



## mothers for nuclear

**NOVEMBER 7, 2024**

Mothers for Nuclear Response to NYSERDA's Draft New Nuclear Blueprint:

Mothers for Nuclear commends the State of New York for taking proactive steps in developing a draft nuclear blueprint. The initiation of this document signals a recognition of the critical role that nuclear energy can play in achieving a clean energy future and addressing climate change. We appreciate NYSERDA's commitment to exploring solutions and promoting reliable energy sources for the state.

As a grassroots organization of mothers, women, community members, and nuclear professionals, we advocate for clean, sustainable, and reliable energy solutions that protect both the environment and the health of our families, and we would like to offer constructive feedback on a couple aspects of the draft document.

The current focus of the draft centers on small modular reactors (SMRs). While SMRs are a promising technology, we believe that reducing emissions is an urgent matter and that we should not limit our scope of solutions to technologies that are small in scale and still under development. Even before the recent boom in artificial intelligence and data centers, much of our electricity is still powered by natural gas and other fossil fuels. We have a monumental task ahead of us and need to bring massive amounts of clean energy on line to even hold our ground.

While the Vogtle nuclear plant obviously experienced some challenges, we can learn from these and roll out existing nuclear technology at scale right now. And as several of us work at existing nuclear plants, we can attest to the ability of the nuclear industry to implement operating experience from around the country and world in the drive for excellence. Both large and small reactors can contribute to a diverse and resilient energy portfolio, something we need more focus on given the increasing occurrence of severe weather events. We encourage NYSERDA to broaden its scope to include a comprehensive assessment of all nuclear technologies, including and perhaps even emphasizing the potential of large-scale nuclear reactors.

The transition to a clean energy economy must be equitable, ensuring that all communities, especially those most vulnerable to climate change, benefit from the solutions we pursue. Nuclear energy can provide valuable economic opportunities, such as high-paying, stable jobs and the long-term investment necessary for maintaining a resilient energy infrastructure. As the Nuclear Blueprint moves forward, we urge NYSERDA to ensure that policies supporting nuclear energy are inclusive and support economic and educational opportunities for workers and communities across the state, particularly those in regions that rely on the energy sector for employment.

Moreover, we are committed to ensuring that the communities most impacted by climate change, including low-income neighborhoods and communities of color, are not left behind in New York's energy transition. By prioritizing nuclear energy, New York has the opportunity to create a just and equitable transition—one that benefits everyone, including the most vulnerable.

Finally, we are concerned about the blueprint's inclusion of perspectives from several anti-nuclear sources, which has led to misinformation within the report. Many of these examples are addressed within the response document that we are submitting jointly with Nuclear New York and New York Energy & Climate Advocates. We urge consideration of those suggestions. We believe that engaging a wider range of stakeholders—including both experts and advocates in the nuclear field—will result in a more balanced and accurate portrayal of nuclear energy's benefits and challenges.

Nuclear energy is a critical piece of the clean energy puzzle—providing reliable, carbon-free electricity while supporting public health, economic opportunity, and climate goals. We urge NYSERDA to refine the blueprint by incorporating a holistic view of nuclear energy, ensuring that it reflects the full potential of this vital resource for New York's energy landscape. Thank you for your efforts, and we look forward to seeing how this blueprint evolves.

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Jennifer Klay (Secretary, Academic Liaison)

## About MfN

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Mothers for Nuclear was founded on Earth Day in 2016 by two mothers. Our mission statement is “building a global community of support for clean energy,” because ultimately we want more of all clean energy and to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. We advocate for nuclear with recognition that nuclear has a great story to tell, but historically we have been bad at telling it. Mothers and women have been an underrepresented voice in the nuclear industry - we started Mothers for Nuclear because we realized that given the gender gap in support for nuclear energy, we weren't reaching potential supporters with a value message from trusted sources. We spent a long time gathering enough information to change from skeptics to supporters, and would like to be a resource for others who may have questions or concerns.

The views expressed in this statement are strictly those of MfN personnel, and do not represent any company or university. We advocate for:

- Protection and expansion of nuclear energy around the world
- Investments in the future workforce
- Efficiency improvements in plant operations, regulations, and siting for new plants
- Development, commercialization, and licensing support for advanced nuclear designs
- Sustainable approaches and consent-based process for used fuel management