For Immediate Release

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Council of Canadians condemns CNSC approval of radioactive shipments through Great Lakes

The Council of Canadians condemns the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission’s decision late Friday to approve the transport of 16 radioactive steam generators by ship across the Great Lakes to Sweden.

“The Great Lakes is a shared commons, public trust and protected bioregion,” says national chairperson Maude Barlow. “These shipments will put the drinking water of 40 million people at risk. Announcing this decision late on a Friday is a clear indication that the CNSC knows that there will be widespread opposition to their decision.”

Last April, Bruce Power applied for a special license from the CNSC because the steam generators failed to meet CNSC’s own Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances Regulations. The radioactive levels also exceed legal limits set out in the International Atomic Energy Agency’s Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material by 50 times.

Bruce Power plans to ship the 16 bus size steam generators to Sweden for decontamination, with the most radioactive parts of the generators being transported back across the Great Lakes and stored near its nuclear power plant on Lake Huron. The corporation has at least 64 steam generators that it wants to ship to Sweden.

“These shipments set an extremely dangerous precedent,” says national water campaigner Emma Lui. “This opens the door to transporting radioactive waste that exceeds legal limits across our lakes.”

The International Institute of Concern for Public Health has noted that radionuclides found in Great Lakes water, including tritium, carbon-14, cesium and long-lived iodine-129, pose serious health hazards even at low levels. An accident with just one of Bruce Power’s numerous planned shipments could prove to be disastrous.

Nearly 80 groups provided written submissions and half of them - including the Council of Canadians - intervened at a public hearing last September in Ottawa. The groups expressed concerns regarding Bruce Power’s insufficient emergency response plans, the lack of an environmental assessment and the failure to consult adequately with communities.

For More Information:

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