

Capps Statement on Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Order on Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant

WASHINGTON – Today, Rep. Lois Capps (CA-23) issued the following statement in response to the order issued by the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board regarding the license renewal proceedings for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant in San Luis Obispo County, California.

“I’m very pleased that the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) has essentially agreed with the request I made to the NRC to delay consideration of the relicensing of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant until advanced, peer-reviewed seismic studies are completed. Today’s order by the ASLB that the relicensing process for Diablo should be delayed by 52 months is welcome news for the people of San Luis Obispo County.

“I’ve said all along that safety is my top priority. That’s why I’m calling on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to immediately concur with this order and officially halt the relicensing process until advanced seismic studies are completed and reviewed by independent experts. The people of the Central Coast deserve to be assured the NRC is doing everything possible to reduce the risk of a severe accident and that the plant is fully prepared to deal with any contingency. That simply can’t happen with limited data and information. So, I’m hopeful this important notice will finally convince the NRC to stop this process until all of the outstanding seismic questions are answered.”

June 7, 2011

The Honorable Gregory B. Jaczko
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Jaczko:

I am writing to inform you of my support for today’s order by the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board that the license renewal for the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant should be delayed by 52 months. I believe the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) should immediately concur with this order and officially halt the relicensing process until updated seismic studies and 3-D seismic mapping are completed, reviewed, and considered as part of this relicensing process.

As you know, I previously requested the NRC stay the license renewal process until these studies demonstrate the plant’s design and operations can withstand the greatest possible ground motion from an earthquake and other potential threats. I made this request because my constituents deserve to be assured the NRC is doing everything possible to reduce the risk of a severe accident and that the plant is fully prepared to deal with any contingency. That simply cannot happen without complete data and information.

The ASLB’s order is wise and responsible. It fully recognizes the NRC relicensing process for Diablo Canyon cannot continue until California’s significant seismic concerns are studied and resolved. It will also help ensure that California taxpayers will not face billions of dollars in charges to once again belatedly address plant design and safety issues that may arise as a result of these needed seismic studies.

Therefore, I once again urge the Commission to stop the continuation of this process until all of the outstanding seismic questions and concerns relating to Diablo Canyon are answered and addressed.

Thank you for your attention to this serious matter.

Sincerely,

LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress

###