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RURAL RESOURCES

October 7, 2024

Doreen M. Harris  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
New York State Energy Research and Development Authority  
17 Columbia Circle  
Albany, NY 12203-6399

**Re: Comments on Draft Blueprint for Consideration of Advanced Nuclear Technologies**

Dear President Harris,

I am writing to support the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority's (NYSERDA) development of the *Draft Blueprint for Consideration of Advanced Nuclear Technologies* and continued discussion of new clean energy technologies, including nuclear generation.

Preserving New York's existing nuclear facilities should be the highest priority and I support the state exploring a variety of solutions to build New York's clean energy future. This includes the potential for advanced nuclear technologies.

Constellation's R.E. Ginna Clean Energy Center, which hosts a nuclear reactor located in my Senate district, has been an incredible asset and valued partner for our local communities. It has provided good paying jobs, supported local agencies and organizations, hosted community events, and driven economic growth. The R.E. Ginna Clean Energy Center has been such a great success that the Wayne County Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a resolution this year in support of its continued operation and have even called for the opening of additional nuclear reactors in the county. Constellation's contributions to Wayne County and the surrounding area are just one example of how New York's nuclear energy industry can positively contribute to our communities and New York's long-term energy goals.



As acknowledged in NYSERDA's Draft *Clean Energy Standard Biennial Review*, there are challenges to achieving New York's energy goals. Since these goals were established, a myriad of issues have hindered new renewable development while at the same time, New York State is experiencing unprecedented economic growth.

Nuclear energy's always-on, reliable, base-load power is essential to meeting the state's electrical demand now and in the future. The New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) forecasts a 300 percent surge in electricity demand by 2040 due to the state's electrification efforts and significant high-load economic developments. New York's need for Dispatchable Emissions Free Resources (DEFERs) will only increase as energy demand grows, traditional, fossil-fueled dispatchable resources are phased out, and the 2040, and 2050 net-zero economywide emissions deadlines approach.

The Climate Action Council's (CAC) Scoping Plan acknowledges the state's existing upstate nuclear power stations' contribution towards grid reliability and achievement of the state's decarbonization goals. New York's upstate nuclear facilities currently produce 46% of the state's carbon-free electricity, approximately 32,000 gigawatt-hours (GWh).

Further, the Scoping Plan assumes New York's upstate nuclear fleet will be granted license extensions to operate an additional 20 years and recommends that the state evaluate the role of existing and advanced nuclear facilities prior to the scheduled conclusion of the Zero Emissions Credit program in 2029. We must ensure that these license extensions are issued, and that New York makes long-term commitments to nuclear power to allow the upstate nuclear fleet to remain environmental and economic engines for our region.

The potential for advanced nuclear technologies is an exciting opportunity for our state, and it is clear that nuclear energy should play a significant part in meeting the state's aggressive energy goals. However, I urge contributors to the final version of the Blueprint and other nuclear power plans to provide further details and clarification regarding the state's intentions, if any, to expand the current nuclear fleet.

We need to ensure these facilities have the policy support to remain environmental and economic engines for our region while also considering new policy mechanisms to incentivize new, advanced nuclear technologies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Pamela A. Helming  
Senator, 54th District