



June 11, 2019

Janet Tauro  
Clean Water Action  
198 Brighton Avenue  
Long Branch, NJ

The Honorable Frank Pallone Jr.  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Congressman Pallone,

Thank you for receiving this letter for the record concerning the transportation of highly radioactive nuclear waste to a consolidated interim storage facility that is currently under review by the Environment and Climate Change Subcommittee, which will hear testimony tomorrow during its "Clean Up Communities: Ensuring Safe Storage and Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel" hearing.

I have the honor to serve as the NJ Board Chair of Clean Water Action, but also live with my husband and have raised our family within the 50-mile ingestion zone of the Oyster Creek Generating Station in Lacey Township.

The facility is now closed. A sale and license transfer, which would include the \$980 million decommissioning fund, is before for the federal Nuclear Regulation Commission (NRC).

Clean Water Action has been involved in identifying and reporting various safety concerns at the nuclear plant for almost two decades. Of particular concern has been the corrosion and deterioration of the plant from age and the accumulation of nuclear waste that will remain highly radioactive for thousands of years. There is about 1.2 million pounds of highly radioactive waste at Oyster Creek.

Clean Water Action has more than 150,000 members statewide in New Jersey and is the nation's largest grassroots group focused on water, energy and environmental health. Since our founding during the campaign to pass the landmark Clean Water Act in 1972, Clean Water Action has worked to win strong health and environmental protections by bringing issue expertise, solution-oriented thinking and people power to the table. We will protect clean water in the face of attacks from a polluter friendly Administration and Congress. [www.cleanwater.org/nj](http://www.cleanwater.org/nj)

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A permanent solution to nuclear waste storage has never been found and is unlikely to occur in the near future. We are left with choosing a least bad option. We agree with our colleagues at Beyond Nuclear that Hardened On-Site Storage (HOSS) to higher ground away from rising seas and worsening storm surges should be seriously considered for coastal areas until a permanent repository is established. Moving the waste thousands of miles out West to a temporary facility from which it would have to be moved again doubles the risk of a catastrophic accident.

How would the waste be moved out of NJ: by barge through Barnegat Bay and out to the Atlantic Ocean, up busy and congested Route 9 to the Garden State Parkway, or by rail through densely populated areas? The population here at the Jersey Shore has exploded; 650,000 permanent residents live in Ocean County and the number swells from tourism during the summer months to 2 million. About 3.5 million live within 50 miles of Oyster Creek.

The current plan at Oyster Creek calls for about 30 casks to be lined up like bowling pins on a pad area near Route 9. Requiring hardened storage, which creates a berm around the storage casks concealing them from terrorist attack, makes sense and increases public safety.

Maximizing safety must be the focus of the committee particularly since the NRC has allowed Exelon, or any future owner of Oyster Creek, to discontinue emergency planning around the plant once the fuel pool is emptied. In fact, Exelon tested its warning sirens for the last time two weeks ago. It would behoove this committee to also determine whether the company has been given the approval by NRC to disband its fire brigade, leaving a nuclear fire to local volunteer fire departments unequipped and untrained to handle such a disaster.

As I write this, my immediate and selfish inclination is to want that atomic waste packed up, shipped out, and away from my home. But, then, on reflection I ask if it is right to dump our poisonous garbage onto someone else.

Thank you for taking up this critical issue.

Sincerely,  
Janet Tauro