Hello! We are the **Lepreau Decommissioning Caucus.** We're here today to remind folks that the job of refurbishing the Point Lepreau nuclear power plant is in the hands of incompetents.

Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL), the lead contractor for the refurbishment, has fallen hopelessly behind and made huge blunders. And neither NB Power nor the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) has provided enough oversight to protect the public interest.

All three agencies knew many months ago that there were serious problems with the calandria tubes being installed as part of the refurbishment. Yet AECL pushed on, installing all 380 tubes before deciding to remove them, polish the metal better and then do the job all over again.

No one took timely action to save months and millions of dollars. No one blew the whistle.

The Lepreau refurbishment is now three years behind schedule and a billion dollars over budget. AECL has flubbed the job. CNSC has failed as a regulator. Now Canadian taxpayers and New Brunswick residents are paying for their incompetence.

Today, the CNSC is holding a hearing in Ottawa to extend the Lepreau license, refusing to give New Brunswick residents an opportunity to directly confront the regulator or NB Power about their role in allowing this situation to develop. NB Power is making a power point presentation at the hearing, but Intervenors from New Brunswick who have asked to speak have been told they cannot make oral presentations, only written ones.

We want the Auditor General of Canada to investigate the role of AECL and CNSC in bringing about these disastrous delays and cost overruns and their failure to be fully accountable to the public. We believe the refurbishment should be halted until the competence of these organizations to function effectively in the public interest has been thoroughly reviewed by the Auditor General.

The cost of the refurbishment has spiraled out of control. And it represents only a fraction of the total liability our province is being saddled with as a result of this operation. The federal government has responsibility only for the high-level radioactive waste (the irradiated nuclear fuel). All the waste from the refurbishment will remain in New Brunswick in perpetuity. The NB government must build a permanent radioactive waste repository somewhere in the province to accommodate refurbishment wastes, at a cost of many hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars.

It's time to stop throwing good money after bad.