



Support clean, renewable energy; Maintain nuclear safeguards, public interest groups ask

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Public interest, environmental and faith groups, along with local clean energy and agricultural businesses, have joined in asking the state legislature and Gov. Scott Walker to maintain state laws safeguarding nuclear power reactors and focus the state's energy policy on clean, renewable energy.

"Wisconsin has an opportunity to be a leader in the clean energy economy. We know that you care about creating family-supporting jobs, protecting the health of our citizens, and sustaining our natural resources. We do as well. We urge you to oppose any bills that weaken or eliminate Wisconsin's cost and waste safeguards for nuclear reactors, and support energy policies that help us realize our clean energy potential," the letter, with 16 signers, said.

Noting that Wisconsin's three operating nuclear reactors were all built in the 1970s, the organizations said that despite extensions of their operating licenses, the reactors' operational lifetime is limited.

"Now is the time to consider how best to maintain the state's energy supplies, while expanding our economy and keeping residents safe. Our local communities are affected by the operations of these reactors, the radioactive waste that they produce, and decisions regarding their operations, safety and security.

"Despite the high cost of new nuclear and the ongoing risks and costs associated with growing stockpiles of radioactive waste, there continues to be talk about building nuclear reactors in Wisconsin. New reactors would burden Wisconsin families and businesses with increased electricity costs, while increasing the public health and safety risks from the storage of radioactive nuclear waste."

With the letter, the groups sent the governor and lawmakers a compact disc with recent articles on the costs of nuclear energy, safety of US nuclear plants, nuclear waste storage, energy efficiency, and health impacts of this year's Japanese nuclear disaster.

Six of the groups signing the letter are members of a Carbon Free Nuclear Free Wisconsin coalition: the Sierra Club's John Muir chapter, Physicians for Social Responsibility Wisconsin, Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice, Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, Nukewatch, and the Wisconsin Resources Protection Council.

Also signing were: Citizens Utility Board, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network, Clean Wisconsin, Full Spectrum Solar, Environmental Law & Policy Center, Organic Valley Family of Farms, Wisconsin Environment Research and Policy Center, WISPIRG, Midwest Environmental Advocates, and Wisconsin Interfaith Power & Light.

(Letter attached)