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Solution to Greenhouse Gases Is New Nuclear Plants, Bush Says

By [JIM RUTENBERG](#)

LIMERICK, Pa., May 24 — With Democrats seizing the national stage on gasoline prices and the environment, President Bush came here Wednesday to take it back, calling for the construction of more nuclear power plants to help reduce the greenhouse gases believed to contribute to [global warming](#).

"Let's quit the debate about whether greenhouse gases are caused by mankind or by natural causes; let's just focus on technologies that deal with the issue," Mr. Bush told workers at the Limerick Generating Station, a nuclear power plant here in Montgomery County. "Nuclear power will help us deal with the issue of greenhouse gases."

Since the 2000 presidential campaign, Democrats have accused Mr. Bush, who grew up in the Texas oil country and was in the business, of being too cozy with the petroleum industry. He and his fellow Republicans had previously shrugged off such charges, as well as those from environmental groups that his administration was ignoring scientific findings on global warming and human involvement in its causes.

But during this crucial election year for Republicans, Democrats have been trying to place the blame for high gas prices at the feet of Mr. Bush and his Congressional allies.

Speaking in front of this hamlet's twin nuclear cooling towers on Wednesday, Mr. Bush promoted the 2005 energy bill he signed into law, which provides tax incentives, loan guarantees and federal risk insurance for companies building nuclear plants. Before the law, he said, only 2 companies were considering building plants, but now 16 are.

"For the sake of economic security and national security," he said, "the United States of America must aggressively move forward with the construction of nuclear power plants."

Mr. Bush also spoke of his administration's efforts to research alternative energy sources, like solar panels, ethanol and wind turbines. He said of the last, "They ought to put one big one in Washington, D.C."

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