

Statement of U.S. Representative Lois Capps

Statement at NRC Scoping Meeting on the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant Relicensing Application

March 3, 2010

I would like to read the following statement from U.S. Representative Lois Capps:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the environmental issues the Nuclear Regulatory Commission should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal application for the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant.

I represent the 23rd Congressional District, in which this facility is located.

As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I am very interested in issues relating to the relicensing process of nuclear power plants.

I appreciate the NRC holding this forum to assess all of the environmental impacts that would result if this plant were to be relicensed.

Given the scale of this renewal, as well as the complex technical issues contained in the licensee's application, it is critically important that this assessment be comprehensive and independent.

The NRC must fully assess and address safety and security impacts, including any measures available to mitigate them, as they relate to the environment.

That means the assessment must include updated and completed analyses to ensure:

the surrounding natural and marine environment is protected,
the plant—including aging infrastructure—can withstand potential earthquakes and is not vulnerable to a terrorist attack, and
that any on-site storage of waste be done safely.

I believe failure to fully assess these issues would do a disservice to the review process by disallowing a look at the overall, collective impacts of this renewal on the environment.

For example, the recently discovered Shoreline Fault, less than one mile offshore of the plant, has not been thoroughly studied.

This clearly exacerbates an already precarious situation. The central coast of California has a number of major and active earthquake faults.

To reduce the likelihood or severity of a severe accident due to these faults, the NRC must include severe accident mitigation alternatives—supported by new seismic hazard data—as part of this review process.

Only with an all-inclusive review of the safety and security impacts will the NRC ever be able to come to an accurate conclusion as to the degree of the severity of a planned or unplanned event at the plant.

Accordingly, the NRC must require site-specific assessments to address the potentially catastrophic and far-ranging impacts on the environment during the license renewal process.

Again, I urge the NRC to act deliberatively in this matter, based on a thorough public record.

My constituents deserve assurance that everything possible is being done to insure this facility is operated in a safe and sound manner, and that the relicensing process is focused on protecting their health and safety.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this proposal.