



CLERK OF THE BOARD OFFICE

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February 12, 2021

Aida Camacho-Welch
Secretary of the Board
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Ave.
9th Floor
PO Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350

Re: BPU Docket Nos. ER20080557, ER200080558, & ER20080559

Dear Ms. Camacho-Welch

The Salem County Board of Commissioners respectfully submits the attached comments regarding the Public Hearing for Salem Unit 1, Salem Unit 2 and Hope Creek for the ZEC program.


Stacy L. Pennington
Clerk of the Board
Salem County Board of Commissioners



Board of County Commissioners

I am Salem County Commissioner Director Ben Laury, and I am representing Salem County and our 64,000 residents.

As you know, Salem County is one of the most rural counties in the state. We are predominately an agricultural community, and we take great pride in being the Garden Spot of the State.

We have an existing business community, but it is now mostly small and micro businesses that have been hit particularly hard by our struggling economy. Major employers have shuttered their businesses and set up shop elsewhere causing a ripple effect.

Our tightknit community has been through so much economically, and although the people of Salem County are resilient and continue to be strong through all the financial hits to our community, we can't take another huge loss. The loss of PSEG and its Salem and Hope Creek nuclear plants would have such a devastating effect, I am convinced the County would be unable to recover.

PSEG provides employment and wage opportunities not typically found in this region, allowing for more discretionary spending in the County and surrounding areas.

PSEG is the county's largest employer – more than 1,600 employees – many from Salem County. During the twice yearly refueling, the numbers swell by 1000. These contractors patronize our local restaurants, stores, motels, and other small businesses. Some of which would not survive without this biannual influx of cash. Think about the shore communities without the summer tourists.

But PSEG is more than just a corporation; they are also part of the fabric of our community. They are an active supporter of dozens of community groups whom, without their support, would cease to exist. They are also the first to volunteer to participate in community events.

On a larger scale, what would it cost to replace the loss of clean, green energy produced by nuclear power? Will we rebuild using fossil fuels, or will New Jersey become California with its rolling brown outs? And what will be the cost to the taxpayers? Not only to build these plants, but in unemployment, welfare, loss of property taxes, and home foreclosure costs.

Salem County has always supported nuclear energy as a clean and reliable source of power. As such the Salem County Board of County Commissioners supports PSEG's ZEC application. We encourage the Board to act and support nuclear power not only for our residents, our community, and our region, but because it is the right thing to do.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Laury', is written over the typed name.

Ben Laury, Commissioner Director of the Board of County Commissioners