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January 1, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

As a resident of Michigan, I feel it is my duty to consider the proposal to build FERMI III on the shores of Lake Erie.

First of all, do we really need more electricity? After all, remember the gifts of our forefathers: freedom, courage, democracy; all produced without electricity.

Second, what cost electricity? If the cost to have lights and machines comes at the expense of clean water and living things, is it worth it?

In the opinion of Dr. Helen Caldicott, the U.S. government is failing to protect the public from radioactive contamination from nuclear plants. Is this true?

According to the NRC, there have been hundreds of thousands of "incidents" reported from plants across the country.

At present, a majority have buried pipes which are leaking tritium.

Among people living in areas with tritium contamination, the chronic exposure can cause serious health effects.

Young people in Monroe suffer higher rates of cancer than young people in the rest of Michigan or in the U.S. at large.

Tritium can produce cancer, mutations, tumors and cell death. No economically feasible technology exists that can remove tritium from a reactor's waste water or steam releases to the air.

Every nuclear reactor releases tritium during routine operation. What effects does tritium have on the flora and fauna in the Lake Erie watershed?

Eating food contaminated with tritium can be more damaging than drinking tritium in water, because when bound in animal or plant tissue, tritium can stay in the body 10 years or longer.

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After the tsunami hit the Fukushima plants, and Japan and the world began trying to adjust to, and learn from, the ongoing disaster, it seemed obvious to many people around the world that the costs and risks of nuclear energy were too high.

Many governments responded with proposals to stop or to phase out nuclear energy. Why not the US? Is it true that the NRC is an industry with a long track record of broken promises? (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2006)

In today's economy, it is no small thing that the NRC boasts of being one of the best places to work. Parents have to make incredible sacrifices and students need to jump through an ever-increasing number of high fiery hoops to get through college. At graduation, it's time to begin paying back the loans.

Before approving any permits for the construction of more nuclear reactors, obtain from the best and brightest of the NRC professionals detailed studies of tritium's effects on plants, insects, worms, birds, fish and other wildlife. Find a cost-effective way to prevent the release of tritium in reactor steam and waste water. Develop an ethic, an explanation and a solution for future generations who will have to deal with a toxic legacy.

With zoning regulations and building codes, neighbors have an opportunity to consider proposals and make comments. Thank you for providing this courtesy.

In several communities, people have been banned from owning pit-bulls after incidents of maulings. After numerous auto accidents, people are required to have insurance.

As a whole, the nuclear industry has had thousands of accidents, and has caused hundreds of thousands of people to become sick and to be forced to evacuate their homes.

Who pays insurance in case of a nuclear accident, particularly one requiring large-scale evacuation? Who pays for the food and lodging, the costs of relocation, the medical treatment, the pain and suffering, the life insurance for people in a region affected by a nuclear accident?

Of course no one can predict when, where, how, or why, but yes, Accidents Happen.

No one could have predicted the tsunami and earthquake in Japan. As a genius said, the only viable way to proceed with nuclear power is to ban all further acts of God.

With a worldwide terror alert for American travelers, it seems at this time we're far away from God and from our fellow human beings, not to mention the voiceless creatures whose future, too, depends on our decisions and actions.

What are we learning from Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima? How are we taking responsibility for what we know?

So as not to burden future generations, may we put our priorities, our resources, and our minds and efforts toward finding a solution to the problem of radioactive waste, to preventing illness and genetic mutations, and to helping people who have been victimized by nuclear accidents.

Heaven forbid the wrath of the nations and the damage to ourselves, if we of this current generation, witnesses to Fukushima, the worst nuclear catastrophe in human history, should proceed to continue in the path of business as usual, blind and callous to the sufferings of others, especially both the victims in Japan and the young people with cancer right in Monroe.

Heaven help us if we who are so fortunate and blessed to live in the Great Lakes watershed should take it for granted and even contaminate it with radioactive waste.

I know we are better than that. I believe that, as every person employed by the NRC was born to a human mother and every funder as well, as long as we all must coexist and share the same air and water, that conscientiousness, responsibility to self and others, and appreciation for life will rule the day.

Sincerely yours, Cadey Sontag