

Script: Indian Point Resolution for Public Health and Safety

Good afternoon! The goal of this resolution before you is to better ensure public health and safety *whether Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant is decommissioned or is relicensed and continues to operate.* While most people think about the reactors and their unique shape, it is the high-level radioactive waste that contains most of the radioactive material on the nuclear plant site. Because we will be dealing with the storage of this radioactive waste from Indian Point long after the plant has ceased operations, there are certain measures that we can take to protect our community in the future.

Indian Point, located in Buchanan, NY has two operating reactors: Indian Point 2 (IP2) and Indian Point 3 (IP3). Indian Point 1 (IP1) was retired in 1974 because it did not have an adequate reactor core cooling system. Adjacent to each reactor is a spent fuel building housing radioactive waste in 40-foot deep pools. These pools were built as temporary storage facilities, but they now hold four times more waste than they were designed for. Furthermore, unlike the reactors themselves, the buildings housing the waste storage pools are warehouse-type buildings with commercially available steel roofs, which provide neither a containment structure nor independent back-up systems to prevent a release of radiation into the atmosphere. **This resolution calls for hardened and reinforced full containment, as well as independent back-up electricity and cooling systems for the spent fuel pools. This is what the reactors have and since most of the plant's radioactive mass is in its waste-storage buildings, those buildings should be made safer.**

Once the nuclear fuel is used up, it still generates enormous heat and must sit in circulating cool water for five years, after which point it may be moved into safer "Dry-Cask Storage Units," which are concrete vaults containing steel cylinders filled with an inert gas that surrounds the nuclear waste, keeping it cool. There are currently 19 casks at Indian Point; until this year, however, these casks only contained waste from IP1 and IP2, and it took over 30 years and many leaks of radioactive elements, such as Strontium 90, to get the operators to remove spent fuel from IP1. Furthermore, due to poor design, the IP3 pool does not have a crane strong enough to move a dry cask, so fuel must first be moved from the IP3 pool to the IP2 pool, which *does* have a large enough crane for transfer to dry-cask storage. Rather than periodically moving waste out of the IP3 pool, however, the various plant operators – formerly Con Edison and the New York Power Authority and now Entergy have let the spent fuel pile up to the point where there is no more room for hot waste coming out of the reactor. Faced with this dilemma, Entergy has finally started moving waste out of the IP3 pool into the IP2 pool for eventual transfer to dry-cask storage. **This resolution calls for the plant owner to better ensure public health and safety by moving its high-level radioactive waste into safer dry-cask storage as promptly as possible, rather than increasing the density in the storage pools and thus the severity of an accident if something were to go wrong at the plant.**

What if there is an accident? The current "key-hole" evacuation plan calls for evacuating a two-mile radius around the plant as well as ten miles in the direction of the wind. Former FEMA director and evacuation expert James Lee Witt, however, evaluated this plan and has found it to be inadequate to protect the public from radiological exposure for a number of reasons, including the high population density in the vicinity of Indian Point, the inadequate roadways and the likelihood that many people

outside the evacuation zone will also evacuate. This could be further complicated if an accident at Indian Point were to occur during rush hour or a major storm that shuts down critical evacuation routes. Also not taken into account in the evacuation plan is that both the New Croton and Kensico Reservoirs, which are critical feeds for the New York City drinking water supply, are located five and fifteen miles, respectively, from Indian Point in the direction of the prevailing winds. Fallout maps from both Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi, however, show that radioactive isotopes were distributed by prevailing winds well beyond ten miles and did not conform to the plume model that is used in the current evacuation plan for Indian Point. Unfortunately, there is no assurance that such a large release would not happen here. For example, Bill Borchardt, the NRC's Executive Director for Operations said, "If Fukushima happened in the U.S., we would go out to 50 miles." **Thus, this resolution calls for the extension of the emergency evacuation zone from a 10-mile radius to a 50-mile radius and for the flaws and deficiencies identified in the James Lee Witt report to be remedied.**

Lastly, when Indian Point was first constructed, we knew about the existence of the nearby Ramapo Fault Line. In 2008, researchers from Columbia University's Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory discovered a second fault line running from Peekskill, New York to Stamford, Connecticut; this fault line intersects the Ramapo fault one mile from Indian Point. Indian Point was designed to withstand a magnitude 5.8 earthquake at a distance of 35 miles; however, researchers from Columbia have reported that a 7.0 magnitude earthquake could occur near the power plant, and despite this information being made available to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the regulatory agency will not consider the new seismological data in establishing safety standards for the plant. **This resolution calls for the NRC to consider this new information and accordingly require an upgrade of infrastructure for the continued operation or decommissioning of the plant, including its radioactive waste facilities.**

In summary, I will finish with a quote from Robert Ryan, the NRC's former Director of the Office of State Programs:

"I think it is insane to have a three-unit reactor on the Hudson River in Westchester County, 40 miles from Times Square, 20 miles from the Bronx . . . [Indian Point is] one of the most inappropriate sites in existence."

Despite Mr. Ryan's objections, however, we will hand off the waste from this plant to future generations long into the future.

Please support this resolution to better ensure the health and safety of our community and the approximately twenty million other residents who live within a 50-mile radius of Indian Point.

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