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## NEWS RELEASE

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## COMMENTING ON THE PSC JOINT PROPOSAL FOR HOLTEC TO DECOMMISSION INDIAN POINT, CLEARWATER STRESSES THE NEED FOR VIGILANCE ON MANY UNRESOLVED SAFETY ISSUES

[Beacon, NY – April 30] The Indian Point nuclear power plant shuts down permanently today. Last night Clearwater filed formal [comments](#) with the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) on the PSC’s proposal for what comes next: transferring Indian Point’s licenses from Entergy to the New Jersey-based company Holtec which will decommission the plant.

The PSC sought public comments on the proposed settlement it negotiated with various parties including Entergy, Holtec, New York State agencies, the New York State Attorney General, Westchester County, the Town of Cortland, the Village of Buchanan, the Hendrick Hudson School District, Riverkeeper and the Public Utility Law Project of New York. The proposed settlement, or Joint Proposal (JP), would allow Holtec to acquire Indian Point and its \$2.3 billion decommissioning trust fund (DTF) in exchange for certain concessions – for example to maintain minimum balances in the DTF, tighten radiation safety requirements for partial release of the site from the federal standard of 25 millirems a year to New York’s standard of 10 millirems a year, report to state and local entities, and to contribute funding to state agencies which will monitor Holtec’s decommissioning work and onsite management of spent fuel.

In comments on the proposal, Clearwater board chair and interim executive director Steve Stanne recognized that the JP “contains measures that would mitigate financial and other risks to the State, and we’re grateful to the parties for negotiating those measures.” But, he added, “the JP does not allay our skepticism of Holtec as the licensee. We remain concerned that Holtec has not demonstrated the expertise, financial stability, ethics or trustworthiness required to conduct and complete safe decommissioning of Indian Point.”

Clearwater’s comments welcomed the concession that Holtec will put half of the money it recovers for spent fuel management by suing the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) back into the DTF, but, Stanne added, “to uphold ratepayer and taxpayer interests, we maintain that Holtec should be required to put all DOE money it recovers for spent fuel management back into the DTF.”

The comments also took issue with other JP provisions – for example that Holtec would conduct its own site assessment of Indian Point’s contamination instead of an assessment by an independent third party, very low emergency preparedness funding that only lasts for two years, inadequate radiation monitoring, and inadequate measures to mitigate risks from the Algonquin natural gas pipeline which traverses the site.

In addition to those issues, “Many other well-founded, important safety concerns that citizens’ groups have raised regarding how Holtec would conduct Indian Point decommissioning and spent fuel management are not directly addressed by the JP,” Stanne wrote. “These include problems with Holtec’s plans spent fuel handling and dry storage systems, and plans announced in its preliminary Post Activities Shutdown Report (PSDAR), in which it indicated it would do nothing to remediate radiological contamination known to be leaking into the groundwater and the Hudson, that it would only superficially remediate contaminated soils, and that it envisioned shipping Indian Point’s radioactive waste, including high-level waste, down the Hudson River by barge.” The spent fuel storage and transport issues are discussed in detail in Appendices filed with the comments.

“To address those issues which remain unaddressed or only partially addressed in the JP, we will need to rely heavily on the newly created Decommissioning Oversight Board (DOB),” Stanne wrote. “We call on the State to empanel and convene the DOB right away to get started on providing the detailed oversight Indian Point decommissioning will clearly need. It’s particularly important that the DOB convene and address the concerns raised herein *before* a determination is made on Holtec’s Post Shutdown Activities Report (PSDAR).”

In general, while Clearwater applauded certain provisions in the JP that advanced the public interest, its comments urged continued vigilance on the safety issues the JP leaves unresolved. “We’re only at the beginning of a long road on which the State and local governments and civil society will need to work tirelessly to watchdog the decommissioning of Indian Point and the safeguarding of its spent fuel, so as to fill the vacuum left by lax NRC oversight, and protect public health and safety and the environment,” Stanne wrote. “Clearwater thanks the Commission and the parties to the JP for getting us started on this long road, and pledges to travel it with them on behalf of the public in the years ahead.”

**NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: Clearwater’s full comments are posted [here](#). Steve Stanne and other Clearwater sources familiar with the Joint Proposal are available for comment and interviews. For more information, or to arrange an interview, please contact Stephen Kent, [skent@kentcom.com](mailto:skent@kentcom.com), 914-589-5988**