

Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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Chairman Wolfe tells Feds Indian Point Risk is Too High for License Renewal

New City, NY (May 21, 2015) – Chairman of the Rockland County Legislature Alden H. Wolfe (D-Montebello) said today that the recent transformer fire at Indian Point should be a warning to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) that they are responsible for the safety of many thousands living near an aging plant in the most highly populated area of the United States. "With so many lives at stake," said Wolfe, "allowing Entergy to operate this facility beyond the term of its license places the public at too high a risk."

Indian Point 2 is operating without a license and the license for Indian Point 3 expires in December of this year. Criteria for license renewal does not include transformers and the recent fire was the third such incident at the plant since 2007. The NRC has so far refused to grant New York State's request to include transformers under the plant's "Aging Management Plan." The NRC omits seismic conditions from its re-licensing checklist. Indian Point is located on two fault lines. Geoscientists have said earthquakes are highly possible at that location in Buchanan.

"The whole re-licensing process baffles me," said Wolfe. "Why aren't older plants like Indian Point required to meet the same safety standards as new plants when applying for their license. This makes no sense. At Indian Point there is an enormous danger of fires. The spent fuel pools are over packed, the plant is on fault lines, and it has only 24 minutes of fire protection due to what I am told is defective insulation."

Wolfe continued, "The most disturbing part of the re-licensing process is that it doesn't take into consideration the reality of a successful evacuation plan. It's simply insulting to Rocklanders for the NRC to say we have an adequate escape route. In Rockland we have only two highways, the Palisades and the Thruway. Rockland is a small county. News of a catastrophe would get out quickly and the roads would be instantly clogged. Everyone would be heading out - not just those in the designated zone. Ask anyone who has been in one of the all too frequent mammoth TZB backups. Why does the NRC insist on saying the evacuation plan can work? It can't."

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Wolfe cites the Witt Report commissioned by Governor George Pataki that found in a fast breaking accident, an effective evacuation would be nearly impossible. "For years," said Wolfe, "the NRC has insisted the evacuation plan can work, because that's a requirement of running the plant. It's time to put the safety of people in of our region before the interests of Entergy, the plant's owner. I have a question: if this plant were so safe, why does the insurance industry refuse to provide coverage beyond \$1.2 billion, when we know damages from an accident could net trillions of dollars?"

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