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Media Statement by Beyond Nuclear's Radioactive Waste Watchdog, Kevin Kamps, re: today's Canadian federal Joint Review Panel (JRP) submission of its Environmental Assessment Report, on the proposed radioactive waste dump targeted at the Great Lakes shore, to the Canadian federal Minister of the Environment:

“Beyond Nuclear joins with a growing groundswell of environmental and public interest groups, concerned residents, and governmental bodies across the Great Lakes Basin, in both the U.S. and Canada, to continue decrying the proposal by Ontario Power Generation (OPG) to bury radioactive wastes on the Lake Huron shore, at its Bruce Nuclear Generating Station in Kincardine, Ontario.

The Great Lakes is the drinking water supply for 40 million people in eight U.S. states, two Canadian provinces, and a large number of Native American First Nations. The Great Lakes, 20% of the world's surface fresh water, and close to 90% of North America's, is the lifeblood of one of the world's largest regional economies. As shown by the Chernobyl and Fukushima nuclear catastrophes, OPG's proposed radioactive waste dump would put the Great Lakes, and its residents, at risk of radioactive ruination forevermore. This is entirely unacceptable on its face.

As unsafe as a dump on the Great Lakes shore for so-called “low” and “intermediate” level radioactive wastes from 20 reactors across Ontario already is, we fear a bait and switch. Opponents have already had to force OPG to reveal its secretive plans to double the dump's already monstrous capacity, to take decommissioning wastes after reactor shutdowns across Ontario.

We also fear the remaining proposals in the Bruce area for Canada's national high-level radioactive waste dump. How much sense would it make to build two deep geologic repositories (DGRs), for different purposes, in the same vicinity? Although OPG optimistically claims its first DGR would only cost some billions to construct and operate, the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) most recent estimate for the price tag at the since-cancelled Yucca Mountain, Nevada DGR was close to \$100 billion. And the 2014 explosion of a single barrel, and consequent radioactivity release underground and to the surface environment, at DOE's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico – which OPG modeled its DGR after – will cost many hundreds of millions of dollars, and perhaps even a billion dollars, to address.

OPG's insane proposal is a declaration of war against the Great Lakes. If the Canadian federal government decides to support and approve this incredibly risky scheme, our bi-national grassroots coalition will intensify its resistance, as it has done for well over a decade. We commend the 154 municipalities, across all eight U.S. Great Lakes states, as well as Ontario, which have passed resolutions opposing OPG's ill-advised Great Lakes radioactive waste dump. And we urge all Americans to contact their U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative, to urge their support for bipartisan resolutions in the U.S. Congress expressing strong opposition to OPG's DGR, and calling upon President Obama to take action against it.”

Beyond Nuclear aims to educate and activate the public about the connections between nuclear power and nuclear weapons and the need to abandon both to safeguard our future. Beyond Nuclear advocates for an energy future that is sustainable, benign and democratic.