

From: Charles Goldman <charles.goldman@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 16, 2020 4:23 PM
To: Quintero, Jessie; Diaz Maldonado, Marilyn; Diana.Diaz@nrc.gov; Vukovinsky, Thomas; WEC_CFFF_EIS Resource
Subject: [External_Sender] Comment Period for SCOPING for the EIS for Westinghouse Fuel Fabrication Facility's Renewal License; Docket No. 70-1151; NRC-2015-0039

Dear Ms. Jessie Quintero, Ms. Marilyn Diaz, Ms. Diana Diaz, and Mr. Vukovinsky:

As a resident stakeholder (Columbia, SC) I request an extension of the comment period for 90 days beyond the current August 31, 2020 deadline for the scoping portion for the Environmental Impact Statement, EIS, as part of the process of re-licensing of the Westinghouse Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility, WEC-CFFF, in Hopkins, South Carolina.

My neighbors and I live in or near the area called Lower Richland where the Westinghouse plant is located. It is an area of rural, low-to-middle income, primarily African-American communities who are hit the hardest by the state of emergency the country is in. There are other industries in these communities polluting the air, increasing asthma and other breathing problems making us more likely to be seriously ill from COVID. The COVID pandemic has the greatest impacts on respiratory health in our area because our population is mostly African-American.

The downturn of the economy has made the lack of access to food, to healthcare, and to job income worse. Many have to focus all their time and energy on surviving from day-to-day. This is not the time to ask hard hit communities for scoping comments for the Environmental Impact Statement. Westinghouse's current license does not even expire for 7 years.

Westinghouse has a history of serious problems. Within the past 5 years there have been accumulation of uranium on a scrubber in 2016, an explosion inside a barrel containing containing nuclear material inside the building, and the leak of an acid and uranium through the building floor and into the soil under the building in June 2018. Westinghouse continues to have non-compliance issues. The presence of radioactive technetium-99 has not been solved and the clean up is not scheduled to be finished until 2022.

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML20202A678>

The NRC is making decisions about public engagement on a case-by-case basis during these emergencies. Commissioner Lubinski stated in an April 30, 2020, letter that NRC is considering public engagement through communication technology, such as teleconference, video conference, webinars, etc. These are not the better ideas as the sole means for communicating with people in Lower Richland. Our case is different because in our rural communities of Lower Richland there is no broadband or reliable phone connection system. The NRC made a promise to Lower Richland residents to have an in-person meeting to explain the scoping process with stakeholders. This meeting can and should be done in person using safe distancing and other precautions.

Scoping comments that the NRC is asking for from the public are about what NRC should investigate for the Environmental Impact Statement. In order to ensure the NRC investigates all that it should to achieve the most effective outcome, the public needs time for research and collaboration. Extensions of time have been granted by the NRC in the past for collaboration among stakeholders on other issues, so there is a precedent here.

In the past the NRC has extended the comment period when complex problems have had complicated effects and when people have needed time to research and collaborate. Extending the comment period will help, not stop or interfere with the NRC meeting its goals.

Rules and policies of normal times will not work and need to be adjusted in this time of emergency to make sure the public is fully included. The goal is to have a full, fair, equitable, transparent, and productive process. The NRC has made adjustments for itself and the industries it serves so the NRC should make adjustments residents in the area as well.

The NRC must keep its promise of an in-person meeting to explain the scoping process. The NRC must make adjustments for the public so we can be fully engaged.

Given the circumstances of emergency this extension request is fair and appropriate, so please grant it as written without cutting the time down. Please extend the deadline for scoping comments to 90 days or more beyond the current August 31, 2020 deadline.

Also, please send me a confirmation notice when you receive this email and let me know the date and day when you will respond to my requests.

Sincerely,

Charles Goldman
803-730-1432 (voice/text)
charles.goldman@yahoo.com

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