



**Beyond Nuclear**  
6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 400,  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
Tel: 301.270.2209 Fax: 301.270.4000  
Email: [info@beyondnuclear.org](mailto:info@beyondnuclear.org)  
Web: [www.beyondnuclear.org](http://www.beyondnuclear.org)

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Contact: Kevin Kamps, Radioactive Waste Specialist, Beyond Nuclear, (240) 462-3216

## **By approving \$850 million for 20-year extension at Cook Nuclear, MI Public Service Commission serves the public up for dinner**

Bridgman, MI—Earlier this week, the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) approved \$850 million towards the 20-year license extension at American Electric Power Company's (AEP) Donald C. Cook nuclear power plant in Bridgman, MI, on the Lake Michigan shoreline. Beyond Nuclear's Radioactive Waste Specialist, Kevin Kamps, has responded:

“The MPSC has given new meaning to ‘public service’: serving the public up for dinner, to the nuclear power industry.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has rubber-stamped 20-year license extensions at both of Cook's atomic reactors, allowing them to operate till 2034 and 2037, respectively. This represents unacceptable, worsening risks as Cook's 35- and 39-year old reactors enter ever more deeply into their break-down phase.

Cook and Fukushima, despite having different reactor designs, have a major safety risk in common. Their ‘pressure-suppression’ containment structures are too small and too weak. Fukushima's catastrophically failed, releasing the worst hazardous radioactive clouds and floods since Chernobyl. Cook's has a soft spot that could well breach during a core meltdown, causing large-scale death and destruction downwind and downstream.

In fact, from 1997-2000, Cook had one of the most infamous safety shutdowns, and one of the largest NRC fines, in history. Waves of protests and non-violent civil disobedience arrests called for the Cook reactors' permanent shutdown.

Another major safety risk at Cook is the more than 1,500 tons of high-level radioactive waste piled up there, with nowhere to go. Unlike the reactors, Cook's high-level radioactive waste storage pools are not located within radiological containment structures, leaving it vulnerable to catastrophic fire in the event of an accident, attack, natural disaster, or loss of the external electricity supply to run cooling pumps.

Our slogan against the safety risks has long been ‘Don't Cook the Great Lakes!’ But the MPSC just ‘cooked’ Michigan ratepayers, on AEP's behalf.

The irony, and injustice, of this massive subsidy, is the fact that AEP is already getting away with murder, while making a killing. Cook likely makes over a million dollars *per day* in net profits from electricity sales, while externalizing most or all of its risks, liabilities, and costs onto ratepayers and/or taxpayers.

The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission is likewise being hit up by AEP for such subsidies to enable Cook to operate for 20 more years. Let's hope IURC has the principled wisdom to just say no, on behalf of the Hoosiers it is pledged to serve."

Kamps has also long served on the board of directors of the state-wide nuclear power watchdog coalition, Don't Waste Michigan, representing the Kalamazoo chapter. He is a long serving member of the Great Lakes United Nuclear-Free/Green Energy Task Force.

Please see Additional Background, as well as "A Bathtub Curve for Nuclear Accidents," posted at: <http://www.beyondnuclear.org/construction-work-in-progress/2013/2/1/by-approving-850-million-for-20-year-extension-at-cook-nucle.html>

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