



An open letter to the New Jersey Legislature calling for environmental, worker, and community protections in the event of nuclear subsidies

December 13, 2017

New Jersey State Senate and Assembly
New Jersey Statehouse
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Members of the New Jersey State Legislature,

The undersigned environmental organizations have a long-standing engagement on energy issues in New Jersey and a strong commitment to help the state build a clean energy economy to reduce pollution by evaluating costs and benefits, improving public health – especially in overburdened communities – creating jobs, and driving economic growth.

We recognize the important role that Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) nuclear plants in New Jersey play in providing low-carbon energy and local jobs. A customer-funded bailout now would be a rushed decision that would unnecessarily cost most New Jerseyans between \$350- and \$400-million a year over the next ten years.

We agree that a time-limited zero-emissions credit for these plants should be considered, if PSEG can demonstrate the facilities are in severe economic distress, and provided that such support is narrowly tailored and tied to protections for workers, communities, and the environment. Any program that is established to support existing nuclear plants must include a commitment to accelerate the adoption of clean energy.

New Jersey has an opportunity to craft a comprehensive transition plan for nuclear power that addresses these issues and sets a model for the nation to follow. And, there is ample time to create such a plan. PSEG has testified that its nuclear plants will not be at any financial risk for at least two years. In addition, none of the scores of people who testified at the December 4th hearing in Trenton stated an urgent need to secure a subsidy now, not even PSEG's CEO, Ralph Izzo.

There is no good environmental or public policy reason to advance a stand-alone subsidy for nuclear power plants during a rushed lame duck session. This issue must be looked at holistically. In the course of only two weeks, it is not possible to determine whether zero-emissions credits for existing nuclear plants are critical to New Jersey's clean energy future, and if they are, to develop such credits wisely.

Residents are learning that nuclear subsidies would add substantial new costs to electric bills for everyone in New Jersey, including fixed-income and low-income residents, existing businesses, and those considering a move to New Jersey. Any investment should be carefully constructed to provide real benefits to the state.

Governor-elect Murphy is about to take office with an ambitious [clean energy agenda](#). We urge you to work with his administration to develop a comprehensive clean energy plan that will provide a smooth transition for New Jersey's nuclear plants and take the steps necessary to ramp up renewables and energy efficiency. We ask that you take the time needed to address this issue with care, and commit to supporting your efforts.

Sincerely,

Dale Bryk
Natural Resources Defense Council

Tom Gilbert
Rethink Energy NJ

Mary Barber
Environmental Defense Fund