differ from one part of the country to the other, and explain part of the rate differential.

Representing a sparsely settled State I am especially aware of the relationship of density to revenue. Nationally the investor-owned utilities obtain about 15 times as much revenue per mile of line as the rural electric cooperatives receive. That density factor was one of the reasons why Congress established the Rural Electrification Administration's 2-percent loan program.

Investor-owned utilities also benefit from these 2-percent REA loans. The biggest loan ever made to a utility serving my State went to an investor-owned utility, Montana-Dakota Utilities, and amounted to more than $5 million. MDU serves a sparsely settled area, as the cooperatives do. Despite MDU's high rates, its rate of return and return on equity are below average.

On the matter of fuel costs, power systems which have access to cheap hydroelectric power in the Columbia Basin are better off than the New England systems which have high fuel costs and which shortsightedly fight hydroelectric projects such as Dickey-Lincoln. The important point to keep in mind on fuel costs is the rapid trend toward nuclear plants.

Federal taxpayers spent more than $2 billion to make nuclear power practical and now the investor-owned utilities are trying to obtain a virtual monopoly on it.

I think Congress needs to face up to this problem of nuclear monopoly. One approach is offered through the Aiken-Kennedy bill, S. 2564, which would insure a reasonable opportunity for all electrical utilities to participate in the benefits of nuclear power.

So to get the full picture we have to look at the rate of return, the components of the rate base and the return on equity.

Any regulatory commission, State or Federal, which is going to protect the interest of the public—and of the Federal Government, which itself has an annual utility bill of $4 billion, with the Department of Defense alone having an annual electric utility bill of more than a quarter of a billion dollars—has to have before it complete information on utility income and expenses. It has to have this information quickly in order to make rate adjustments before the "water-over-the-dam" rule builds up on overcharges which cannot be refunded.

We have the technology to use automatic data processing throughout the regulatory process. It is possible, economical and practical to utilize the Federal Power Commission as a data bank, where any State or Federal regulator, or Member of Congress, or party to a rate case, or member of the public can obtain data on utilities.

I hope that this subcommittee can encourage that approach, which will update regulation and save money both for the Federal Government and our constituents. I think that approach is infinitely better than the one suggested by the pending bill.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion I wish to comment on two points raised yesterday by the spokesman for Florida Power & Light. He said on page 2 of his prepared statement that two members of the Federal Power Commission vigorously dissented from the FPC ruling "that we must file original cost statements and comply with all other Federal Power Commission requirements under the Federal Power Act, including keeping of accounts in accordance with the Commission's uniform system of accounts."