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**Biz News**  
breaking headlines  
- direct from the AP

## Whistle-blower wins ruling vs. Ga. Power

By Tom Ichniowski

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Georgia Power Co. has been ordered to reinstate and pay an estimated \$5 million in back pay, damages and attorney fees to a nuclear plant executive fired in a 10-year-old whistle-blower case.

The utility said it will appeal to the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals a U.S. Labor Department administrative review board ruling that Marvin B. Hobby be reinstated with \$250,000 in compensatory damages for "emotional distress, humiliation and loss of reputation" plus back pay and other costs.

Hobby claimed Georgia Power fired him in 1990 because he questioned decisions on control of the utility's two nuclear power plants, contending they violated federal operating licenses.

Hobby's Washington attorney, Michael Kohn, on Tuesday estimated the final award at \$3 million in back pay plus another \$2 million in legal fees, costs and damages. The review board issued the ruling last Friday.

Kohn is associated with the National Whistleblower Center, a Washington-based activist group. He called the award the largest resulting from a series of U.S. environmental whistle-blower laws enacted during the 1970s. Hobby, 54, lives and is employed in metro Atlanta but was not available for comment Tuesday.

Kohn said the company is required to make full payment to Hobby within 30 days. But Georgia Power spokesman Todd Terrell said the company will ask the appeals court to suspend the order while the appeal is litigated. He also disputed Kohn's calculation of \$5 million in damages but didn't put a value on the award. Parent Southern Co. and Georgia Power denied Hobby's accusations.

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