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BWXT Re-licensing Hearing – March 2, 2020

Summary of my remarks

I wanted to extend my thanks to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) for relocating the BWXT Licensing Renewal Public Hearings to the Davenport Riding. My team and I worked hard to make this location change happen. I also want to thank Casa do Alentejo for hosting the two-day sessions. It is important for the local community to be able to easily participate in these hearings.

My recommendation is that should CNSC renew BWXT's license, it is the final renewal of the license and that BWXT begins thinking about their shift to a different location.

I have lived in the riding for over 15 years and this facility has always been a source of anxiety for many in the community who were aware of its purpose. Since being elected over 4 ½ years ago, I have heard a steady stream of concerns from local residents about the safety of the facility and possible exposure to pollutants.

To follow up on these concerns, I met with BWXT, its leadership and representatives. I have inquired about safety standards, how pollutants are monitored and the safety of the facility and its operations. I also inquired after any emissions testing done at the federal, provincial and municipal levels.

The information I have received from these inquires confirmed that any any emissions released are miniscule and well below designated safe levels. In addition, there have been no major or minor safety incidences, and the company has operated safely in the community for decades.

Given this history of safe operations and no evidence of harm to the public, I am still recommending this be the last renewal by CNSC.

This recommendation is due to the nature of BWXT's industry and the source of anxiety it continues to instill in the community. Residents do not see it as a regular manufacturing plant but as a nuclear facility – one located in a dense urban area (that has changed from the largely industrial area that the area was over 50 years ago).

More specifically:

- They worry about the *one time* when an accident happens and something that shouldn't be released into the air is released into the air, and/or a major safety mishap happens – and it affects the health of themselves, their family, their home
- They worry about the increase of diseases and wonder about the collective impact of pollutants on our health and on our children's health [cancer now 1 in 2]
- These fears are perfectly understandable and no amount of information and placating will alleviate these fears.

These fears are understandable, and no amount of information and placating can alleviate them.

In addition, the plant no longer makes sense in its current location, as the area continues to densify over time—especially with the new GO station hub coming to the area and greater expected residential density and growth.

I believe it is in everyone's interests to search for a better location for this facility. Hence my recommendation that this be the last renewal, to allow BWXT time to search for a new location and to transition BWXT Toronto's approximate 50 employees.

Regardless of whether this is the final renewal, I ask BWXT & CSNC for:

Maximum transparency.

BWXT must continue to significantly improve its communications. A lack of information and understanding of what happens at BWXT breeds the anxiety already seen within the community and can promote the spread of information not based on facts. [Much of this will be come out during the testimony over the next couple of days].

BWXT must make the effort to:

- Find ways of abating the community's concerns;
- Fight against the misinformation that arises in an information vacuum;
- Make all emissions data, epidemiological testing and results accessible to the community in non-technical and easily understandable language;
- Make available any and all other relevant information.

Rigorous open discussion and outreach with the community.

BWXT has already made efforts in this area through its community newsletters and BBQs and initiated the Toronto Committee Liaison Committee with members of the local community. Initiatives that are good start but much more needs to be done.

There are ongoing improvements and engagements that could be made to assure the community of its safety given the unconventional location and nature of the BWXT facility.

CNSC has a role to play here as well. It should expand its outreach program and make their Information Sessions in affected communities more frequent, in less technical, plain language,

and more community-focused. Communication to the communities about this program could also be improved.

Accessible Emergency Planning.

I understand that the details of the emergency plan might not be shareable with the general public for security reasons but, surely BWXT and the CNSC should be able to share high-level details of the emergency plan with the community that will ensure them that:

- it has signed off by the CNSC, and has been reviewed and signed off by the fire department, the police department, the Min of Environment, and any other key bodies that need to be part of creating and signing off on such a plan,
- That it is a “best in class” strong emergency plan able to deal with any safety incident, small or big, and that they are protected, and their homes are protected.

In closing, I am part of a federal government that believes in evidence-based decision making and informing the public as clearly and transparently as possible.

While there is no evidence to show that BWXT poses a safety risk to the local community, BWXT no longer makes best sense in its current location as the area continues to densify and the property is less suited for use as a uranium processing facility.

For whatever period of time it continues to be in Davenport, it is important to ensure maximum transparency from BWXT and CNSC, rigorous open discussion and outreach with the community and accessible emergency planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this morning and thank you for your efforts and the important work you do.

During the question period afterwards mentioned the following point:

I do not believe that CNSC would approve a net new application for a uranium processing plant in Davenport today, so why would CNSC approve a renewal?