



July 31, 2017

Governor Andrew Cuomo
Executive Chamber
Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We are writing to urge you to reevaluate the Zero Emissions Credit program in light of a new [analysis](#) from Amory B. Lovins, Chief Scientist of the Rocky Mountain Institute, which shows that subsidizing costly, uncompetitive nuclear plants is not the most efficient or cheapest way to reduce emissions. In fact, reinvesting nuclear plant operating costs into energy efficiency can both replace the power from the nuclear plant and displace power generated by fossil fuels, all without charging ratepayers an extra dime.

The analysis should also allay the fears of those who worry we need large power plants to ensure a reliable and efficient grid. Lovins demonstrates that today, “baseload” power is no longer needed for grid reliability. In fact, large plants’ size and inflexibility (i.e., they’re difficult to ramp up and down) also make them a barrier to integration of renewables into the grid. This has been confirmed by a former FERC Chairman, the CEO of National Grid, General Electric, the Department of Energy, and European utilities in Spain, Denmark, Germany, Scotland and Portugal that have run their grids with 40+ percent renewable energy.

This rationale is also what drove Pacific Gas & Electric’s multi-stakeholder agreement to close the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant in California and replace it with a portfolio of energy efficiency, renewables and other carbon-free resources. The agreement made headlines nationwide for being so forward-thinking and beginning the transition to a 21st-century grid.

These are the kinds of landmark decisions New York should be making to become *the* national leader in the fight against climate change. Instead, bailing out these nuclear plants in the face of powerful evidence that there is a better route for the planet and a more fiscally prudent path for New Yorkers does a disservice to the people of this state and misses an opportunity to be on the vanguard of the low-carbon revolution.

We, like you, desperately want to meet New York’s climate goals. We have no time to waste. We hope you agree that this analysis shows we should immediately halt the ZEC program and investigate phasing out the FitzPatrick, Nine Mile Point and R.E. Ginna plants in exchange for investing in efficiency. No matter how you look at it, spending billions of dollars on nuclear plants just to prolong their eventual closure is the wrong way to go when there are cheaper and more environmentally responsible paths to pursue. We don’t have the time or the money to make mistakes of this magnitude. There’s too much at stake for everyone.

Sincerely,

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