

Carlos Medina, Chairman, Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey  
Public Hearings BPU Docket Nos. ER20080557, ER20080558, & ER20080559  
Testimony in support of Nuclear Generation

# Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey

## **Testimony of Carlos Medina**

Chairman

Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey

In Support of Nuclear Generation

Public Hearing On

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Monday, February 1, 2021

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- My name is Carlos Medina and I am the Chairman of the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey which is the voice of 119,000 businesses that call New Jersey home and contribute \$20 Billion annually to the New Jersey economy.
- At the chamber, we work closely with a number of businesses and organizations throughout the State of New Jersey and many of them have stressed how important it is to find a solution to the energy crisis we face.
- In 2017, the chamber testified in support of Senate Bill 3560 and Assembly Bill 5330, the Nuclear Diversity Certificate program, which created the Zero Emission Certificate Program discussed here today.
- The Chamber's support for nuclear generation has not waived. And since 2017 the nuclear plants have delivered on their promise. These nuclear plants maintain thousands of good paying jobs, have broad local, state and national economic impact, run 24/7 safely and reliably – they keep the lights on – and provide the largest source of carbon-free generation in the state.
- This last point is particularly important in light of the state's ambitious carbon reduction goals, set forth in the Energy Master Plan, and the acknowledgment therein that the preservation of the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear plants are critically important to reaching those goals with the least customer impact.
- Today I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to the Board of Public Utilities and staff to highlight the importance and need for the continued support, at current levels, for New Jersey nuclear generation through the zero-emission certificate program.
- As you've heard, New Jersey's Salem and Hope Creek nuclear plants remain at risk of prematurely shutting down if they do not receive ZECs at current levels and the impact that will have on New Jersey's businesses is tremendous.
- Without these nuclear plants, it has been estimated that New Jersey will lose hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity across the state and thousands of good-paying New Jersey jobs.
- It will cost New Jersey businesses less to preserve New Jersey's nuclear plants than to replace them.

- Not preserving these plants would be devastating to many New Jersey businesses.
- These New Jersey nuclear plants provide more than 90 percent of our state's carbon-free electricity. Without them, we'd see a significant rise in carbon and other harmful pollutants. Which is completely at odds with the state's clean energy vision.
- And perhaps most importantly, nuclear energy plants are one of our state's most reliable source of 24/7 energy, provide close to half of our state's power and ensure a fuel diverse mix of resources to meet the energy needs of New Jerseyans. If Salem and Hope Creek go away, how will we replace that energy supply? It is my understanding that most of that energy would be replaced with fossil fuels that produce carbon and other pollution.
- Preserving energy diversity is critically important to mitigating threats to the electricity supply such as extreme weather that we have seen more recently in the State. This is a significant issue for many of the businesses that make up the Chamber. In a North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) study it pointed out that "reliance on a single fuel increases vulnerabilities, particularly during extreme weather conditions[.]" New Jersey itself has experienced severe weather events in recent years, including Superstorm Sandy and the Polar Vortex that crippled much of the northeast. Preserving a diverse generation mix that relies on multiple sources of fuel is essential to reducing the risk these potential common failures posed to the power grid.
- We all want the same thing – we want to make sure when we go home or go to work, that that power we use is being generated in a safe, reliable, cost-effective, and low-carbon/low pollution manner.
- This is why I stand with our fellow chambers of commerce (many of which testified in support of the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear plants), businesses, workers and families throughout the state on this issue and ask for continued ZEC support for Salem and Hope Creek at current levels.
- The Zero Emission Certificate Program preserves Salem and Hope Creek nuclear energy plants in New Jersey, powers our businesses, and ensures our great state will continue to be a national leader in carbon-free energy production.

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- Investing in our nuclear plants is good for our economy, for New Jersey businesses and residents, and for the environment.
- On behalf of our members, I urge you all to support continued ZEC support at current levels.
- Thank you.