



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **For immediate release**

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### **Nuclear agency squandered \$350 million on redundant building but claims \$8 million too high and timeframe too long for cancer study**

TAKOMA PARK, MD, September 11, 2015 — This week, Beyond Nuclear, was widely quoted in the press as challenging the reasoning given by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in canceling a proposed cancer study around U.S. nuclear facilities.

We alleged that the NRC's balking at just an \$8 million expenditure for a 39-month pilot study "smells wrong" and "doesn't seem like a credible answer."

An NRC spokesman justified the cancelation due to cost and "the long duration" of such a study while pointing to the agency's "responsibility to use congressionally-provided funds as wisely as possible."

That "wise" spending includes [\\$350 million of taxpayer](#) money squandered on a new building, 3 White Flint North, located at the NRC's Rockville, MD headquarters and that the agency found it in fact did not need. This lavish expenditure was predicated on ramping up staff to deal with the "renaissance" of new nuclear plants, which has proven an illusion of industry. But the agency is not shy about spending time and money on projects favorable to the nuclear industry it is supposed to monitor.

"The NRC is certainly willing to spend millions of dollars and as long as it takes to license and relicense aging reactors that are likely responsible for cancers the agency now refuses to even look at," said Paul Gunter, Director of Reactor Oversight at Beyond Nuclear. "The NRC has been reviewing the Watts Bar Unit 2 nuclear power plant's construction and operation application for 43 years for a 40-year operating license," he noted.

The NRC took six years to relicense the Vermont Yankee and Pilgrim (MA) nuclear reactors and several years and more millions trying to license a proposed new reactor at the Calvert Cliffs, MD site, a project that has since been canceled. Vermont Yankee received its new 20-year license on March 10, 2011, but Entergy, the owner, closed the reactor at the end of 2014. Relicensing proceedings at Indian Point 2 and 3 in New York have continued for more than eight years.

“The NRC canceled this study because neither they nor the nuclear industry want the public to know there are elevated cancer rates around nuclear power plants,” Gunter continued. He pointed to a 1990 cancer study in southeastern Massachusetts conducted by the State Department of Public Health that found a 400% increase in adult leukemias around the Pilgrim nuclear power plant. The increases were in direct correlation to the proximity and amount of time an individual lived near the reactor.

Beyond Nuclear is a leading U.S. NGO of record on the health, safety and environmental dangers of nuclear power facilities.

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*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. The Beyond Nuclear team works with diverse partners and allies to provide the public, government officials, and the media with the critical information necessary to move humanity toward a world beyond nuclear. Beyond Nuclear: 6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 400, Takoma Park, MD 20912. [Info@beyondnuclear.org](mailto:Info@beyondnuclear.org). [www.beyondnuclear.org](http://www.beyondnuclear.org).*