

Queens Chamber of Commerce

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September 5, 2012

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USNRC

Office of the Secretary
Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

September 20, 2012 (8:30 a.m.)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Re: **Economic Impact of Indian Point Units 2 and 3 License Renewal Application**
NRC Docket Nos. 50-247-LR and 50-286-LR ASLBP No. 07-858-03-LR-BD01

Dear Secretary:

I am executive director of the Queens Chamber of Commerce, which represents more than 1,000 local businesses. I am writing to urge your board's approval for license renewal of Indian Point Units 2 and 3 in Buchanan, New York. It is my understanding that the NRC is considering numerous issues in connection with the license renewal application, including the effect of relicensing on (i) the potential for energy alternatives and (ii) environmental justice issues.

Queens is in midst of an economic resurgence and across the borough, from Long Island City to Far Rockaway, a variety of new projects are creating jobs, housing, and recreational opportunities for New Yorkers. Home to two of the nation's busiest airports, Queens acts as gateway to New York and international trade. To capitalize on these opportunities, it is important that steps be taken to keep our region's electricity affordable and reliable so that Queens can continue the upward trajectory.

The closure of Indian Point's would seriously jeopardize this recent economic growth. Parts of Queens including Astoria, Flushing, and Long Island City are vulnerable to blackouts, brownouts, and power reductions during the dog days of summer. Our energy demand will only continue to grow, and our economy is destined to expand; however, this will not happen without Indian Point.

According to Con Edison and the New York Independent System Operator, closing Indian Point would cause major electric service disruptions and exponential increases in electricity rates that would affect everyone's bottom lines. Any reduction in grid reliability will turn out the lights in Queens, resulting in economic harm and serious safety issues. The plant supplies up to 30 percent of New York City's electricity and 11 percent statewide. We rely on this clean, carbon neutral power to keep our businesses operating, keep the lights on in our homes, and provide confidence that electricity costs will not skyrocket.

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The existing energy alternatives to Indian Point – mainly fossil fuel sources – not only reduce electric reliability, but also present real health issues for New York City. Queens is home to six fossil fuel power plants, which are among the most egregious emitters of toxic pollution. These plants are predominantly located in minority and low-income communities. Indian Point's closure would increase our reliance on power from the pollution-emitting fossil fuel generators, resulting in a disproportionate impact on the borough's most vulnerable populations, including seniors, children and the disabled. A report commissioned by the New York City Department of Environmental Conservation found that without Indian Point, carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions will increase by 15 percent, sulfur dioxide (SO₂) will go up to 14 percent, and nitrogen oxide (NO_x) will reach 7-8 percent. These toxic emissions are linked to global warming, acid rain and smog.

If our employees have to deal with increased health costs, it will impact both productivity and the family unit. The Clean Air Task Force attributes 799 deaths, 698 hospitalizations, and 1,541 heart attacks annually to power plant pollution throughout the New York Metropolitan region. These concerns and costs should not be the tradeoff in this process. New York already pays the third highest electricity rates in the nation, adding increased healthcare costs to the mix will only worsen the situation.

The numerous benefits of Indian Point's continued operation, including electric reliability, minimized power costs, and increased public safety, have contributed to strong economic growth in Queens. Indian Point's continued operation is essential to protecting the environment and the lives of those in designated environmental justice areas. As we move toward achieving expansion plans, improving air quality is central to keeping both businesses and their employees healthy. The borough has come a long way, and we have some more to go. Shutting down Indian Point would set us back and send many to the emergency room.

As such, the Queens Chamber of Commerce encourages you to renew the license for Indian Point. Thank you for your time and considering my comments on this issue.

Sincerely,



Jack Friedman, Executive Director

cc: Administrative Judge Lawrence G. McDade
c/o Anne Siarnacki, Law Clerk
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