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THE SENATE
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July 20, 2016

Hon. Kathleen H. Burgess
Secretary to the Commission
New York State Public Service Commission
Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223-1350

Dear Secretary Burgess:

I request that the NY State Public Service Commission reconsider the recommendations for a mandatory nuclear subsidy that is estimated to cost New Yorkers more than $7 billion over the course of the next 12 years.

In a recent California Public Utility proposal, the State will phase out their last nuclear power plant through a joint agreement between Pacific Gas & Electric, Plant workers unions, environmental groups and municipal officials to replace the last nuclear plant facility with renewable energy resources of the next 9 years. This agreement made sure to protect the jobs of countless workers by providing them with updated training without mandating any subsidy that taxpayers would fund.

Unlike California, New York State has no plan in place that would not hurt taxpayers. The Department of Public Service is proposing to impose an estimated $7.6 billion subsidy to underwrite the currently unprofitable operation of FitzPatrick, Ginna, and Nine Mile Point nuclear power stations. Over the next two years, New York taxpayers will be forced to subsidize an estimated $953 million dollars to keep these plants operational. By subsidizing these plants, New York ratepayers see rates escalate form $17.48 to $29.15 over the next twelve years.

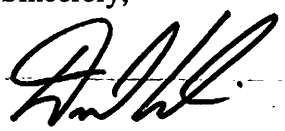
In addition to the three previously mentioned nuclear power stations, the proposed recommendations also include the Indian Point nuclear power station. The New York State Department of State has already deemed this power station to be unnecessary and unreliable. Adding this power station to the proposal burdens New York taxpayers with another $4 billion in subsidies in a region with the highest tax rates in the country.

Moreover, the Load Serving Entities – the utilities and Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) – would be required to bill their customers for the so-called Zero Emission Credits (ZECs). New Yorkers would no longer have the option of choosing to purchase 100% renewable energy because they would be forced to pay the nuclear surcharge regardless of whether or not they want to purchase nuclear power.

Furthermore, by referring to nuclear power as having zero-emission attributes, the proposal ignores emissions generated in mining, milling, transporting and storing nuclear fuel, and the planned and unplanned releases of radioactive isotopes and other emissions associated with nuclear operations. The proposal also ignores the creation of high-level radioactive waste in the form spent nuclear fuel rods, which will likely be stored in New York State for many decades. It also exaggerates the reliability of aging nuclear facilities, which have recently experienced increasingly frequent outages due to leaks, fires, and electrical problems.

I urge the Public Service Commission to deny the Staff's Responsive Proposal for Preserving Zero-Emissions Attributes in its current form. The recommendations mentioned above will have significant negative economic impacts on Rockland and Westchester Counties. I also request that the PSC extend the deadline for filing comments on the proposal to the full 45-days, as is customary under State Administrative Procedures Act (SAPA), to allow adequate time to review the substantial changes contained in this proposal.

Sincerely,



Senator David Carlucci
38th Senate District