

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION AWARD DINNER

November 4, 2011

Remarks by J. Wayne Leonard

Thank all of you for this recognition of the relatively small but deeply sincere effort we at Entergy make to sustain and improve the world we share with all living things.

It's especially meaningful for us coming from an organization whose passion and work we so deeply admire.

My mother passed away last year. She would have been 87 this week. My father passed away when he was exactly my age.

I guess I'm next in line.

But, anytime someone close to us passes, we find ourselves asking the question, "After I die, what?"

The real question we should be answering is, "*Before* I die, what?"

Never before in history has that question and your mission to give a voice to those without one been more relevant, more critical.

Climate Change is the greatest threat to our world we ever have faced. This wasn't supposed to happen for several billion years when the sun burns out.

Whether we make it that far comes down to the things we do and don't do in our lifetime to address Climate Change.

It's complicated science, but there is near unanimous agreement that we will not suffer the consequences of inaction or of promoting policies that exacerbate the growing crisis.

Those that will suffer are those without a voice: the unborn children and other species or other living things that sustain life and nature and the world as we know it.

There are no consequences to us.

Plato said, "Without consequences, the just shall behave in the same manner as the wicked."

Sadly, not everyone is like you all. As a society, we seem determined to prove Plato right, and nothing is going to happen, and our worst fears will be realized.

Those without a voice will be hardest hit.

Up to 50% of all species will become extinct. The poorest among us will suffer the most as they have the least capability to move, relocate, adapt.

So what can we do?

- 1) We need to aggressively begin adaptation efforts before we are forced into a triage society.**
- 2) We need to eliminate climate subsidies and mandates. They have done more harm than good. Opponents of climate change have used them against us as an example of bad investments, high prices and how developers are using the system for their benefit.

Inevitably, the money falls into the hands of those who least need it; and the costs to those who can least afford it.**
- 3) Put a price on every ton of CO₂ across the economy. Simple is good. Use the money to reduce the deficit and assist low-income folks.**
- 4) Institute a large innovation effort by government directed toward basic research that jump starts innovation and then fund the Death Valley - the long period of demonstration projects between when venture capital and project finance will put dollars into these ideas.**

5) Lastly, and most importantly, we need to lead. We led ourselves into this. It is morally right that we should lead ourselves out. We built the greatest nation on earth, and we are the most able to lead ourselves out.

When people ask, “What should I do before I die?” I generally advise them to get insurance. Not life insurance. Insurance for the soul, the conscious.

Dedicate yourself to something that matters. Nothing matters more than this.

Your voice is critical. Not only does it speak for those who have no voice, it gives those of us who do have a voice the courage and moral imperative to use it.

When I grew up, I wanted to save the world. Well things didn't turn out exactly like I hoped.

This honor means so much for me, for Entergy; especially coming from an organization whose dedicated and courageous efforts are saving the world.

**On behalf of all our children, grandchildren and great
grandchildren we thank you.**