fukushima Daiichi. Despite these notable exceptions, nuclear energy has continued to grow in much of South East Asia, the Middle East and in developing energy markets around the world.

"There are reasons for optimism, and they became clear in every panel during our conference. There are five reactors under construction in the United States at Vogtle in Georgia, and Watts Bar in Tennessee. And there are early signs of recovery in Japan," said Scott L. Campbell, president of the Howard Baker Forum and managing shareholder of Baker Donelson's Washington, D.C. office. Mr. Campbell is a former Director of the Office of Policy Planning & Analysis of the U.S. Department of Energy.

"The most compelling presentations came from leading environmentalists, who articulated nuclear power's potential to mitigate the threat of global warming," said Mr. Campbell.

These speakers included Oscar-nominated documentary filmmaker Robert Stone, author of *Power to Save the World*, Gwyneth Cravens and Jessica Lovering of the Breakthrough Institute, which represents a new environmental movement that is willing to reconsider nuclear energy in light of its contributions to avoided CO2 emissions and the ever-growing possibility of catastrophic climate change.

With most of the leading Japanese nuclear technology and trading companies represented at the Roundtable, including Toshiba, Hitachi, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Marubeni, Mitsubishi Corp. and others, it was evident that the U.S.-Japan nuclear partnership is an expansive one.

Taizo Takahashi, Deputy Commissioner at the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, spoke of Japan's commitment to mitigating global warming while providing global energy security. "Japan is a country of limited resources, and nuclear power plays an important role in our energy security," he said. Mr. Takahashi later added, "As nuclear power increases, especially in Asia, it is Japan's obligation to support safe usage of nuclear power, safe decommissioning, global nuclear security and nuclear non-proliferation."

Over lunch, former Senator Byron Dorgan, now co-chair of energy at the Bipartisan Policy Center, placed energy as the central concern and possible answer to addressing climate change. "What energy you use and

how you use it has a direct effect on the health of the planet," said the former senator from North Dakota. Senator Dorgan introduced the concept of highly improbable events that have disrupted expectations, such as hydraulic fracturing. "We must take a new look at new science, new technology and a renewal of nuclear because it changes the calculation."

A panel of environmentalists took on the idea of highly improbable events that could change everything. "We went to the moon, we can make a cheaper nuclear reactor. That would be disruptive to the energy space," said Ms. Lovering of the Breakthrough Institute. She added, "Natural gas seemed to come out of nowhere, but there were people working on that technology for 30 years. A real highly improbable game changer would be to make it easier for smaller companies to get through NRC's licensing procedures, which would allow more start-up like companies."

Author and environmental activist Gwyneth Cravens said, "Nuclear fusion sounds like a fairy tale and there are many rivers to cross, but there are many people studying it." The message from the panel was summed up by Ms. Cravens: "When you learn the facts (on nuclear) you change your mind. Learn the facts."

Documentary filmmaker Robert Stone added, "Why can't this country get anything done anymore? We can do big things when we have leadership, a goal and a dream."

The conference closed with advice from former Senator Blanche Lincoln, who warned, "We are sleepwalking into our energy future if we allow nuclear plants to continue closing early. If we are serious about climate change and our economy, then we must realize the benefits of nuclear."

The U.S.-Japan Roundtable is an ongoing series sponsored by the Howard Baker Forum. The Howard Baker Forum was founded by the late Senator Howard Baker in Washington, D.C. to provide a platform for examining specific, immediate, critical issues affecting the nation's progress at home and its relations abroad. Under the leadership of its president, Scott Campbell, the Forum organizes a variety of programs and research projects to examine and illuminate public policy challenges facing the nation today. The Howard Baker Forum is a public and international affairs affiliate of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell and Berkowitz, PC.