

# **Firms Negotiate With DOE To Establish Paducah, Kentucky Laser Enrichment Facility- Richland, Washington Nuclear Reactor Fuel Processing Center**

Area Development Online News Desk (11/27/2013)

The U.S. Department of Energy is negotiating with Global Laser Enrichment to consider its request to operate a laser enrichment facility at a Paducah, Kentucky, Gaseous Diffusion Plant and AREVA, a Richland, Washington, firm to process the government's uranium hexafluoride inventory into nuclear reactor fuel.

According to the DOE, "GLE proposed licensing, constructing, and operating a new laser enrichment facility that could potentially provide significant compensation to the Department for its depleted uranium hexafluoride inventories, as well as supporting U.S. policy interests and utilization of the Paducah site."

"The GLE offer also included the potential lease or use of existing Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant facilities, infrastructure, and utilities. The company's commercial operation also has the potential to produce substantial economic benefit to the Paducah region through the addition of highly skilled technical jobs and increasing the local tax base," the DOE said in its report.

"The Department determined that GLE offered the greatest benefit to the government among those who responded to a Request for Offers. The Department also decided to enter into negotiations with AREVA for the off-specification uranium hexafluoride inventory."

AREVA's "proposal utilizes its nuclear fuel fabrication facility in Richland, Washington, to process the off-specification uranium hexafluoride as blend stock for domestic nuclear reactor fuel. AREVA has well-established technology and licensed operations for blending this type of material with other uranium feed material," the report concluded.

GLE and AREVA were selected following an RFO for the sale of depleted and off-specification uranium hexafluoride inventories. The materials are currently housed at the Paducah, Kentucky, and Portsmouth, Ohio, Gaseous Diffusion Plant facilities. The RFO built on an Expression of Interest released earlier this year that provided the Department with confirmation that a number of parties are interested in utilizing the uranium inventories and potentially in using land

or facilities at the Paducah site.

Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear said, “Today’s news that DOE will begin negotiations with Global Laser Enrichment to consider operating a new laser enrichment facility at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant is a positive development in our long effort to ensure a promising future for the workers at that facility. This is a strong step toward energizing that sector of our economy, while providing economic stability and investment for the Paducah community.”

“Companies that are ready and willing to create economic opportunities at the site need timely answers, and so do our valued and skilled workers in Paducah,” he added.

“Today, after months of hard work and ahead of our anticipated end-of-year decision...the Department selected GLE and AREVA for potential projects that provide value to American taxpayers by reducing the costs of cleanup at the sites and creating high-paying technical jobs in the State of Kentucky,” said Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman. “These selections represent an important next step as the Department continues planning for potential future uses and ongoing cleanup efforts at the Paducah site.”