

William B. Leavens
359 West Mill Road
Long Valley, NJ 07853

January 31, 2021

NJ Board of Public Utilities
via Zec.Comments@bpu.nj.gov

re: Comments on the Application of PSEG Nuclear for Zero Emission Credits
BPU Docket Numbers ER20080557; ER20080558; ER 20080559

Dear Members of the Board,

I am an active environmentalist and have long advocated for nuclear power. In my view, nuclear reactors are the best means of generating the energy that permits the world to enjoy a high quality of life. Nuclear reactors are ideal for dealing with climate change because they are the only carbon-free energy source that is available on a large scale for 24 hours a day.

Closing New Jersey's nuclear plants would be a huge step backward. If there is any question about the annual subsidy that must be made to keep the state's reactors in operation, that cost must be balanced against the additional cost of replacing the power from Salem and Hope Creek with energy that would be primarily generated from fossil fuels. Burning fossil fuels would significantly increase climate change gases and other pollutants in our atmosphere. NJ has already lost the generation capacity from Oyster Creek and should not lose the value of our existing nuclear power plants as well.

There is also a real social cost of converting current and future power production to fossil fuels. As it is, the crowded cities of northeastern New Jersey suffer disproportionately from the environmental costs of carbon and other fossil fuel emissions. Shuttering the reactors will only exacerbate those harmful effects.

Nuclear power plants operated by our utility companies provide 40% of New Jersey's electric power. Most importantly, they generate 90 percent of our carbon-free power. Although there are superior new reactor technologies being developed, the Salem and Hope Creek power plants currently exist and they have consistently and reliably operated at very high levels of efficiency for decades.

The Salem County power plants account for a large portion of the direct and indirect jobs in that economically depressed part of the state. The threat of losing those jobs has to be a real consideration in your decision process.

I appreciate your consideration of my views and welcome your response.

